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SAMUEL JOHNSON, L.L.D.

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JONES'S

UNIVERSITY EDITION OF

BRITISH CLASSICAL AUTHORS

The WORKS OF SAM.L JOHNSON, L.L.D.

Vol. I.

AFRAID TO GO FORWARD LEST HE SHOULD GO WRONG. Pg 65

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THE

WORKS

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

WITH

AN ESSAY

ON HIS LIFE AND GENIUS,

BY

ARTHUR MURPHY, Esq.

IN TWO VOLUMES COMPLETE.

VOL. I.

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AN

ESSAY

ON THE

LIFE AND GENIUS

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

When the works of a great writer, who has bequeathed to posterity a lasting legacy, are presented to the world, it is naturally expected, that some account of his life should accompany the edition. The reader wishes to know as much as possible of the author. The circumstances that attended him, the features of his private character, his conversation, and the means by which he rose to eminence, become the favourite objects of inquiry. Curiosity is excited; and the admirer of his works is eager to know his private opinions, his course of study, the particularities of his conduct, and, above all, whether he pursued the wisdom which he recommends, and practised the virtue which his writings inspire. A principle of gratitude is awakened in every generous mind. For the entertainment and instruction which genius and diligence have provided for the world, men of refined and sensible tempers are ready to pay their tribute of praise, and even to form a posthumous friendship with the author.

In reviewing the life of such a writer, there is, besides, a rule of justice to which the public have an undoubted claim. Fond admiration and partial friendship should not be suffered to represent his virtues with exaggeration; nor should malignity be allowed, under a specious disguise, to magnify mere defects, the usual failings of human nature, into vice or gross deformity. The lights and shades of the character should be given; and, if this be done with a strict regard to truth, a just estimate of Dr. Johnson will afford a lesson, perhaps as valuable as the moral doctrine that speaks with energy in every page of his works.

The present writer enjoyed the conversation and friendship of that excellent man more than thirty years. He thought it an honour to be so connected, and to this hour he reflects on his loss with regret: but regret, he knows, has secret bribes, by which the judgment may be influenced, and partial affection may be carried beyond the bounds of truth. In the present case, however, nothing needs to be disguised, and exaggerated praise is unnecessary. It is an observation of the younger Pliny, in his Epistle to his friend Tacitus, that history ought never to magnify matters of fact, because worthy actions require nothing but the truth. *Nam nec historia debet egredi veritatem, et honeste factis veritas sufficit.* This rule the present biographer promises shall guide his pen throughout the following narrative.

It may be said, the death of Dr. Johnson kept the public mind in agitation beyond all former example. No literary character ever excited so much attention; and, when the press has teemed with anecdotes, apophthegms, essays, and publications of every kind, what occasion now for a new tract on the same threadbare subject? The plain truth shall be the answer. The proprietors of Johnson's Works thought the life, which they prefixed to their former edition, too unweildy for republication. The prodigious variety of foreign matter, introduced into that performance, seemed to overload the memory of Dr. Johnson, and in the account of his own life to leave him hardly visible. They wished to have a more concise, and, for that reason, perhaps a more satisfactory account, such as may exhibit a just picture of the man, and keep him

the principal figure in the foreground of his own picture. To comply with that request is the design of this essay, which the writer undertakes with a trembling hand. He has no discoveries, no secret anecdotes, no occasional controversy, no sudden flashes of wit and humour, no private conversation, and no new facts, to embellish his work. Every thing has been gleaned. Dr. Johnson said of himself, "I am not uncandid nor severe: I sometimes say more than I mean, in jest, and people are apt to think me serious."* The exercise of that privilege, which is enjoyed by every man in society, has not been allowed to him. His fame has given importance even to trifles; and the zeal of his friends has brought every thing to light. What should be related, and what should not, has been published without distinction. *Dicenda tacenda locuti!* Every thing that fell from him has been caught with eagerness by his admirers, who, as he says in one of his letters, have acted with the diligence of spies upon his conduct. To some of them the following lines, in Mallet's Poem, on verbal criticism, are not inapplicable:

"Such that grave bird in Northern seas is found,
Whose name a Dutchman only knows to sound;
Where'er the king of fish moves on before,
This humble friend attends from shore to shore;
With eye still earnest, and with bill inclined,
He picks up what his patron left behind,
With those choice cates his palate to regale,
And is the careful TIBBALD of a WHALE."

After so many esssays and volumes of *Johnsoniana*, what remains for the present writer? Perhaps, what has not been attempted; a short, yet full—a faithful, yet temperate, history of Dr. Johnson.

SAMUEL JOHNSON was born at Litchfield, September 7, 1709, O. S.† His father Michael Johnson, was a bookseller in that city; a man of large athletic make, and violent passions; wrong-headed, positive, and at times afflicted with a degree of melancholy, little short of madness. His mother was sister to Dr. Ford, a practising physician, and father of Cornelius Ford, generally known by the name of PARSON FORD, the same who is represented near the punch-bowl in Hogarth's Midnight Modern Conversation. In the life of Fenton, Johnson says, that "his abilities, instead of furnishing convivial merriment to the voluptuous and dissolute, might have enabled him to excel among the virtuous and the wise." Being chaplain to the Earl of Chesterfield, he wished to attend that nobleman on his embassy to the Hague. Colley Cibber has recorded the anecdote. "You should go," said the witty peer, "if to your many vices you would add one more." "Pray, my Lord, what is that?" "Hypocrisy, my dear Doctor." Johnson had a younger brother named Nathaniel, who died at the age of twenty-seven or twenty-eight. Michael Johnson, the father, was chosen in the year 1718, under bailiff of Litchfield; and in the year 1725 he served the office of the senior bailiff. He had a brother of the name of Andrew, who, for some years, kept the ring at Smithfield, appropriated to wrestlers and boxers. Our author used to say, that he was never thrown or conquered. Michael, the father, died December 1731, at the age of seventy-six; his mother at eighty-nine, of a gradual decay, in the year 1759. Of the family nothing more can be related worthy of notice. Johnson did not delight in talking of his relations. "There is little pleasure," he said to Mrs. Piozzi, "in relating the anecdotes of beggary."

Johnson derived from his parents, or from an unwholesome nurse, the distemper called the king's evil. The jacobites at that time believed in the efficacy of the royal touch; and accordingly Mrs. Johnson presented her son, when two years old, before Queen Anne, who, for the first time, performed that office, and communicated to her young patient all the healing virtue in her power. He was afterwards cut for that scrophulous humour, and the under part of his face was seamed and disfigured by the operation. It is supposed that this disease deprived him of the sight of his left eye, and also impaired his hearing. At eight years old he was placed under Mr. Hawkins, at the Free-school in Litchfield, where he was not remarkable for diligence or regular application. Whatever he read, his tenacious memory made his own. In the fields with his school-fellows, he talked more to himself than with his companions. In 1725, when he was about sixteen years old, he went on a visit to his cousin Cornelius Ford, who detained him for some months, and in the mean time assisted him in the classics. The general direction for his studies, which he then received, he related to Mrs. Piozzi. "Obtain," says Ford, "some general principles of every science: he who can talk only on one subject, or act only in one department, is seldom wanted, and perhaps never wished for; while the man of general knowledge can often benefit, and always please." This advice Johnson seems to have pursued with a good inclination. His reading was always desultory, seldom resting on any particular author, but rambling from one book to another,

* Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. ii. p. 465, 4to. edit.

† This appears in a note to Johnson's Diary, prefixed to the first of his prayers. After the alteration of the style, he kept his birth day on the 18th of September, and it is accordingly marked Septem-ber, 18

and, by hasty snatches, hoarding up a variety of knowledge. It may be proper in this place to mention another general rule laid down by Ford for Johnson's future conduct: "You will make your way the more easily in the world, as you are contented to dispute no man's claim to conversation excellence: they will, therefore, more willingly allow your pretensions as a writer." "But," says Mrs. Piozzi, "the features of peculiarity, which mark a character to all succeeding generations, are slow in coming to their growth." That ingenious lady adds, with her usual vivacity, "Can one, on such an occasion, forbear recollecting the predictions of Boileau's father, who said, stroking the head of the young satirist, 'this little man has too much wit, but he will never speak ill of any one?'"

On Johnson's return from Cornelius Ford, Mr. Hunter, then master of the Free-school at Litchfield, refused to receive him again on that foundation. At this distance of time, what his reasons were, it is vain to inquire; but to refuse assistance to a lad of promising genius must be pronounced harsh and illiberal. It did not, however, stop the progress of the young student's education. He was placed at another school, at Stourbridge in Worcestershire, under the care of Mr. Wentworth. Having gone through the rudiments of classic literature, he returned to his father's house, and was probably intended for the trade of a bookseller. He has been heard to say that he could bind a book. At the end of two years, being then about nineteen, he went to assist the studies of a young gentleman of the name of Corbett, to the University of Oxford; and on the 31st of October, 1728, both were entered of Pembroke College; Corbett, as a gentleman-commoner, and Johnson as a commoner. The college tutor, Mr. Jordan, was a man of no genius; and Johnson, it seems, showed an early contempt of mean abilities, in one or two instances behaving with insolence to that gentleman. Of his general conduct at the university there are no particulars that merit attention, except the translation of Pope's Messiah, which was a college exercise imposed upon him as a task, by Mr. Jordan. Corbett left the university in about two years, and Johnson's salary ceased. He was by consequence straitened in his circumstances: but he still remained at college. Mr. Jordan the tutor, went off to a living; and was succeeded by Dr. Adams, who afterwards became head of the college, and was esteemed through life for his learning, his talents, and his amiable character. Johnson grew more regular in his attendance. Ethics, theology, and classic literature, were his favourite studies. He discovered, notwithstanding, early symptoms of that wandering disposition of mind, which adhered to him to the end of his life. His reading was by fits and starts, undirected to any particular science. General philology, agreeably to his cousin Ford's advice, was the object of his ambition. He received, at that time, an early impression of piety, and a taste for the best authors, ancient and modern. It may, notwithstanding, be questioned whether, except his Bible, he ever read a book entirely through. Late in life, if any man praised a book in his presence, he was sure to ask, "Did you read it through?" If the answer was in the affirmative, he did not seem willing to believe it. He continued at the university till the want of pecuniary supplies obliged him to quit the place. He obtained, however, the assistance of a friend, and returning in a short time, was able to complete a residence of three years. The history of his exploits, at Oxford, he used to say, was best known to Dr. Taylor and Dr. Adams. Wonders are told of his memory, and, indeed, all who knew him late in life, can witness that he retained that faculty in the greatest vigour.

From the university Johnson returned to Litchfield. His father died soon after, December 1731; and the whole receipt out of his effects, as appeared by a memorandum in the son's hand-writing, dated 15th June, 1732, was no more than twenty pounds.* In this exigence, determined that poverty should neither depress his spirit nor warp his integrity, he became under-master of a grammar-school at Market-Bosworth in Leicestershire. That resource, however, did not last long. Disgusted by the pride of Sir Wolstan Dixie, the patron of that little seminary, he left the place in discontent, and ever after spoke of it with abhorrence. In 1733 he went on a visit to Mr. Hector, who had been his school-fellow, and was then a surgeon at Birmingham, lodging at the house of Warren, a bookseller. At that place Johnson translated a voyage to Abyssinia, written by Jerome Lobo, a Portuguese missionary. This was the first literary work from the pen of Dr. Johnson. His friend Hector was occasionally his amanuensis. The work was, probably, undertaken at the desire of Warren, the bookseller, and was printed at Birmingham; but it appears in the Literary Magazine, or History of the Works of the Learned, for March 1735, that it was published by Bettesworth and Hitch, Paternoster-row. It contains a narra-

* The entry of this is remarkable, for his early resolution to preserve through life a fair and upright character. "1732, Junii 15. Undecim aureos deposui, quo die, quidquid ante matris funus (quod serum sit precor) de paternis bonis sperare licet, viginti scilicet libras, accepi. Usque adeo mihi mea fortuna fingenda est interea, et ne paupertate vires animi languescant, ne in flagitia egestas adigat, cavendum."

tive of the endeavours of a company of missionaries to convert the people of Abyssinia to the Church of Rome. In the preface to this work Johnson observes, "that the Portuguese traveller, contrary to the general view of his countrymen, has amused his readers with no romantic absurdities, or incredible fictions. He appears, by his modest and unaffected narration, to have described things as he saw them; to have copied nature from the life; and to have consulted his senses, not his imagination. He meets with no basilisks, that destroy with their eyes; his crocodiles devour their prey, without tears; and his cataracts fall from the rock, without deafening the neighbouring inhabitants. The reader will here find no regions cursed with irremediable barrennesss, or blessed with spontaneous fecundity; no perpetual gloom, or unceasing sunshine: nor are the nations, here described, either void of all sense of humanity, or consummate in all private and social virtues: here are no Hottentots without religion, polity, or articulate language; no Chinese perfectly polite, and completely skilled in all sciences: he will discover, what will always be discovered by a diligent and impartial inquirer, that, wherever human nature is to be found, there is a mixture of vice and virtue, a contest of passion and reason; and that the Creator doth not appear partial in his distributions, but has balanced, in most countries, their particular inconveniences by particular favours."——We have here an early specimen of Johnson's manner; the vein of thinking and the frame of the sentences are manifestly his: we see the infant Hercules. The translation of Lobo's Narrative has been reprinted lately in a separate volume, with some other tracts of Dr. Johnson's, and therefore forms no part of this edition; but a compendious account of so interesting a work as Father Lobo's discovery of the head of the Nile will not, it is imagined, be unacceptable to the reader.

Father Lobo, the Portuguese Missionary, embarked, in 1622, in the same fleet with the Count *Vidigueira*, who was appointed, by the king of Portugal, Viceroy of the Indies. They arrived at Goa; and, in January 1624, Father Lobo set out on the mission to Abyssinia. Two of the Jesuits, sent on the same commission, were murdered in their attempt to penetrate into that empire. Lobo had better success; he surmounted all difficulties, and made his way into the heart of the country. Then follows a description of Abyssinia, formerly the largest empire of which we have an account in history. It extended from the Red Sea to the kingdom of Congo, and from Egypt to the Indian Sea, containing no less than forty provinces. At the time of Lobo's mission, it was not much larger than Spain, consisting then but of five kingdoms, of which part was entirely subject to the Emperor, and part paid him a tribute, as an acknowledgment. The provinces were inhabited by Moors, Pagans, Jews, and Christians. The last was, in Lobo's time, the established and reigning religion. The diversity of people and religion is the reason why the kingdom was under different forms of government, with laws and customs extremely various. Some of the people neither sowed their lands, nor improved them by any kind of culture, living upon milk and flesh, and, like the Arabs, encamping without any settled habitation. In some places they practised no rites of worship, though they believed that, in the regions above, there dwells a Being that governs the world. This Deity they call in their language *Oul*. The Christianity professed by the people in some parts, is corrupted with superstitious errors, and heresies, and so mingled with ceremonies borrowed from the Jews, that little, besides the name of Christianity, is to be found among them. The Abyssins cannot properly be said to have either cities or houses; they live in tents or cottages made of straw or clay, very rarely building with stone. Their villages or towns consist of these huts; yet even of such villages they have but few; because the grandees, the viceroys, and the emperor himself, are always in camp, that they may be prepared, upon the most sudden alarm, to meet every emergence, in a country which is engaged every year either in foreign wars or intestine commotions. Ethiopia produces very near the same kinds of provision as Portugal, though, by the extreme laziness of the inhabitants, in a much less quantity. What the ancients imagined of the torrid zone being a part of the world uninhabitable, is so far from being true, that the climate is very temperate. The blacks have better features than in other countries, and are not without wit and ingenuity. Their apprehension is quick, and their judgment sound. There are in the climate two harvests in the year: one in winter, which lasts through the months of July, August and September; the other in the Spring. They have, in the greatest plenty, raisins, peaches, pomegranates, sugar-canes, and some figs. Most of these are ripe about Lent, which the Abyssins keep with great strictness. The animals of the country are the lion, the elephant, the rhinoceros, the unicorn, horses, mules, oxen, and cows without number. They have a very particular custom, which obliges every man, that has a thousand cows, to save every year one day's milk of all his herd, and make a bath with it for his relations. This they do so many days in each year, as they have thousands of cattle; so that, to express how rich a man is, they tell you *he bathes so many times*.

"Of the river Nile, which has furnished so much controversy, we have a full and clear description. It is called by the natives, Abavi, the Father of Water. It rises in Sa-

ala, a province of the kingdom of Goiama, he most fertile and agreeable part of the Abys- inian dominions. On the Eastern side of the ountry, on the declivity of a mountain, whose lescent is so easy, that it seems a beautiful lain, is that source of the Nile, which has been ought after at so much expense and labour. This spring, or rather these two springs, are wo holes, each about two feet diameter, a tone's cast distant from each other. One of hem is about five feet and a half in depth. Lobo was not able to sink his plummet lower, erhaps, because it was stopped by roots, the whole place being full of trees. A line of ten eet did not reach the bottom of the other. These springs are supposed by the Abyssins to e the vents of a great subterraneous lake. At small distance to the South, is a village called Guix, through which you ascend to the top of he mountain, where there is a little hill, which he idolatrous Agaci hold in great veneration. Their priest calls them together to this place nce a year: and every one sacrifices a cow, or nore, according to the different degrees of wealth nd devotion. Hence we have sufficient proof, hat these nations always paid adoration to the Deity of this famous river.

"As to the course of the Nile, its waters, af- er the first rise, run towards the East, about he length of a musket-shot: then, turning northward, continue hidden in the grass and weeds for about a quarter of a league, when hey re-appear amongst a quantity of rocks. The Nile from its source proceeds with so in- considerable a current, that it is in danger of being dried up by the hot season; but soon re- ceiving an increase from the Gemma, the Keltu, he Bransa, and the other smaller rivers, it ex- pands to such a breadth in the plains of Boad, which is not above three days' journey from its ource, that a musket-ball will scarcely fly from ne bank to the other. Here it begins to run northward, winding, however, a little to the East, for the space of nine or ten leagues, and hen enters the so-much-talked-of Lake of Dam- bia, flowing with such violent rapidity, that its waters may be distinguished through the whole assage, which is no less than six leagues. Here egins the greatness of the Nile. Fifteen miles urther, in the land of Alata, it rushes precipi- ately from the top of a high rock, and forms ne of the most beautiful waterfalls in the world. Lobo says, he passed under it without being wet, nd resting himself, for the sake of the coolness, was charmed with a thousand delightful rain- bows, which the sunbeams painted on the water, n all their shining and lively colours.* The fall of this mighty stream, from so great a height, makes a noise that may be heard at a considerable distance; but it was not found, that the neighbouring inhabitants were deaf. After the cataract, the Nile collects its scattered stream among the rocks, which are so near each other, that in Lobo's time, a bridge of beams, on which the whole imperial army passed, was laid over them. Sultan Sequed has since built a stone bridge of one arch, in the same place, for which purpose he procured masons from India. Here the river alters its course, and passes through various kingdoms, such as Amhara, Olaca, Choaa, Damot, and the kingdom of Goiama, and, after various windings, returns within a short day's journey of its spring. To pursue it through all its mazes, and accompany it round the kingdom of Goiama, is a journey of twenty-nine days. From Abyssinia, the river passes into the countries of Fazulo and Ombarca, two vast regions little known, inhabited by nations entirely different from the Abyssins. Their hair, like that of the other blacks in those regions, is short and curled. In the year 1615, Rassela Christos, Lieutenant-General to Sultan Sequed, entered those kingdoms in a hostile manner; but, not being able to get intelligence, returned without attempting any thing. As the empire of Abyssinia terminates at these descents, Lobo followed the course of the Nile no farther, leaving it to range over barbarous kingdoms, and convey wealth and plenty into Ægypt, which owes to the annual inundations of this river its envied fertility.* Lobo knows nothing of the Nile in the rest of its passage, except that it receives great increase from many other rivers, has several cataracts like that already described, and that few fish are to be found in it; that scarcity is to be attributed to the river horse and the crocodile, which destroy the weaker inhabitants of the river. Something, likewise, must be imputed to the cataracts, where fish cannot fall without being killed. Lobo adds, that neither he, nor any with whom he conversed about the crocodile, ever saw him weep; and therefore all that hath been said about his tears must be ranked among the fables invented for the amusement of children.

* This Mr. Bruce, the late traveller, avers to be a downright falsehood. He says, a deep pool of water reaches to the very foot of the rock; and, allowing that there was a seat or bench (which there is not) in the middle of the pool, it is absolutely impossible, by any exertion of human strength, to have arrived at it. But it may be asked, can Mr. Bruce say, what was the face of the country in the year 1622, when Lobo saw the magnificent sight which he has described? Mr. Bruce's pool of water may have been formed since; and Lobo, perhaps, was content to sit down without a bench.

* After comparing this description with that lately given by Mr. Bruce, the reader will judge whether Lobo is to lose the honour of having been at the head of the Nile near two centuries before any other European traveller.

"As to the causes of the inundations of the Nile, Lobo observes, that many an idle hypothesis has been framed. Some theorists ascribe it to the high winds, that stop the current, and force the water above its banks. Others pretend a subterraneous communication between the Ocean and the Nile, and that the sea, when violently agitated, swells the river. Many are of opinion, that this mighty flood proceeds from the melting of the snow on the mountains of Ethiopia; but so much snow and such prodigious heat are never met with in the same region. Lobo never saw snow in Abyssinia, except on Mount Semen in the kingdom of Tigre, very remote from the Nile; and on Namara, which is, indeed, not far distant, but where there never falls snow enough to wet, when dissolved, the foot of the mountain. To the immense labours of the Portuguese, mankind is indebted for the knowledge of the real cause of these inundations, so great and so regular. By them we are informed, that Abyssinia, where the Nile rises, is full of mountains, and, in its natural situation, is much higher than Egypt; that in the winter, from June to September, no day is without rain; that the Nile receives in its course, all the rivers, brooks, and torrents, that fall from those mountains, and, by necessary consequence, swelling above its banks, fills the plains of Egypt with inundations, which come regularly about the month of July, or three weeks after the beginning of the rainy season in Ethiopia. The different degrees of this flood are such certain indications of the fruitfulness or sterility of the ensuing year, that it is publicly proclaimed at Cairo how much the water hath gained during the night."

Such is the account of the Nile and its inundations, which it is hoped will not be deemed an improper or tedious digression, especially as the whole is an extract from Johnson's translation. He is all the time the actor in the scene, and in his own words relates the story. Having finished this work, he returned, in February 1734, to his native city, and, in the month of August following, published proposals for printing by subscription the Latin Poems of Politian, with the History of Latin Poetry, from the Era of Petrarch, to the time of Politian; and also the Life of Politian, to be added by the Editor, Samuel Johnson. The book to be printed in thirty octavo sheets, price five shillings. It is to be regretted that this project failed for want of encouragement. Johnson, it seems, differed from Boileau, Voltaire, and D'Alembert, who had taken upon them to proscribe all modern efforts to write with elegance in a dead language. For a decision pronounced in so high a tone, no good reason can be assigned. The interests of learning require that the diction of Greece and Rome should be cultivated with care; and he who can write a language with correctness, will be most likely to understand its idiom, its grammar, and its peculiar graces of style. What man of taste would willingly forego the pleasure of reading Vida, Fracastorius, Sannazaro, Strada, and others, down to the late elegant productions of Bishop Lowth? The history which Johnson proposed to himself would, beyond all question, have been a valuable addition to the history of letters; but his project failed. His next expedient was to offer his assistance to Cave, the original projector of the Gentleman's Magazine. For this purpose he sent his proposals in a letter, offering, on reasonable terms, occasionally to fill some pages with poems and inscriptions never printed before; with fugitive pieces that deserved to be revived, and critical remarks on authors ancient and modern. Cave agreed to retain him as a correspondent and contributor to the Magazine. What the conditions were cannot now be known; but certainly they were not sufficient to hinder Johnson from casting his eyes about him in quest of other employment. Accordingly, in 1735, he made overtures to the Rev. Mr. Budworth, Master of a Grammar-school at Brerewood, in Staffordshire, to become his assistant. This proposition did not succeed. Mr. Budworth apprehended, that the involuntary motions, to which Johnson's nerves were subject, might make him an object of ridicule with his scholars, and, by consequence, lessen their respect for their master. Another mode of advancing himself presented itself about this time. Mrs. Porter, the widow of a mercer in Birmingham, admired his talents. It is said that she had about eight hundred pounds; and that sum to a person in Johnson's circumstances was an affluent fortune. A marriage took place, and to turn his wife's money to the best advantage, he projected the scheme of an academy for education. Gilbert Walmsley, at that time Registrar of the Ecclesiastical Court of the Bishop of Litchfield, was distinguished by his erudition, and the politeness of his manners. He was the friend of Johnson, and, by his weight and influence endeavoured to promote his interest. The celebrated Garrick, whose father, Captain Garrick, lived at Litchfield, was placed in the new seminary of education, by that gentleman's advice.—Garrick was then about eighteen years old. An accession of seven or eight pupils was the most that could be obtained, though notice was given by a public advertisement,* that at Edial, near Litchfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are boarded and taught the Latin and Greek Languages, by Samuel Johnson.

The undertaking proved abortive. Johnson having now abandoned all hopes of promoting his fortune in the country, determined to become

* See the Gentleman's Magazine for 1736, p. 418.

an adventurer in the world at large. His young pupil, Garrick, had formed the same resolution; and, accordingly, in March, 1737, they arrived in London together. Two such candidates for fame, perhaps never before that day entered the metropolis together. Their stock of money was soon exhausted. In his visionary project of an academy, Johnson had probably wasted his wife's substance; and Garrick's father had little more than his half-pay. The two fellow-travellers had the world before them, and each was to choose his road to fortune and to fame. They brought with them genius, and powers of mind, peculiarly formed by nature for the different vocations to which each of them felt himself inclined. They acted from the impulse of young minds, even then meditating great things, and with courage anticipating success. Their friend Mr. Walmsley, by a letter to the Rev. Mr. Colson, who, it seems, was a great mathematician, exerted his good offices in their favour. He gave notice of their intended journey. "Davy Garrick," he said, "will be with you next week; and Johnson, to try his fate with a tragedy, and to get himself employed in some translation either from the Latin or French. Johnson is a very good scholar and a poet, and I have great hopes will turn out a fine tragedy writer. If it should be in your way, I doubt not but you will be ready to recommend and assist your countrymen." Of Mr. Walmsley's merit, and the excellence of his character, Johnson has left a beautiful testimonial at the end of the Life of Edward Smith. It is reasonable to conclude, that a mathematician, absorbed in abstract speculations, was not able to find a sphere of action for two men who were to be the architects of their own fortune. In three or four years afterwards Garrick came forth, with talents that astonished the public. He began his career at Goodman's-fields, and there, *monstratus fuit Vespasianus!* he chose a lucrative profession, and consequently soon emerged from all his difficulties. Johnson was left to toil in the humble walks of literature. A tragedy, as appears by Walmsley's letter, was the whole of his stock. This, most probably, was IRENE; but, if then finished, it was doomed to wait for a more happy period. It was offered to Fleetwood, and rejected. Johnson looked round him for employment. Having, while he remained in the country, corresponded with Cave, under a feigned name, he now thought it time to make himself known to a man whom he considered as a patron of literature. Cave had announced, by public advertisement, a prize of fifty pounds for the best poem on Life, Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell; and this circumstance diffused an idea of his liberality. Johnson became connected with him in business, and in a close and intimate acquaintance. Of Cave's character it is unnecessary to say any thing in this place, as Johnson was afterwards the biographer of his first and most useful patron. To be engaged in the translation of some important book was still the object which Johnson had in view. For this purpose he proposed to give the History of the Council of Trent, with copious notes, then lately added to a French edition. Twelve sheets of this work were printed, for which Johnson received forty-nine pounds, as appears by his receipt in the possession of Mr. Nichols, the compiler of that entertaining and useful work, the Gentleman's Magazine. Johnson's translation was never completed: a like design was offered to the public, under the patronage of Dr. Zachary Pearce; and by that contention both attempts were frustrated. Johnson had been commended by Pope for the translation of the Messiah into Latin verse; but he knew no approach to so eminent a man. With one, however, who was connected with Pope, he became acquainted at St. John's Gate; and that person was no other than the well-known Richard Savage, whose life was afterwards written by Johnson, with great elegance, and a depth of moral reflection. Savage was a man of considerable talents. His address, his various accomplishments, and, above all, the peculiarity of his misfortunes, recommended him to Johnson's notice. They became united in the closest intimacy. Both had great parts, and they were equally under the pressure of want. Sympathy joined them in a league of friendship. Johnson has been often heard to relate, that he and Savage walked round Grosvenor-square till four in the morning; in the course of their conversation reforming the world, dethroning princes, establishing new forms of government, and giving laws to the several states of Europe; till, fatigued at length with their legislative office, they began to feel the want of refreshment, but could not muster up more than fourpence-halfpenny. Savage, it is true, had many vices: but vice could never strike its roots in a mind like Johnson's, seasoned early with religion, and the principles of moral rectitude. His first prayer was composed in the year 1738. He had not at that time renounced the use of wine; and, no doubt, occasionally enjoyed his friend and his bottle. The love of late hours, which followed him through life, was, perhaps, originally contracted in company with Savage. However that may be, their connection was not of long duration. In the year 1738, Savage was reduced to the last distress. Mr. Pope, in a letter to him, expressed his concern for "the miserable withdrawing of his pension after the death of the Queen;" and gave him hopes that, "in a short time, he should find himself supplied with a competence, without any dependence on those little creatures whom we are pleased to call the Great." The scheme proposed to him was, that he should retire to Swansea in Wales, and receive an allowance of

fifty pounds a year, to be raised by subscription; Pope was to pay twenty pounds. This plan, though finally established, took more than a year before it was carried into execution. In the mean time, the intended retreat of Savage called to Johnson's mind the third Satire of Juvenal, in which that poet takes leave of a friend, who was withdrawing himself from all the vices of Rome. Struck with this idea, he wrote that well-known poem, called London. The first lines manifestly point to Savage.

"Though grief and fondness in my breast rebel,
When injured Thales bids the town farewell;
Yet still my calmer thoughts his choice commend;
I praise the hermit, but regret the friend;
Resolved at length, from Vice and London far,
To breathe in distant fields a purer air;
And fixed on Cambria's solitary shore,
Give to St. David one true Briton more."

Johnson at that time lodged at Greenwich. He there fixes the scene, and takes leave of his friend; who, he says in his Life, parted from him with tears in his eyes. The poem, when finished, was offered to Cave. It happened, however, that the late Mr. Dodsley was the purchaser, at the price of ten guineas. It was published in 1738; and Pope, we are told, said, "The author, whoever he is, will not be long concealed:" alluding to the passage in Terence, *Ubi, ubi est, diu celari non potest.* Notwithstanding that prediction, it does not appear that, besides the copy-money, any advantage accrued to the author of a poem, written with the elegance and energy of Pope. Johnson, in August 1738, went, with all the fame of his poetry, to offer himself a candidate for the mastership of the school at Appleby, in Leicestershire. The statutes of the place required, that the person chosen should be a Master of Arts. To remove this objection, the then Lord Gower was induced to write to a friend, in order to obtain for Johnson a Master's degree in the University of Dublin, by the recommendation of Dr. Swift. The letter was printed in one of the Magazines, and was as follows:

"Sir,

"Mr. Samuel Johnson (author of London, a Satire, and some other poetical pieces), is a native of this county, and much respected by some worthy gentlemen in the neighbourhood, who are trustees of a charity-school, now vacant; the certain salary of which is sixty pounds per year, of which they are desirous to make him master; but unfortunately he is not capable of receiving their bounty, which would make him happy for life, by not being a Master of Arts, which, by the statutes of the school, the master of it must be.

"Now, these gentlemen do me the honour to think, that I have interest enough in you, to prevail upon you to write to Dean Swift, to persuade the University of Dublin to send a diploma to me, constituting this poor man Master of Arts in their University. They highly extol the man's learning and probity, and will not be persuaded, that the University will make any difficulty of conferring such a favour upon a stranger, if he is recommended by the Dean. They say he is not afraid of the strictest examination, though he is of so long a journey; and yet he will venture it, if the Dean thinks it necessary, choosing rather to die upon the road, than to be starved to death in translating for booksellers, which has been his only subsistence for some time past.

"I fear there is more difficulty in this affair than these good-natured gentlemen apprehend, especially as their election cannot be delayed longer than the 11th of next month. If you see this matter in the same light that it appears to me, I hope you will burn this, and pardon me for giving you so much trouble about an impracticable thing; but, if you think there is a probability of obtaining the favour asked, I am sure your humanity and propensity to relieve merit in distress will incline you to serve the poor man, without my adding any more to the trouble I have already given you, than assuring you, that I am, with great truth,

"Sir,
"Your faithful humble servant,
"Gower."

"Trentham, Aug. 1st."

This scheme miscarried. There is reason to think, that Swift declined to meddle in the business; and to that circumstance Johnson's known dislike of Swift has been often imputed.

It is mortifying to pursue a man of merit through all his difficulties; and yet this narrative must be, through many following years, the history of Genius and Virtue struggling with Adversity. Having lost the school at Appleby, Johnson was thrown back on the metropolis. Bred to no profession, without relations, friends, or interest, he was condemned to drudgery in the service of Cave, his only patron. In November 1738 was published a translation of Crousaz's Examen of Pope's Essay on Man; "containing a succinct View of the System of the Fatalists, and a Confutation of their Opinions; with an Illustration of the Doctrine of Free-Will; and an Inquiry, what view Mr. Pope might have in touching upon the Leibnitzian Philosophy, and Fatalism. By Mr. Crousaz, Professor of Philosophy and Mathematics at Lausanne." This translation has been generally thought a production of Johnson's pen; but it is now known, that Mrs. Elizabeth Carter has acknowledged it to be one of her early performances. It is certain, however, that Johnson was eager to promote the

publication. He considered the foreign philosopher as a man zealous in the cause of religion; and with him he was willing to join against the system of the Fatalists, and the doctrine of Leibnitz. It is well known that Warburton wrote a vindication of Mr. Pope; but there is reason to think that Johnson conceived an early prejudice against the Essay on Man; and what once took root in a mind like his, was not easily eradicated. His letter to Cave on this subject is still extant, and may well justify Sir John Hawkins, who inferred that Johnson was the translator of Crousaz. The conclusion of the letter is remarkable. "I am yours, IMPRANSUS." If by that Latin word was meant that he had not dined, because he wanted the means, who can read it, even at this hour, without an aching heart?

With a mind naturally vigorous, and quickened by necessity, Johnson formed a multiplicity of projects; but most of them proved abortive. A number of small tracts issued from his pen with wonderful rapidity; such as "MARMOR NORFOLCIENSE; or an Essay on an ancient prophetical Inscription, in Monkish Rhyme, discovered at Lynn in Norfolk. By *Probus Britannicus.*" This was a pamphlet against Sir Robert Walpole. According to Sir John Hawkins, a warrant was issued to apprehend the Author, who retired with his wife to an obscure lodging near Lambeth Marsh, and there eluded the search of the messengers. But this story has no foundation in truth. Johnson was never known to mention such an incident in his life; and Mr. Steele (late of the Treasury) caused diligent search to be made at the proper offices, and no trace of such a proceeding could be found. In the same year (1739) the Lord Chamberlain prohibited the representation of a tragedy, called GUSTAVUS VASA, by Henry Brooke. Under the mask of irony, Johnson published "A Vindication of the Licenser from the malicious and scandalous Aspersions of Mr. Brooke." Of these two pieces Sir John Hawkins says "they have neither learning nor wit, nor a single ray of that genius which has since blazed forth;" but, as they have lately been reprinted, the reader, who wishes to gratify his curiosity, is referred to the fourteenth volume of Johnson's works, published by Stockdale. The lives of Boerhaave, Blake, Barratier, Father Paul, and others, were, about that time, printed in the Gentleman's Magazine. The subscription of fifty pounds a year for Savage was completed; and in July 1739, Johnson parted with the companion of his midnight hours never to see him more. The separation was, perhaps, an advantage to him, who wanted to make a right use of his time, and even then beheld with self-reproach the waste occasioned by dissipation. His abstinence from wine and strong liquors began soon after the departure of Savage. What habits he contracted in the course of that acquaintance cannot now be known. The ambition of excelling in conversation, and that pride of victory, which, at times, disgraced a man of Johnson's genius, were, perhaps, native blemishes. A fierce spirit of independence, even in the midst of poverty, may be seen in Savage; and, if not thence transfused by Johnson into his own manners, it may, at least, be supposed to have gained strength from the example before him. During that connection there was, if we believe Sir John Hawkins, a short separation between our author and his wife; but a reconciliation soon took place. Johnson loved her, and showed his affection in various modes of gallantry, which Garrick used to render ridiculous by his mimicry. The affectation of soft and fashionable airs did not become an unwieldy figure: his admiration was received by the wife with the flutter of an antiquated coquette; and both, it is well known, furnished matter for the lively genius of Garrick.

It is a mortifying reflection, that Johnson, with a store of learning and extraordinary talents, was not able, at the age of thirty, to force his way to the favour of the public. *Slow rises worth, by poverty depressed.* "He was still," as he says himself, "to provide for the day that was passing over him." He saw Cave involved in a state of warfare with the numerous competitors, at that time struggling with the Gentleman's Magazine; and gratitude for such supplies as Johnson received dictated a Latin Ode on the subject of that contention. The first lines,

> "Urbane, nullis fesse laboribus,
> Urbane, nullis victe calumniis,"

put one in mind of Casimir's Ode to Pope Urban:

> "Urbane, regum maxime, maxime
> Urbane vatum."———

The Polish poet was, probably, at that time, in the hands of a man who had meditated the history of the Latin poets. Guthrie the historian had from July 1736 composed the parliamentary speeches for the Magazine; but, from the beginning of the session, which opened on the 19th of November 1740, Johnson succeeded to that department, and continued it from that time to the debate on spirituous liquors, which happened in the House of Lords in February 1742-3. The eloquence, the force of argument, and the splendour of language displayed in the several speeches, are well known, and universally admired. The whole has been collected in two volumes by Mr. Stockdale, and may form a proper supplement to this edition. That Johnson was the author of the debates during that period was not generally known; but the secret transpired several years afterwards, and was avowed

by himself on the following occasion: Mr. Wedderburne (now Lord Loughborough,)* Dr. Johnson, Dr. Francis (the translator of Horace,) the present writer, and others, dined with the late Mr. Foote. An important debate towards the end of Sir Robert Walpole's administration being mentioned, Dr. Francis observed, "That Mr. Pitt's speech, on that occasion, was the best he had ever read." He added, "That he had employed eight years of his life in the study of Demosthenes, and finished a translation of that celebrated orator, with all the decorations of style and language within the reach of his capacity; but he had met with nothing equal to the speech above-mentioned." Many of the company remembered the debate; and some passages were cited, with the approbation and applause of all present. During the ardour of conversation Johnson remained silent. As soon as the warmth of praise subsided, he opened with these words: "That speech I wrote in a garret in Exeter-street." The company was struck with astonishment. After staring at each other in silent amaze, Dr. Francis asked, "How that speech could be written by him?" Sir," said Johnson, "I wrote it in Exeter-street. I never had been in the gallery of the House of Commons but once. Cave had interest with the door-keepers. He, and the persons employed under him, gained admittance; they brought away the subject of discussion, the names of the speakers, the side they took, and the order in which they rose, together with notes of the arguments advanced in the course of the debate. The whole was afterwards communicated to me, and I composed the speeches in the form which they now have in the Parliamentary Debates." To this discovery Dr. Francis made answer: "Then, Sir, you have exceeded Demosthenes himself; for to say that you have exceeded Francis's Demosthenes, would be saying nothing." The rest of the company bestowed lavish encomiums on Johnson; one, in particular, praised his impartiality; observing, that he dealt out reason and eloquence with an equal hand to both parties. "That is not quite true," said Johnson; "I saved appearances tolerably well; but I took care that the whig dogs should not have the best of it." The sale of the Magazine was greatly increased by the Parliamentary Debates, which were continued by Johnson till the month of March 1742-3. From that time the Magazine was conducted by Dr. Hawkesworth.

In 1743-4, Osborne, the bookseller, who kept a shop in Gray's-Inn, purchased the Earl of Oxford's library, at the price of thirteen thousand pounds. He projected a catalogue in five octavo volumes, at five shillings each. Johnson was employed in that painful drudgery. He was likewise to collect all such small tracts as were in any degrees worth preserving, in order to reprint and publish the whole in a collection, called "The Harleian Miscellany." The catalogue was completed: and the Miscellany, in 1749, was published in eight quarto volumes. In this business Johnson was a day-labourer for immediate subsistence, not unlike Gustavus Vasa working in the mines of Dalecarlia. What Wilcox, a bookseller of eminence in the Strand, said to Johnson, on his first arrival in town, was now almost confirmed. He lent our author five guineas, and then asked him, "How do you mean to earn your livelihood in this town?" "By my literary labours," was the answer. Wilcox, staring at him, shook his head: "By your literary labours!—You had better buy a porter's knot." Johnson used to tell this anecdote to Mr. Nichols; but he said, "Wilcox was one of my best friends, and he meant well." In fact, Johnson, while employed in Gray's-Inn, may be said to have carried a porter's knot. He paused occasionally to peruse the book that came to his hand. Osborne thought that such curiosity tended to nothing but delay, and objected to it with all the pride and insolence of a man who knew that he paid daily wages. In the dispute that of course ensued, Osborne, with that roughness which was natural to him, enforced his argument by giving the lie. Johnson seized a folio and knocked the bookseller down. This story has been related as an instance of Johnson's ferocity; but merit cannot always take the spurns of the unworthy with a patient spirit.*

That the history of an author must be found in his works, is, in general, a true observation; and was never more apparent than in the present narrative. Every era of Johnson's life is fixed by his writings. In 1744, he published the life of Savage; and then projected a new edition of Shakspeare. As a prelude to that design, he published, in 1745, "Miscellaneous Observations on the Tragedy of Macbeth, with Remarks on Sir Thomas Hanmer's Edition;" to which were prefixed, "Proposals for a new Edition of Shakspeare," with a specimen. Of this pamphlet Warburton, in the Preface to Shakspeare, has given his opinion: "As to all those things, which have been published under the title of Essays, Remarks, Observations, &c. on Shakspeare, if you except some critical notes on *Macbeth*, given as a specimen of a projected edition, and written, as appears, by a man of parts and

* Afterwards Earl of Roslin. He died Jan. 3, 1805.

* Mr. Boswell says, "The simple truth I had from Johnson himself. 'Sir, he was impertinent to me, and I beat him; but it was not in his shop, it was in my own chamber.'"

genius, the rest are absolutely below a serious notice." But the attention of the public was not excited; there was no friend to promote a subscription; and the project died, to revive at a future day. A new undertaking, however, was soon after proposed; namely, an English Dictionary upon an enlarged plan. Several of the most opulent booksellers had meditated a work of this kind; and the agreement was soon adjusted between the parties. Emboldened by this connection, Johnson thought of a better habitation than he had hitherto known. He had lodged with his wife in courts and alleys about the Strand; but now, for the purpose of carrying on his arduous undertaking, and to be nearer his printer and friend, Mr. Strahan, he ventured to take a house in Gough-square, Fleet-street. He was told that the Earl of Chesterfield was a friend to his undertaking; and in consequence of that intelligence, he published, in 1747, *The Plan of a Dictionary of the English Language, addressed to the Right Honourable Philip Dormer, Earl of Chesterfield, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State.* Mr. Whitehead, afterwards Poet Laureat, undertook to convey the manuscript to his Lordship: the consequence was an invitation from Lord Chesterfield to the author. A stronger contrast of characters could not be brought together; the Nobleman celebrated for his wit, and all the graces of polite behaviour; the Author, conscious of his own merit, towering in idea above all competition, versed in scholastic logic, but a stranger to the arts of polite conversation, uncouth, vehement, and vociferous. The coalition was too unnatural. Johnson expected a Mæcenas, and was disappointed. No patronage, no assistance followed. Visits were repeated; but the reception was not cordial. Johnson one day was left a full hour, waiting in an antichamber, till a gentleman should retire, and leave his lordship at leisure. This was the famous Colley Cibber. Johnson saw him go, and fired with indignation, rushed out of the house.* What Lord Chesterfield thought of his visitor may be seen in a passage in one of that Nobleman's letters to his son.† "There is a man, whose moral character, deep learning, and superior parts, I acknowledge, admire, and respect; but whom it is so impossible for me to love, that I am almost in a fever whenever I am in his company. His figure (without being deformed) seems made to disgrace or ridicule the common structure of the human body. His legs and arms are never in the position which, according to the situation of his body, they ought to be in, but constantly employed in committing acts of hostility upon the Graces. He throws any where, but down his throat, whatever he means to drink: and mangles what he means to carve. Inattentive to all the regards of social life, he mis-times and mis-places every thing. He disputes with heat indiscriminately, mindless of the rank, character, and situation of those with whom he disputes. Absolutely ignorant of the several gradations of familiarity and respect, he is exactly the same to his superiors, his equals, and his inferiors; and therefore, by a necessary consequence, is absurd to two of the three. Is it possible to love such a man? No. The utmost I can do for him is, to consider him a respectable Hottentot." Such was the idea entertained by lord Chesterfield. After the incident of Colley Cibber, Johnson never repeated his visits. In his high and decisive tone, he has been often heard to say, "Lord Chesterfield is a Wit among Lords, and a Lord among Wits."

In the course of the year 1747, Garrick, in conjunction with Lacy, became patentee of Drury-Lane playhouse. For the opening of the theatre, at the usual time, Johnson wrote for his friend the well-known prologue, which, to say no more of it, may at least be placed on a level with Pope's to the tragedy of Cato. The playhouse being now under Garrick's direction, Johnson thought the opportunity fair to think of his tragedy of Irene, which was his whole stock on his first arrival in town, in the year 1737. That play was accordingly put into rehearsal in January, 1749. As a precursor to prepare the way, and to awaken the public attention, *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, a poem in imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal, by the Author of *London*, was published in the same month. In the Gentleman's Magazine, for February, 1749, we find that the tragedy of *Irene* was acted at Drury-Lane, on Monday, February the 6th, and from that time, without interruption, to Monday, February the 20th being in all thirteen nights. Since that time it has not been exhibited on any stage. *Irene* may be added to some other plays in our language, which have lost their place in the theatre, but continue to please in the closet. During the representation of this piece, Johnson attended every night behind the scenes. Conceiving that his character as an author required some ornament for his person, he chose upon that occasion to decorate himself with a handsome waistcoat, and a gold-laced hat. The late Mr. Topham Beauclerc, who had a great deal of that humour, which pleases the more for seeming undesigned, used to give a pleasant description of this green-room finery, as related by the author himself; "But," said Johnson, with great gravity, "I soon laid aside my gold-laced hat, lest it should make me proud." The amount of the three benefit nights for the tragedy of Irene, it is to be feared, was not very considerable, as

* Dr. Johnson denies the whole of this story. See Boswell's Life. vol. i. p. 128. Oct. Edit. 1804. C.

† Letter CCXII.

the profit, that stimulating motive, never invited the author to another dramatic attempt. Some years afterwards, when the present writer was intimate with Garrick, and knew Johnson to be in distress, he asked the manager why he did not produce another tragedy for his Litchfield friend? Garrick's answer was remarkable: "When Johnson writes *tragedy, declamation roars, and passion sleeps:* when Shakespeare wrote, he dipped his pen in his own heart."

There may, perhaps, be a degree of sameness in this regular way of tracing an author from one work to another, and the reader may feel the effect of a tedious monotony: but in the life of Johnson there are no other landmarks. He was now forty years old, and had mixed but little with the world. He followed no profession, transacted no business, and was a stranger to what is called a town life. We are now arrived at the brightest period he had hitherto known. His name broke out upon mankind with a degree of lustre that promised a triumph over all his difficulties. The Life of Savage was admired as a beautiful and instructive piece of biography. The two imitations of Juvenal were thought to rival even the excellence of Pope; and the tragedy of Irene, though uninteresting on the stage, was universally admired in the closet, for the propriety of the sentiments, the richness of the language, and the general harmony of the whole composition. His fame was widely diffused; and he had made his agreement with the booksellers for his English Dictionary at the sum of fifteen hundred guineas; a part of which was to be, from time to time, advanced in proportion to the progress of the work. This was a certain fund for his support, without being obliged to write fugitive pieces for the petty supplies of the day. Accordingly we find that, in 1749, he established a club, consisting of ten in number, at Horseman's, in Ivy-Lane, on every Tuesday evening. This is the first scene of social life to which Johnson can be traced out of his own house. The members of this little society were, Samuel Johnson; Dr. Salter (father of the late Master of the Charter-House); Dr. Hawkesworth; Mr. Ryland, a merchant; Mr. Payne, a bookseller, in Paternoster-row; Mr. Samuel Dyer, a learned young man; Dr. Wm. M'Ghie, a Scotch physician; Dr. Edmund Barker, a young physician; Dr. Bathurst, another young physician; and Sir John Hawkins. This list is given by Sir John, as it should seem, with no other view than to draw a spiteful and malevolent character of almost every one of them. Mr. Dyer, whom Sir John says he loved with the affection of a brother, meets with the harshest treatment, because it was his maxim, that *to live in peace with mankind, and in a temper to do good offices, was the most essential part of our duty.* That notion of moral goodness gave umbrage to Sir John Hawkins, and drew down upon the memory of his friend the bitterest imputations. Mr. Dyer, however, was admired and loved through life. He was a man of literature. Johnson loved to enter with him into a discussion of metaphysical, moral, and critical subjects; in those conflicts, exercising his talents, and, according to his custom, always contending for victory. Dr. Bathurst was the person on whom Johnson fixed his affection. He hardly ever spoke of him without tears in his eyes. It was from him, who was a native of Jamaica, that Johnson received into his service Frank,* the black servant, whom, on account of his master, he valued to the end of his life. At the time of instituting the club in Ivy-Lane, Johnson had projected the *Rambler*. The title was most probably suggested by the *Wanderer;* a poem which he mentions with the warmest praise, in the Life of Savage. With the same spirit of independence with which he wished to live, it was now his pride to write. He communicated his plan to none of his friends; he desired no assistance, relying entirely on his own fund, and the protection of the Divine Being, which he implored in a solemn form of prayer, composed by himself for the occasion. Having formed a resolution to undertake a work that might be of use and honour to his country, he thought, with Milton, that this was not to be obtained "but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit that can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and send out his seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases."

Having invoked the special protection of Heaven, and by that act of piety fortified his mind, he began the great work of the *Rambler*. The first number was published on Tuesday, March the 20th, 1750; and from that time was continued regularly every Tuesday and Saturday, for the space of two years, when it finally closed, on Saturday, March 14, 1752. As it began with motives of piety, so it appears that the same religious spirit glowed with unabating ardour to the last. His conclusion is: "The Essays professedly serious, if I have been able to execute my own intentions, will be found exactly conformable to the precepts of Christianity, without any accommodation to the licentiousness and levity of the present age. I therefore look back on this part of my work with pleasure, which no man shall diminish or augment. I shall never envy the honours which wit and learning obtain in any other cause, if I can be numbered among the writers who have given ardour to virtue, and confidence to truth." The whole number of Essays amounted to two hundred and eight. Addison's, in the Spectator, are

* See Gent. Mag. vol. lxxi. p. 190.

more in number, but not half in point of quantity: Addison was not bound to publish on stated days; he could watch the ebb and flow of his genius, and send his paper to the press when his own taste was satisfied. Johnson's case was very different. He wrote singly and alone. In the whole progress of the work he did not receive more than ten essays. This was a scanty contribution. For the rest, the author has described his situation. "He that condemns himself to compose on a stated day, will often bring to his task an attention dissipated, a memory embarrassed, an imagination overwhelmed, a mind distracted with anxieties, a body languishing with disease: he will labour on a barren topic, till it is too late to change it; or, in the ardour of invention, diffuse his thoughts into wild exuberance, which the pressing hour of publication cannot suffer judgment to examine or reduce." Of this excellent production, the number sold on each day did not amount to five hundred: of course the bookseller, who paid the author four guineas a week, did not carry on a successful trade. His generosity and perseverance deserve to be commended; and happily, when the collection appeared in volumes, were amply rewarded. Johnson lived to see his labours flourish in a tenth edition. His posterity, as an ingenious French writer has said on a similar occasion, began in his lifetime.

In the beginning of 1750, soon after the Rambler was set on foot, Johnson was induced by the arts of a vile impostor to lend his assistance, during a temporary delusion, to a fraud not to be paralleled in the annals of literature.* One Lauder, a native of Scotland, who had been a teacher in the University of Edinburgh, had conceived a mortal antipathy to the name and character of Milton. His reason was, because the prayer of Pamela, in Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia, was, as he supposed, maliciously inserted by the great poet in an edition of the Eikon Basilike, in order to fix an imputation of impiety on the memory of the murdered king. Fired with resentment, and willing to reap the profits of a gross imposition, this man collected from several Latin poets, such as Masenius the Jesuit, Staphorstius a Dutch divine, Beza, and others, all such passages as bore any kind of resemblance to different places in the Paradise Lost; and these he published from time to time, in the Gentleman's Magazine, with occasional interpolations of lines, which he himself translated from Milton. The public credulity swallowed all with eagerness; and Milton was supposed to be guilty of plagiarism from inferior modern writers. The fraud succeeded so well, that Lauder collected the whole into a volume, and advertised it under the title of "An Essay on Milton's Use and Imitation of the Moderns, in his Paradise Lost; dedicated to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge." While the book was in the press, the proof-sheets were shown to Johnson at the Ivy-Lane club, by Payne, the bookseller, who was one of the members. No man in that society was in possession of the authors from whom Lauder professed to make his extracts. The charge was believed, and the contriver of it found his way to Johnson; who is represented by Sir John Hawkins, not indeed as an accomplice in the fraud, but through motives of malignity to Milton, delighting in the detection, and exulting that the poet's reputation would suffer by the discovery. More malice to a deceased friend cannot well be imagined. Hawkins adds, "that he wished well to the argument must be inferred from the preface, which indubitably was written by him." The preface, it is well known, was written by Johnson, and for that reason is inserted in this edition. But if Johnson approved of the argument, it was no longer than while he believed it founded in truth. Let us advert to his own words in that very preface. "Among the inquiries to which the ardour of criticism has naturally given occasion, none is more obscure in itself, or more worthy of rational curiosity, than a retrospection of the progress of this mighty genius in the construction of his work; a view of the fabric gradually rising, perhaps from small beginnings, till its foundation rests in the centre, and its turrets sparkle in the skies; to trace back the structure, through all its varieties, to the simplicity of the first plan; to find what was projected, whence the scheme was taken, how it was improved, by what assistance it was executed, and from what stores the materials were collected; whether its founder dug them from the quarries of nature, or demolished other buildings to embellish his own." These were the motives that induced Johnson to assist Lauder with a preface: and are not these the motives of a critic and a scholar? What reader of taste, what man of real knowledge, would not think his time well employed in an inquiry so curious, so interesting, and instructive? If Lauder's facts were really true, who would not be glad, without the smallest tincture of malevolence, to receive real information? It is painful to be thus obliged to vindicate a man who, in his heart, towered above the petty arts of fraud and imposition, against an injudicious biographer, who undertook to be his editor, and the protector of his memory. Another writer, Dr. Towers, in an Essay on the Life and Character of Dr. Johnson, seems to countenance this calumny. He says, "It can hardly be doubted, but that Johnson's aversion to Milton's politics was the cause of that alacrity with

* It has since been paralleled, in the case of the Shakspeare MSS. by a yet more vile impostor.

which he joined with Lauder in his infamous attack on our great epic poet, and which induced him to assist in that transaction." These words would seem to describe an accomplice, were they not immediately followed by an express declaration, that Johnson was *unacquainted with the imposture*. Dr. Towers adds, "It seems to have been by way of making some compensation to the memory of Milton, for the share he had in the attack of Lauder, that Johnson wrote the Prologue, spoken by Garrick, at Drury-Lane Theatre, 1750, on the performance of the Masque of Comus, for the benefit of Milton's grand-daughter." Dr. Towers is not free from prejudice; but, as Shakspeare has it, "he begets a temperance, to give it smoothness." He is, therefore, entitled to a dispassionate answer. When Johnson wrote the prologue, it does not appear that he was aware of the malignant artifices practised by Lauder. In the postscript to Johnson's preface, a subscription is proposed, for relieving the grand-daughter of the author of Paradise Lost. Dr. Towers will agree that this shows Johnson's alacrity in doing good. That alacrity showed itself again in the letter printed in the European Magazine, January, 1785, and there said to have appeared originally in the General Advertiser, 4th April, 1750, by which the public were invited to embrace the opportunity of paying a just regard to the illustrious dead, united with the pleasure of doing good to the living. The letter adds, "to assist industrious indigence, struggling with distress, and debilitated by age, is a display of virtue, and an acquisition of happiness and honour. Whoever, therefore, would be thought capable of pleasure in reading the works of our incomparable Milton, and not so destitute of gratitude as to refuse to lay out a trifle, in a rational and elegant entertainment, for the benefit of his living remains, for the exercise of their own virtue, the increase of their reputation, and the consciousness of doing good, should appear at Drury-Lane Theatre, to-morrow, April 5, when Comus will be performed for the benefit of Mrs. Elizabeth Foster, grand-daughter to the author, and the only surviving branch of his family. *Nota bene*, there will be a new prologue on the occasion, written by the author of Irene, and spoken by Mr. Garrick." The man who had thus exerted himself to serve the grand-daughter, cannot be supposed to have entertained personal malice to the grand-father. It is true, that the malevolence of Lauder, as well as the impostures of Archibald Bower, were fully detected by the labours, in the cause of truth, of the Rev. Dr. Douglas, the late Lord Bishop of Salisbury.

——"Diram qui contudit Hydram,
Notaque fatali portenta labore subegit."

But the pamphlet, entitled, "Milton vindicated from the charge of Plagiarism brought against him by Mr. Lauder, and Lauder himself convicted of several Forgeries and gross Impositions on the Public, by John Douglas, M. A. Rector of Eaton Constantine, Salop," was not published till the year 1751. In that work, p. 77, Dr. Douglas says, "It is to be hoped, nay, it is *expected*, that the elegant and nervous writer, whose judicious sentiments and inimitable style point out the author of Lauder's preface and postscript, will no longer allow A MAN to *plume himself with his feathers*, who appears so little to have deserved his assistance, an assistance which I am persuaded would never have been communicated, had there been the least suspicion of those facts, which I have been the instrument of conveying to the world." We have here a contemporary testimony to the integrity of Dr. Johnson throughout the whole of that vile transaction. What was the consequence of the requisition made by Dr. Douglas? Johnson, whose ruling passion may be said to be the love of truth, convinced Lauder, that it would be more for his interest to make a full confession of his guilt, than to stand forth the convicted champion of a lie; and for this purpose he drew up, in the strongest terms, a recantation, in a Letter to the Rev. Mr. Douglas, which Lauder signed, and published in the year 1751. That piece will remain a lasting memorial of the abhorrence with which Johnson beheld a violation of truth. Mr. Nichols, whose attachment to his illustrious friend was unwearied, showed him, in 1780, a book called "Remarks on Johnson's Life of Milton," in which the affair of Lauder was renewed with virulence, and a *poetical scale* in the Literary Magazine, 1758, (when Johnson had ceased to write in that collection) was urged as an additional proof of deliberate malice. He read the libellous passage with attention, and instantly wrote on the margin: "In the business of Lauder I was deceived, partly by thinking the man too frantic to be fraudulent. Of the *poetical scale* quoted from the Magazine I am not the author. I fancy it was put in after I had quitted that work; for I not only did not write it, but I do not remember it." As a critic and a scholar, Johnson was willing to receive what numbers, at the time, believed to be true information: when he found that the whole was a forgery, he renounced all connection with the author.

In March 1752, he felt a severe stroke of affliction in the death of his wife. The last number of the Rambler, as already mentioned, was on the 14th of that month. The loss of Mrs. Johnson was then approaching, and probably was the cause that put an end to those admirable periodical essays. It appears that she died on the 28th of March: in a memorandum, at the foot of the Prayers and Meditations, that is called her Dying Day. She was buried at

Bromley, under the care of Dr. Hawkesworth. Johnson placed a Latin inscription on her tomb, in which he celebrated her beauty. With the singularity of his prayers for his deceased wife, from that time to the end of his days, the world is sufficiently acquainted. On Easter-day, 22d April, 1764, his memorandum says: "Thought on Tetty, poor dear Tetty; with my eyes full. Went to church. After sermon I recommended Tetty in a prayer by herself; and my father, mother, brother, and Bathurst, in another. I did it only once, so far as it might be lawful for me." In a prayer, January 23, 1759, the day on which his mother was buried, he commends, as far as may be lawful, her soul to God, imploring for her whatever is most beneficial to her in her present state. In this habit he persevered to the end of his days. The Rev. Mr. Strahan, the editor of the Prayers and Meditations, observes, "That Johnson, on some occasions, prays that the Almighty *may have had mercy* on his wife and Mr. Thrale; evidently supposing their sentence to have been already passed in the Divine Mind; and by consequence, proving, that he had no belief in a state of purgatory, and no reason for praying for the dead that could impeach the sincerity of his profession as a Protestant." Mr. Strahan adds, "That, in praying for the regretted tenants of the grave, Johnson conformed to a practice which has been retained by many learned members of the Established Church, though the Liturgy no longer admits it. *If where the tree falleth, there it shall be*; if our state, at the close of life, is to be the measure of our final sentence, then prayers for the dead, being visibly fruitless, can be regarded only as the vain oblations of superstition. But of all superstitions this, perhaps, is one of the least unamiable, and most incident to a good mind. If our sensations of kindness be intense, those, whom we have revered and loved, death cannot wholly seclude from our concern. It is true, for the reason just mentioned, such evidences of our surviving affection may be thought ill-judged; but surely they are generous, and some natural tenderness is due even to a superstition, which thus originates in piety and benevolence." These sentences, extracted from the Rev. Mr. Strahan's preface, if they are not a full justification, are, at least, a beautiful apology. It will not be improper to add what Johnson himself has said on the subject. Being asked by Mr. Boswell,* what he thought of purgatory as believed by the Roman Catholics? His answer was, "It is a very harmless doctrine. They are of opinion, that the generality of mankind are neither so obstinately wicked as to deserve everlasting punishment; nor so good as to merit being admitted into the society of blessed spirits; and, therefore, that God is graciously pleased to allow a middle state, where they may be purified by certain degrees of suffering. You see there is nothing unreasonable in this; and if it be once established that there are souls in purgatory, it is as proper to pray for them, as for our brethren of mankind who are yet in this life." This was Dr. Johnson's guess into futurity; and to guess is the utmost that man can do. "Shadows, clouds, and darkness, rest upon it."

Mrs. Johnson left a daughter, Lucy Porter, by her first husband. She had contracted a friendship with Mrs. Anne Williams, the daughter of Zachary Williams, a physician of eminence in South Wales, who had devoted more than thirty years of a long life to the study of the longitude, and was thought to have made great advances towards that important discovery. His letters to Lord Halifax, and the Lords of the Admiralty, partly corrected and partly written by Dr. Johnson, are still extant in the hands of Mr. Nichols.† We there find Dr. Williams, in the eighty-third year of his age, stating, that he had prepared an instrument, which might be called an epitome or miniature of the terraqueous globe, showing, with the assistance of tables constructed by himself, the variations of the magnetic needle, and ascertaining the longitude for the safety of navigation. It appears that this scheme had been referred to Sir Isaac Newton; but that great philosopher excusing himself on account of his advanced age, all applications were useless till 1751, when the subject was referred, by order of Lord Anson, to Dr. Bradley, the celebrated professor of astronomy. His report was unfavourable,‡ though it allows that a considerable progress had been made. Dr. Williams, after all his labour and expense, died in a short time after, a melancholy instance of unrewarded merit. His daughter possessed uncommon talents, and, though blind, had an alacrity of mind that made her conversation agreeable, and even desirable. To relieve and appease melancholy reflections, Johnson took her home to his house in Gough-square. In 1755, Garrick gave her a benefit-play, which produced two hundred pounds. In 1766, she published, by subscription, a quarto volume of Miscellanies, and increased her little stock to three hundred pounds. That fund, with Johnson's protection, supported her through the remainder of her life.

During the two years in which the Rambler was carried on, the Dictionary proceeded by slow degrees. In May 1752, having composed a prayer preparatory to his return from tears and sorrow to the duties of life, he resumed his

* Life of Johnson, vol. i. p. 328. 4to edition.

† See Gentleman's Magazine for Nov. and Dec. 1787.

‡ See Gentleman's Magazine for 1787, p. 1042.

grand design, and went on with vigour, giving, however, occasional assistance to his friend Dr. Hawkesworth in the Adventurer, which began soon after the Rambler was laid aside. Some of the most valuable essays in that collection were from the pen of Johnson. The Dictionary was completed towards the end of 1754; and, Cave being then no more, it was a mortification to the author of that noble addition to our language, that his old friend did not live to see the triumph of his labours. In May 1755, that great work was published. Johnson was desirous that it should come from one who had obtained academical honours; and for that purpose his friend, the Rev. Thomas Wharton, obtained for him, in the preceding month of February, a diploma for a master's degree from the University of Oxford. Garrick, on the publication of the Dictionary, wrote the following lines;

"Talk of war with a Briton, he'll boldly advance,
That one English soldier can beat ten of France.
Would we alter the boast, from the sword to the pen,
Our odds are still greater, still greater our men.
In the deep mines of science, though Frenchmen may toil, [Boyle?
Can their strength be compared to Locke, Newton, or
Let them rally their heroes, send forth all their powers,
Their versemen and prosemen, then match them with ours.
First Shakspeare and Milton, like Gods in the fight,
Have put their whole drama and epic to flight.
In satires, epistles, and odes would they cope?
Their numbers retreat before Dryden and Pope.
And Johnson well arm'd, like a hero of yore,
Has beat forty French, and will beat forty more."

It is, perhaps, needless to mention, that Forty was the number of the French academy, at the time when their Dictionary was published to settle their language.

In the course of the winter preceding this grand publication, the late Earl of Chesterfield gave two essays in the periodical paper called The World, dated November 28, and December 5, 1754, to prepare the public for so important a work. The original plan, addressed to his Lordship in the year 1747, is there mentioned in terms of the highest praise; and this was understood, at the time, to be a courtly way of soliciting a dedication of the Dictionary to himself. Johnson treated this civility with disdain. He said to Garrick and others, "I have sailed a long and painful voyage round the world of the English language; and does he now send out two cock-boats to tow me into harbour?" He had said, in the last number of the Rambler, that, "having laboured to maintain the dignity of virtue, I will not now degrade it by the meanness of dedication." Such a man, when he had finished his Dictionary, "not," as he says himself, "in the soft obscurities of retirement, or under the shelter of academic bowers, but amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow, and without the patronage of the Great," was not likely to be caught by the lure thrown out by Lord Chesterfield. He had in vain sought the patronage of that nobleman; and his pride, exasperated by disappointment, drew from him the following letter, dated in the month of February, 1755.

"*To the Right Hon. the Earl of* CHESTERFIELD.

MY LORD,

I have been lately informed, by the proprietors of The World, that two papers, in which my Dictionary is recommended to the public, were written by your Lordship. To be so distinguished, is an honour which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

"When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your Lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address, and could not forbear to wish, that I might boast myself *le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre*; that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending. But I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your Lordship in public, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing, which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

"Seven years, my Lord, have now passed since I waited in your outward room, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

"The Shepherd in Virgil grew acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

"Is not a patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind: but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received; or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron, which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

"Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I

shall not be disappointed, though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation,

My Lord, your Lordship's most humble,
And most obedient servant,
SAMUEL JOHNSON."

It is said, upon good authority, that Johnson once received from Lord Chesterfield the sum of ten pounds. It were to be wished that the secret had never transpired. It was mean to receive it, and meaner to give it. It may be imagined, that for Johnson's ferocity, as it has been called, there was some foundation in his finances; and, as his Dictionary was brought to a conclusion, that money was now to flow in upon him. The reverse was the case. For his subsistence, during the progress of the work, he had received at different times the amount of his contract; and when his receipts were produced to him at a tavern dinner, given by the booksellers, it appeared that he had been paid a hundred pounds and upwards more than his due. The author of a book, called *Lexiphanes* * written by a Mr. Campbell, a Scotchman, and purser of a man of war, endeavoured to blast his laurels, but in vain. The world applauded, and Johnson never replied. "Abuse," he said, "is often of service: there is nothing so dangerous to an author as silence; his name, like a shuttlecock, must be beat backward and forward, or it falls to the ground." Lexiphanes professed to be an imitation of the pleasant manner of Lucian; but humour was not the talent of the writer of Lexiphanes. As Dryden says, "He had too much horse-play in his raillery."

It was in the summer of 1754, that the present writer became acquainted with Dr. Johnson. The cause of his first visit is related by Mrs. Piozzi nearly in the following manner: "Mr. Murphy being engaged in a periodical paper, the Gray's-Inn Journal, was at a friend's house in the country, and not being disposed to lose pleasure for business, wished to content his bookseller by some unstudied essay. He therefore took up a French *Journal Littéraire*, and translating something he liked, sent it away to town. Time, however, discovered that he translated from the French a Rambler, which had been taken from the English without acknowledgment. Upon this discovery, Mr. Murphy thought it right to make his excuses to Dr. Johnson. He went next day, and found him covered with soot, like a chimney-sweeper, in a little room, as if he had been acting Lungs in the Alchymist, *making æther*. This being told by Mr. Murphy in company, 'Come, come,' said Dr. Johnson, 'the story is black enough; but it was a happy day that brought you first to my house.'" After this first visit, the author of this narrative by degrees grew intimate with Dr. Johnson. The first striking sentence, that he heard from him, was in a few days after the publication of Lord Bolingbroke's posthumous works. Mr. Garrick asked him, "If he had seen them?" "Yes, I have seen them." "What do you think of them?" "Think of them!" He made a long pause, and then replied: "Think of them! A scoundrel and a coward! A scoundrel, who spent his life in charging a gun against Christianity; and a coward, who was afraid of hearing the report of his own gun; but left half-a-crown to a hungry Scotchman to draw the trigger after his death." His mind, at this time strained and over-laboured by constant exertion, called for an interval of repose and indolence. But indolence was the time of danger; it was then that his spirits, not employed abroad, turned with inward hostility against himself. His reflections on his own life and conduct were always severe: and, wishing to be immaculate, he destroyed his own peace by unnecessary scruples. He tells us, that when he surveyed his past life, he discovered nothing but a barren waste of time, with some disorders of body, and disturbances of mind, very near to madness. His life, he says, from his earliest youth, was wasted in a morning bed; and his reigning sin was a general sluggishness, to which he was always inclined, and in part of his life, almost compelled, by morbid melancholy, and weariness of mind. This was his constitutional malady; derived, perhaps, from his father, who was, at times, overcast with a gloom that bordered on insanity. When to this it is added, that Johnson, about the age of twenty, drew up a description of his infirmities, for Dr. Swinfen, at that time an eminent physician in Staffordshire; and received an answer to his letter, importing, that the symptoms indicated a future privation of reason; who can wonder that he was troubled with melancholy and dejection of spirit? An apprehension of the worst calamity that can befal human nature hung over him all the rest of his life, like the sword of the tyrant suspended over his guest. In his sixtieth year he had a mind to write the history of his melancholy; but he desisted, not knowing whether it would not too much disturb him. In a Latin Poem, however, to which he has perfixed as a title, ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ, he has left a picture of himself, drawn with as much truth, and as firm a hand, as can be seen in the portraits of Hogarth or Sir Joshua Reynolds. The learned reader will find the original Poem in this volume, and it is hoped that a translation, or rather imitation, of so curious a piece will not be improper in this place.

* This work was not published until the year 1767, when Dr. Johnson's Dictionary was fully established in reputation. C.

KNOW YOURSELF.

(AFTER REVISING AND ENLARGING THE ENGLISH LEXICON OR DICTIONARY.)

WHEN Scaliger, whole years of labour past,
Beheld his Lexicon complete at last,
And weary of his task, with wond'ring eyes,
Saw from words piled on words a fabric rise,
He cursed the industry, inertly strong,
In creeping toil that could persist so long,
And if, enraged he cried, Heaven meant to shed
Its keenest vengeance on the guilty head,
The drudgery of words the damn'd would know,
Doom'd to write Lexicons in endless woe.*

Yes, you had cause, great Genius, to repent;
"You lost good days, that might be better spent;"
You well might grudge the hours of ling'ring pain,
And view your learned labours with disdain.
To you were given the large expanded mind,
The flame of genius, and the taste refined.
'Twas yours on eagle wings aloft to soar,
And amidst rolling worlds the Great First Cause explore;
To fix the eras of recorded time,
And live in every age and every clime;
Record the Chiefs, who propt their Country's cause;
Who founded Empires, and established Laws;
To learn whate'er the Sage, with virtue fraught,
Whate'er the Muse of moral wisdom taught.
These were your quarry; these to you were known,
And the world's ample volume was your own.

Yet warn'd by me, ye pigmy Wits, beware,
Nor with immortal Scaliger compare.
For me, though his example strike my view,
Oh! not for me his footsteps to pursue.
Whether first Nature, unpropitious, cold,
This clay compounded in a ruder mould;
Or the slow current, loitering at my heart,
No gleam of wit or fancy can impart;
Whate'er the cause, from me no numbers flow
No visions warm me, and no raptures glow.
A mind like Scaliger's, superior still,
No grief could conquer, no misfortunes chill.
Though for the maze of words his native skies
He seem'd to quit, 'twas but again to rise;
To mount once more to the bright source of day,
And view the wonders of th' ethereal way.
The love of Fame his generous bosom fired;
Each Science hail'd him, and each Muse inspired.
For him the Sons of Learning trimm'd the bays,
And Nations grew harmonious in his praise.

My task perform'd, and all my labours o'er,
For me what lot has Fortune now in store?
The listless will succeeds, that worst disease,
The rack of indolence, the sluggish ease.
Care grows on care, and o'er my aching brain
Black melancholy pours her morbid train.
No kind relief, no lenitive at hand,
I seek at midnight clubs the social band
But midnight clubs, where wit with noise conspires,
Where Comus revels, and where wine inspires,
Delight no more: I seek my lonely bed,
And call on Sleep to soothe my languid head.
But Sleep from these sad lids flies far away;
I mourn all night, and dread the coming day.
Exhausted, tired, I throw my eyes around,
To find some vacant spot on classic ground;
And soon, vain hope! I form a grand design;
Languor succeeds, and all my powers decline.
If Science open not her richest vein,
Without materials all our toil is vain.
A form to rugged stone when Phidias gives,
Beneath his touch a new creation lives.
Remove his marble, and his genius dies;
With Nature, then, no breathing statue vies.

Whate'er I plan, I feel my powers confined
By Fortune's frown and penury of mind.
I boast no knowledge glean'd with toil and strife,
That bright reward of a well-acted life.
I view myself, while Reason's feeble light
Shoots a pale glimmer through the gloom of night.
While passions, error, phantoms of the brain,
And vain opinions, fill the dark domain;
A dreary void, where fears with grief combined
Waste all within, and desolate the mind.

What then remains? Must I in slow decline
To mute inglorious ease old age resign?
Or, bold Ambition kindling in my breast,
Attempt some arduous task? Or, were it best,
Brooding o'er Lexicons to pass the day,
And in that labour drudge my life away?

* See Scaliger's Epigram on this subject, communicated without doubt by Dr. Johnson, Gent. Mag. 1748, p. 8.

Such is the picture for which Dr. Johnson sat to himself. He gives the prominent features of his character; his lassitude, his morbid melancholy, his love of fame, his dejection, his tavern parties, and his wandering reveries, *Vacuæ mala somnia mentis*, about which so much has been written; all are painted in miniature, but in vivid colours, by his own hand. His idea of writing more dictionaries was not merely said in verse. Mr. Hamilton, who was at that time an eminent printer, and well acquainted with Dr. Johnson, remembers that he engaged in a Commercial Dictionary, and, as appears by the receipts in his possession, was paid his price for several sheets; but he soon relinquished the undertaking. It is probable that he found himself not sufficiently versed in that branch of knowledge.

He was again reduced to the expedient of short compositions for the supply of the day. The writer of this narrative has now before him a letter in Dr. Johnson's hand-writing, which shows the distress and melancholy situation of the man who had written the Rambler, and finished the great work of his Dictionary. The letter is directed to Mr. Richardson (the author of Clarissa), and is as follows:

"SIR,

"I am obliged to entreat your assistance. I am now under an arrest for five pounds eighteen shillings. Mr. Strahan, from whom I should have received the necessary help in

this case, is not at home; and I am afraid of not finding Mr. Millar. If you will be so good as to send me this sum, I will very gratefully repay you, and add it to all former obligations.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most obedient,

"and most humble servant,

"SAMUEL JOHNSON."

"Gough-square, 16 March."

In the margin of this letter there is a memorandum in these words: "March 16, 1756, Sent six guineas. Witness, Wm. Richardson." For the honour of an admired writer it is to be regretted, that we do not find a more liberal entry. To his friend in distress he sent eight shillings more than was wanted. Had an incident of this kind occurred in one of his Romances, Richardson would have known how to grace his hero; but in fictitious scenes, generosity costs the writer nothing.

About this time Johnson contributed several papers to a periodical Miscellany, called "The VISITOR," from motives which are highly honourable to him, a compassionate regard for the late Mr. Christopher Smart. The Criticism on Pope's Epitaphs appeared in that work. In a short time after he became a reviewer in the Literary Magazine, under the auspices of the late Mr. Newbery, a man of a projecting head, good taste, and great industry. This employment engrossed but little of Johnson's time. He resigned himself to indolence, took no exercise, rose about two, and then received the visits of his friends. Authors, long since forgotten, waited on him as their oracle, and he gave responses in the chair of criticism. He listened to the complaints, the schemes, and the hopes and fears, of a crowd of inferior writers, "who," he said, in the words of Roger Ascham, "lived, *men knew not how, and died obscure, men marked not when.*" He believed that he could give a better history of Grub-street than any man living. His house was filled with a succession of visitors till four or five in the evening. During the whole time he presided at his tea-table. Tea was his favourite beverage; and, when the late Jonas Hanway pronounced his anathema against the use of tea, Johnson rose in defence of his habitual practice, declaring himself "in that article a hardened sinner, who had for years diluted his meals with the infusion of that fascinating plant; whose tea kettle had no time to cool: who with tea solaced the midnight hour, and with tea welcomed the morning."

The proposal for a new edition of Shakspeare, which had formerly miscarried, was resumed in the year 1756. The booksellers readily agreed to his terms; and subscription-tickets were issued out. For undertaking this work, money, he confessed, was the inciting motive. His friends exerted themselves to promote his interest; and, in the mean time, he engaged in a new periodical production called "The Idler." The first number appeared on Saturday, April 15, 1758; and the last, April 5, 1760. The profits of this work, and the subscriptions for the new edition of Shakspeare, were the means by which he supported himself for four or five years. In 1759 was published "Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia." His translation of Lobo's Voyage to Abyssinia seems to have pointed out that country for the scene of action; and *Rassila Christos*, the General of *Sultan Segued*, mentioned in that work, most probably suggested the name of the prince. The author wanted to set out on a journey to Litchfield, in order to pay the last offices of filial piety to his mother, who, at the age of ninety, was then near her dissolution; but money was necessary. Mr. Johnston, a bookseller, who has long since left off business, gave one hundred pounds for the copy. With this supply Johnson set out for Litchfield; but did not arrive in time to close the eyes of a parent whom he loved. He attended the funeral, which, as appears among his memorandums, was on the 23d of January, 1759.

Johnson now found it necessary to retrench his expenses. He gave up his house in Gough-square. Mrs. Williams went into lodgings. He retired to Gray's-Inn, and soon removed to chambers in the Inner Temple-lane, where he lived in poverty, total idleness, and the pride of literature. *Magni stat nominis umbrâ.* Mr. Fitzherbert (the father of Lord St. Helens, the present minister at Madrid,) a man distinguished through life for his benevolence and other amiable qualities, used to say, that he paid a morning visit to Johnson, intending from his chambers to send a letter into the City; but, to his great surprise, he found an author by profession without pen, ink, or paper. The late Dr. Douglas, bishop of Salisbury, was also among those who endeavoured, by constant attention, to soothe the cares of a mind which he knew to be afflicted with gloomy apprehensions. At one of the parties made at his house, Boscovich, the Jesuit, who had then lately introduced the Newtonian philosophy at Rome, and, after publishing an elegant Latin poem on the subject, was made a Fellow of the Royal Society, was one of the company invited to meet Dr. Johnson. The conversation at first was mostly in French. Johnson, though thoroughly versed in that language, and a professed admirer of Boileau and La Bruyere, did not understand its pronunciation, nor could he speak it himself with propriety. For the rest of the evening the talk was in Latin. Boscovich had a ready current flow of that flimsy phraseology with which a priest may travel through Italy, Spain, and Germany. Johnson scorned what he called colloquial barbarisms. It was his pride to speak

his best. He went on, after a little practice, with as much facility as if it was his native tongue. One sentence this writer well remembers. Observing that Fontenelle at first opposed the Newtonian philosophy, and embraced it afterwards, his words were: *Fontenellus, ni fallor, in extremâ senectute, fuit transfuga ad castra Newtoniana.*

We have now travelled through that part of Dr. Johnson's life which was a perpetual struggle with difficulties. Halcyon days are now to open upon him. In the month of May 1762, his Majesty, to reward literary merit, signified his pleasure to grant to Johnson a pension of three hundred pounds a year. The Earl of Bute was minister. Lord Loughborough, who, perhaps, was originally a mover in the business, had authority to mention it. He was well acquainted with Johnson; but, having heard much of his independent spirit, and of the downfall of Osborne the bookseller, he did not know but his benevolence might be rewarded with a folio on his head. He desired the author of these memoirs to undertake the task. This writer thought the opportunity of doing so much good the most happy incident in his life. He went, without delay, to the chambers in the Inner Temple-lane, which, in fact, were the abode of wretchedness. By slow and studied approaches the message was disclosed. Johnson made a long pause: he asked if it was seriously intended? He fell into a profound meditation, and his own definition of a pensioner occurred to him. He was told, "That he, at least, did not come within the definition." He desired to meet next day and dine at the Mitre Tavern. At that meeting he gave up all his scruples. On the following day Lord Loughborough conducted him to the Earl of Bute. The conversation that passed was in the evening related to this writer by Dr. Johnson. He expressed his sense of his Majesty's bounty, and thought himself the more highly honoured, as the favour was not bestowed on him for having dipped his pen in faction. "No, Sir," said Lord Bute, "it is not offered to you for having dipped your pen in faction, nor with a design that you ever should." Sir John Hawkins will have it, that, after this interview, Johnson was often pressed to wait on Lord Bute: but with a sullen spirit refused to comply. However that be, Johnson was never heard to utter a disrespectful word of that nobleman. The writer of this essay remembers a circumstance which may throw some light on this subject. The late Dr. Rose, of Chiswick, whom Johnson loved and respected, contended for the pre-eminence of the Scotch writers; and Ferguson's book on Civil Society, then on the eve of publication, he said, would give the laurel to North Britain. "Alas! what can he do upon that subject?" said Johnson: "Aristotle, Polybius, Grotius, Puffendorf, and Burlemaqui, have reaped in that field before him." "He will treat it," said Dr. Rose, "in a new manner." "A new manner! Buckinger had no hands, and he wrote his name with his toes at Charing-cross, for half-a-crown a-piece; that was a new manner of writing!" Dr. Rose replied, "If that will not satisfy you, I will name a writer, whom you must allow to be the best in the kingdom" "Who is that?" "The Earl of Bute, when he wrote an order for your pension." "There, Sir," said Johnson, "you have me in the toil: to Lord Bute I must allow whatever praise you may claim for him." Ingratitude was no part of Johnson's character.

Being now in the possession of a regular income, Johnson left his chambers in the Temple, and once more became master of a house in Johnson's-court, Fleet-street. Dr. Levet, his friend and physician in ordinary,* paid his daily visits with assiduity; made tea all the morning, talked what he had to say, and did not expect an answer. Mrs. Williams had her apartment in the house, and entertained her benefactor with more enlarged conversation. Chemistry was part of Johnson's amusement. For this love of experimental philosophy, Sir John Hawkins thinks an apology necessary. He tells us, with great gravity, that curiosity was the only object in view; not an intention to grow suddenly rich by the philosopher's stone, or the transmutation of metals. To enlarge his circle, Johnson once more had recourse to a literary club. This was at the Turk's Head, in Gerard-street, Soho, on every Tuesday evening through the year. The members were, besides himself, the Right Hon. Edmund Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Dr. Nugent, Dr. Goldsmith, the late Mr. Topham Beauclerk, Mr. Langton, Mr. Chamier, Sir John Hawkins, and some others. Johnson's affection for Sir Joshua was founded on a long acquaintance, and a thorough knowledge of the virtues and amiable qualities of that excellent artist. He delighted in the conversation of Mr. Burke. He met him for the first time at Mr. Garrick's, several years ago. On the next day he said, "I suppose, Murphy you are proud of your countryman. CUM TALIS SIT UTINAM NOSTER ESSET?" From that time his constant observation was, "That a man of sense could not meet Mr. Burke by accident, under a gateway to avoid a shower, without being convinced that he was the first man in England." Johnson felt not only kindness, but zeal and ardour for his friends. He did every thing in his power to advance the reputation of Dr. Goldsmith. He loved him, though he knew his failings, and particularly the leaven of envy, which corroded

* See Johnson's Epitaph on him.

the mind of that elegant writer, and made him impatient, without disguise, of the praises bestowed on any person whatever. Of this infirmity, which marked Goldsmith's character, Johnson gave a remarkable instance. It happened that he went with Sir Joshua Reynolds and Goldsmith to see the Fantoccini, which were exhibited some years ago in or near the Haymarket. They admired the curious mechanism by which the puppets were made to walk the stage, draw a chair to the table, sit down, write a letter, and perform a variety of other actions, with such dexterity, that "though Nature's journeymen made the men, they imitated humanity" to the astonishment of the spectator. The entertainment being over, the three friends retired to a tavern. Johnson and Sir Joshua talked with pleasure of what they had seen; and says Johnson, in a tone of admiration, "How the little fellow brandished his spontoon!" "There is nothing in it," replied Goldsmith, starting up with impatience; "give me a spontoon; I can do it as well myself."

Enjoying his amusements at his weekly club, and happy in a state of independence, Johnson gained in the year 1765 another resource, which contributed more than any thing else to exempt him from the solicitudes of life. He was introduced to the late Mr. Thrale and his family. Mrs. Piozzi has related the fact, and it is therefore needless to repeat it in this place. The author of this narrative looks back to the share he had in that business with self-congratulation, since he knows the tenderness which from that time scothed Johnson's cares at Streatham, and prolonged a valuable life. The subscribers to Shakspeare began to despair of ever seeing the promised edition. To acquit himself of this obligation, he went to work unwillingly, but proceeded with vigour. In the month of October, 1765, Shakspeare was published; and, in a short time after, the University of Dublin sent over a diploma, in honourable terms, creating him a Doctor of Laws. Oxford, in eight or ten years afterwards, followed the example; and till then Johnson never assumed the title of Doctor. In 1766 his constitution seemed to be in a rapid decline; and that morbid melancholy which often clouded his understanding, came upon him with a deeper gloom than ever. Mr. and Mrs. Thrale paid him a visit in this situation, and found him on his knees, with Dr. Delap, the Rector of Lewes, in Sussex, beseeching God to continue to him the use of his understanding. Mr. Thrale took him to his house at Streatham; and Johnson from that time became a constant resident in the family. He went occasionally to the club in Gerard-street; but his head-quarters were fixed at Streatham. An apartment was fitted up for him, and the library was greatly enlarged. Parties were constantly invited from town; and Johnson was every day at an elegant table, with select and polished company. Whatever could be devised by Mr. and Mrs. Thrale to promote the happiness, and establish the health of their guest, was studiously performed from that time to the end of Mr. Thrale's life. Johnson accompanied the family in all their summer excursions to Brighthelmstone, to Wales, and to Paris. It is but justice to Mr. Thrale to say, that a more ingenuous frame of mind no man possessed. His education at Oxford gave him the habits of a gentleman; his amiable temper recommended his conversation; and the goodness of his heart made him a sincere friend. That he was the patron of Johnson is an honour to his memory.

In petty disputes with contemporary writers, or the wits of the age, Johnson was seldom entangled. A single incident of that kind may not be unworthy of notice, since it happened with a man of great celebrity in his time. A number of friends dined with Garrick on a Christmas-day. Foote was then in Ireland. It was said at table, that the modern Aristophanes (so Foote was called) had been horse-whipped by a Dublin apothecary, for mimicking him on the stage. "I wonder," said Garrick, "that any man should show so much resentment to Foote; he has a patent for such liberties; nobody ever thought it *worth his while* to quarrel with him in London." "I am glad," said Johnson, "to find that the *man is rising in the world*." The expression was afterwards reported to Foote; who, in return, gave out, that he would produce the *Caliban of Literature* on the stage. Being informed of this design, Johnson sent word to Foote, "That the theatre being intended for the reformation of vice, he would step from the boxes on the stage, and correct him before the audience." Foote knew the intrepidity of his antagonist, and abandoned the design. No ill-will ensued. Johnson used to say, "That, for broad-faced mirth, Foote had not his equal."

Dr. Johnson's fame excited the curiosity of the King. His Majesty expressed a desire to see a man of whom extraordinary things were said. Accordingly, the librarian at Buckingham-house invited Johnson to see that elegant collection of books, at the same time giving a hint of what was intended. His Majesty entered the room; and, among other things, asked the author, "if he meant to give the world any more of his compositions?" Johnson answered, "That he thought he had written enough." "And I should think so too," replied his Majesty, "if you had not written so well."

Though Johnson thought he had written enough, his genius, even in spite of bodily sluggishness, could not lie still. In 1770 we find him entering the lists as a political writer. The flame of discord that blazed throughout the nation on the expulsion of Mr. Wilkes, and the

final determination of the House of Commons, that Mr. Luttrell was duly elected, by 206 votes against 1143, spread a general spirit of discontent. To allay the tumult, Dr. Johnson published The False Alarm. Mrs. Piozzi informs us, "That this pamphlet was written at her house, between eight o'clock on Wednesday night and twelve on Thursday night." This celerity has appeared wonderful to many, and some have doubted the truth. It may, however, be placed within the bounds of probability. Johnson has observed that there are different methods of composition. Virgil was used to pour out a great number of verses in the morning, and pass the day in retrenching the exuberances, and correcting inaccuracies; and it was Pope's custom to write his first thoughts in his first words, and gradually to amplify, decorate, rectify, and refine them. Others employ at once memory and invention, and with little intermediate use of the pen, form and polish large masses by continued meditation, and write their productions only, when, in their opinion, they have completed them. This last was Johnson's method. He never took his pen in hand till he had well weighed his subject, and grasped in his mind the sentiments, the train of argument, and the arrangement of the whole. As he often thought aloud, he had, perhaps, talked it over to himself. This may account for that rapidity with which, in general, he despatched his sheets to the press, without being at the trouble of a fair copy. Whatever may be the logic or eloquence of the False Alarm, the House of Commons have since erased the resolution from the Journals. But whether they have not left materials for a future controversy, may be made a question.

In 1771, he published another tract, on the subject of Falkland Islands. The design was to show the impropriety of going to war with Spain for an island thrown aside from human use, stormy in winter, and barren in summer. For this work it is apparent that materials were furnished by direction of the minister.

At the approach of the general election in 1774, he wrote a short discourse, called The Patriot; not with any visible application to Mr. Wilkes; but to teach the people to reject the leaders of opposition, who called themselves patriots. In 1775 he undertook a pamphlet of more importance, namely, Taxation no Tyranny, in answer to the Resolutions and Address of the American Congress. The scope of the argument was, that distant colonies, which had in their assemblies a legislature of their own, were, notwithstanding, liable to be taxed in a British Parliament, where they had neither peers in one house, nor representatives in the other. He was of opinion, that this country was strong enough to enforce obedience. "When an Englishman," he says, "is told that the Americans shoot up like the hydra, he naturally considers how the hydra was destroyed." The event has shown how much he and the minister of that day were mistaken.

The Account of the Tour to the Western Islands of Scotland, which was undertaken in the autumn of 1773, in company with Mr. Boswell, was not published till some time in the year 1775. This book has been variously received; by some extolled for the elegance of the narrative, and the depth of observation on life and manners; by others, as much condemned, as a work of avowed hostility to the Scotch nation. The praise was, beyond all question, fairly deserved; and the censure, on due examination, will appear hasty and ill-founded. That Johnson entertained some prejudices against the Scotch, must not be dissembled. It is true, as Mr. Boswell says, "that he thought their success in England exceeded their proportion of real merit, and he could not but see in them that nationality which no liberal-minded Scotsman will deny." The author of these memoirs well remembers, that Johnson one day asked him, "Have you observed the difference between your own country impudence and Scotch impudence?" The answer being in the negative: "Then I will tell you," said Johnson. "The impudence of an Irishman is the impudence of a fly, that buzzes about you, and you put it away, but it returns again, and flutters and teazes you. The impudence of a Scotsman is the impudence of a leech, that fixes and sucks your blood." Upon another occasion, this writer went with him into the shop of Davis the bookseller, in Russel-street, Covent-garden. Davis came running to him almost out of breath with joy: "The Scots gentleman is come, Sir; his principal wish is to see you; he is now in the back-parlour." "Well, well, I'll see the gentleman," said Johnson. He walked towards the room. Mr. Boswell was the person. This writer followed with no small curiosity. "I find," said Mr. Boswell, "that I am come to London at a bad time, when great popular prejudice has gone forth against us North Britons; but when I am talking to you, I am talking to a large and liberal mind, and you know that I cannot *help coming from Scotland.*" "Sir," said Johnson, "no more can the rest of your countrymen."*

He had other reasons that helped to alienate him from the natives of Scotland. Being a cordial well-wisher to the constitution in Church and State, he did not think that Calvin and John Knox were proper founders of a national religion. He made, however, a wide distinction between the Dissenters of Scotland and the Separatists

* Mr. Boswell's account of this introduction is very different from the above. See his Life of Johnson, vol. i. p. 360, 8vo. Edit. 1804.

of England. To the former he imputed no disaffection, no want of loyalty. Their soldiers and their officers had shed their blood with zeal and courage in the service of Great Britain; and the people, he used to say, were content with their own established modes of worship, without wishing, in the present age, to give any disturbance to the Church of England. This he was at all times ready to admit; and therefore declared, that whenever he found a Scotchman to whom an Englishman was as a Scotchman, that Scotchman should be as an Englishman to him. In this, surely, there was no rancour, no malevolence. The Dissenters on this side the Tweed appeared to him in a different light. Their religion, he frequently said, was too worldly, too political, too restless and ambitious. The doctrine of *cashiering* kings, and erecting on the ruins of the constitution a new form of government, which lately issued from their pulpits, he always thought was, under a calm disguise, the principle that lay lurking in their hearts. He knew that a wild democracy had overturned Kings, Lords, and Commons; and that a set of Republican Fanatics, who would not bow at the name of Jesus, had taken possession of all the livings and all the parishes in the kingdom. That those scenes of horror might never be renewed, was the ardent wish of Dr. Johnson; and though he apprehended no danger from Scotland, it is probable that his dislike of Calvinism mingled sometimes with his reflections on the natives of that country. The association of ideas could not be easily broken; but it is well known that he loved and respected many gentlemen from that part of the island. Dr. Robertson's History of Scotland, and Dr. Beattie's Essays, were subjects of his constant praise. Mr. Boswell, Dr. Rose of Chiswick, Andrew Millar, Mr. Hamilton, the printer, and the late Mr. Strahan, were among his most intimate friends. Many others might be added to the list. He scorned to enter Scotland as a spy; though Hawkins, his biographer, and the professing defender of his fame, allowed himself leave to represent him in that ignoble character. He went into Scotland, to survey men and manners. Antiquities, fossils, and minerals, were not within his province. He did not visit that country to settle the station of Roman camps, or the spot where Galgacus fought the last battle for public liberty. The people, their customs, and the progress of literature, were his objects. The civilities which he received in the course of his tour have been repaid with grateful acknowledgment, and, generally, with great elegance of expression. His crime is, that he found the country bare of trees, and he has stated the fact. This, Mr. Boswell, in his Tour to the Hebrides, has told us, was resented by his countrymen with anger inflamed to rancour; but he admits that there are few trees on the east side of Scotland. Mr. Pennant, in his Tour, says, that in some parts of the eastern side of the country, he saw several large plantations of pine planted by gentlemen near their seats; and in this respect such a laudable spirit prevails, that, *in another half century* it never shall be said, "*To spy the nakedness of the land are you come.*" Johnson could not wait for that half century, and therefore mentioned things as he found them. If in any thing he has been mistaken, he has made a fair apology in the last paragraph of his book, avowing with candour, "That he may have been surprised by modes of life, and appearances of nature, that are familiar to men of wider survey, and more varied conversation. Novelty and ignorance must always be reciprocal; and he is conscious that his thoughts on national manners are the thoughts of one who has seen but little."

The Poems of Ossian made a part of Johnson's inquiry during his residence in Scotland and the Hebrides. On his return to England, November 1773, a storm seemed to be gathering over his head; but the cloud never burst, and the thunder never fell.—Ossian, it is well known, was presented to the public as a translation from the *Earse;* but that this was a fraud, Johnson declared without hesitation. "The *Earse,*" he says, "was always oral only, and never a written language. The Welsh and the Irish were more cultivated. In *Earse* there was not in the world a single manuscript a hundred years old. Martin, who in the last century published an Account of the Western Islands, mentions *Irish,* but never *Earse* manuscripts, to be found in the islands in his time. The bards could not read; if they could, they might probably have written. But the bard was a barbarian among barbarians, and, knowing nothing himself, lived with others that knew no more. If there is a manuscript from which the translation was made, in what age was it written, and where is it? If it was collected from oral recitation, it could only be in detached parts and scattered fragments: the whole is too long to be remembered. Who put it together in its present form?" For these, and such like reasons, Johnson calls the whole an imposture. He adds, "The editor, or author, never could show the original, nor can it be shown by any other. To revenge reasonable incredulity, by refusing evidence, is a degree of insolence with which the world is not yet acquainted; and stubborn audacity is the last refuge of guilt. This reasoning carries with it great weight. It roused the resentment of Mr. Macpherson. He sent a threatening letter to the author; and Johnson answered him in the rough phrase of stern defiance. The two heroes frowned at a distance, but never came to action.

In the year 1777, the misfortunes of Dr. Dodd excited his compassion. He wrote a speech for

that unhappy man, when called up to receive judgment of death; besides two petitions, one to the King, and another to the Queen: and a sermon to be preached by Dodd to the convicts in Newgate. It may appear trifling to add, that about the same time he wrote a prologue to the comedy of "A Word to the Wise," written by Hugh Kelly. The play, some years before, had been damned by a party on the first night. It was revived for the benefit of the author's widow. Mrs. Piozzi relates, that when Johnson was rallied for these exertions, so close to one another, his answer was, "When they come to me with a dying Parson, and a dead Stay-maker, what can a man do?" We come now to the last of his literary labours. At the request of the Booksellers he undertook the Lives of the Poets. The first publication was in 1779, and the whole was completed in 1781. In a memorandum of that year he says, some time in March he finished the Lives of the Poets, which he wrote in his usual way, dilatorily and hastily, unwilling to work, yet working with vigour and haste. In another place, he hopes they are written in such a manner as may tend to the promotion of piety. That the history of so many men, who, in their different degrees, made themselves conspicuous in their time, was not written recently after their deaths, seems to be an omission that does no honour to the Republic of Letters. Their contemporaries in general looked on with calm indifference, and suffered Wit and Genius to vanish out of the world in total silence, unregarded, and unlamented. Was there no friend to pay the tribute of a tear? No just observer of life, to record the virtues of the deceased? Was even Envy silent? It seemed to have been agreed, that if an author's works survived, the history of the man was to give no moral lesson to after ages. If tradition told us that Ben Johnson went to the Devil Tavern; that Shakspeare stole deer, and held the stirrup at playhouse doors; that Dryden frequented Button's Coffee-house; curiosity was lulled asleep, and biography forgot the best part of her function, which is to instruct mankind by examples taken from the school of life. This task remained for Dr. Johnson, when years had rolled away; when the channels of information were, for the most part, choked up, and little remained besides doubtful anecdote, uncertain tradition, and vague report.

"Nunc situs informis premit et deserta Vetustas."

The value of Biography has been better understood in other ages, and in other countries. Tacitus informs us, that to record the lives and characters of illustrious men was the practice of the Roman authors, in the early periods of the Republic. In France the example has been followed. Fontenelle, D'Alembert, and Monsieur Thomas, have left models in this kind of composition. They have *embalmed* the dead. But it is true, that they had incitements and advantages, even at a distant day, which could not, by any diligence, be obtained by Dr. Johnson. The wits of France had ample materials. They lived in a nation of critics, who had at heart the honour done to their country by their Poets, their Heroes, and their Philosophers. They had, besides, an *Academy of Belles-Lettres*, where Genius was cultivated, refined, and encouraged. They had the tracts, the essays, and dissertations, which remain in the memoirs of the Academy, and they had the speeches of the several members, delivered at their first admission to a seat in that learned Assembly. In those speeches the new Academician did ample justice to the memory of his predecessor; and though his harangue was decorated with the colours of eloquence, and was, for that reason, called panegyric, yet being pronounced before qualified judges, who knew the talents, the conduct, and morals of the deceased, the speaker could not, with propriety, wander into the regions of fiction. The truth was known, before it was adorned. The Academy saw the marble before the artist polished it. But this country has had no Academy of Literature. The public mind, for centuries, has been engrossed by party and faction; *by the madness of many for the gain of a few;* by civil wars, religious dissensions, trade and commerce, and the arts of accumulating wealth. Amidst such attentions, who can wonder that cold praise has been often the only reward of merit? In this country Doctor Nathaniel Hodges, who, like the good bishop of Marseilles, *drew purer breath* amidst the contagion of the plague in London, and, during the whole time, continued in the city, administering medical assistance, was suffered, as Johnson used to relate with tears in his eyes, to die for debt in a gaol. In this country, the man who brought the New River to London was ruined by that noble project; and in this country, Otway died for want on Tower Hill; Butler, the great author of Hudibras, whose name can only die with the English language, was left to languish in poverty, the particulars of his life almost unknown, and scarce a vestige of him left except his immortal poem. Had there been an Academy of Literature, the lives, at least, of those celebrated persons would have been written for the benefit of posterity. Swift, it seems, had the idea of such an institution, and proposed it to Lord Oxford; but Whig and Tory were more important objects. It is needless to dissemble, that Dr. Johnson, in the Life of Roscommon, talks of the inutility of such a project. "In this country," he says, "an Academy could be expected to do but little. If an Academician's place were profitable, it would be given by interest; if attendance were gratuitous, it would be rarely paid, and no man

would endure the least disgust. Unanimity is impossible, and debate would separate the assembly." To this it may be sufficient to answer, that the Royal Society has not been dissolved by sullen disgust; and the modern Academy at Somerset House has already performed much, and promises more. Unanimity is not necessary to such an assembly. On the contrary, by difference of opinions, and collision of sentiment, the cause of literature would thrive and flourish. The true principles of criticism, the secret of fine writing, the investigation of antiquities, and other interesting subjects, might occasion a clash of opinion; but in that contention Truth would receive illustration, and the essays of the several members would supply the memoirs of the Academy. "But," says Dr. Johnson, "suppose the philological decree made and promulgated, what would be its authority? In absolute government there is sometimes a general reverence paid to all that has the sanction of power, the countenance of greatness. How little this is the state of our country needs not be told. The edicts of an English Academy would probably be read by many, only that they may be sure to disobey them. The present manners of the nation would deride authority, and therefore nothing is left, but that every writer should criticise himself." This surely is not conclusive. It is by the standard of the best writers that every man settles for himself his plan of legitimate composition; and since the authority of superior genius is acknowledged, that authority, which the individual obtains, would not be lessened by an association with others of distinguished ability. It may, therefore, be inferred, that an Academy of Literature would be an establishment highly useful, and an honour to Literature. In such an institution profitable places would not be wanted. *Vatis avarus haud facile est animus;* and the minister, who shall find leisure from party and faction to carry such a scheme into execution, will, in all probability, be respected by posterity as the Mæcenas of letters.

We now take leave of Dr. Johnson as an author. Four volumes of his Lives of the Poets were published in 1778, and the work was completed in 1781. Should Biography fall again into disuse, there will not always be a Johnson to look back through a century, and give a body of critical and moral instruction. In April 1781, he lost his friend Mr. Thrale. His own words, in his diary, will best tell that melancholy event. "On Wednesday the 11th of April, was buried my dear friend Mr. Thrale, who died on Wednesday the 4th, and with him were buried many of my hopes and pleasures. About five, I think, on Wednesday morning he expired. I felt almost the last flutter of his pulse, and looked for the last time upon the face, that, for fifteen years before, had never been turned upon me but with respect and benignity. Farewell! may God, that delighteth in mercy, have *had* mercy on thee! I had constantly prayed for him before his death. The decease of him, from whose friendship I had obtained many opportunities of amusement, and to whom I turned my thoughts as to a refuge from misfortunes, has left me heavy. But my business is with myself." From the close of his last work, the malady that persecuted him through life came upon him with alarming severity, and his constitution declined apace. In 1782 his old friend *Levet* expired without warning, and without a groan. Events like these reminded Johnson of his own mortality. He continued his visits to Mrs. Thrale at Streatham, to the 7th day of October 1782, when having first composed a prayer for the happiness of a family with whom he had for many years enjoyed the pleasures and comforts of life, he removed to his own house in town. He says he was up early in the morning, and read fortuitously in the Gospel, *which was his parting use of the library.* The merit of the family is manifested by the sense he had of it, and we see his heart overflowing with gratitude. He leaves the place with regret, and *casts a lingering look behind.*

The few remaining occurrences may be soon despatched. In the month of June, 1783, Johnson had a paralytic stroke, which affected his speech only. He wrote to Dr. Taylor of Westminster; and to his friend Mr. Allen, the printer, who lived at the next door. Dr. Brocklesby arrived in a short time, and by his care, and that of Dr. Heberden, Johnson soon recovered. During his illness the writer of this narrative visited him, and found him reading Dr. Watson's Chemistry. Articulating with difficulty, he said "From this book he who knows nothing may learn a great deal; and he who knows, will be pleased to find his knowledge recalled to his mind in a manner highly pleasing." In the month of August he set out for Litchfield, on a visit to Mrs. Lucy Porter, the daughter of his wife by her first husband; and in his way back paid his respects to Dr. Adams at Oxford. Mrs. Williams died at his house in Bolt Court, in the month of September, during his absence. This was another shock to a mind like his, ever agitated by the thoughts of futurity. The contemplation of his own approaching end was constantly before his eyes; and the prospect of death, he declared, was terrible. For many years, when he was not disposed to enter into the conversation going forward, whoever sat near his chair, might hear him repeating from Shakspeare,

> Ay, but to die, and go we know not where;
> To lie in cold obstruction and to rot;
> This sensible warm motion to become

A kneaded clod, and the delighted spirit
To bathe in fiery floods——

And from Milton,

Who would lose,
For fear of pain, this intellectual being?

By the death of Mrs. Williams he was left in a state of destitution, with nobody but Frank, his black servant, to soothe his anxious moments. In November 1783, he was swelled from head to foot with a dropsy. Dr. Brocklesby, with that benevolence with which he always assists his friends, paid his visits with assiduity. The medicines prescribed were so efficacious, that in a few days Johnson, while he was offering up his prayers, was suddenly obliged to rise, and, in the course of the day, discharged twenty pints of water.

Johnson, being eased of his dropsy, began to entertain hopes that the vigour of his constitution was not entirely broken. For the sake of conversing with his friends, he established a conversation club, to meet on every Wednesday evening; and to serve a man whom he had known in Mr. Thrale's household for many years, the place was fixed at his house in Essex-street, near the Temple. To answer the malignant remarks of Sir John Hawkins on this subject, were a wretched waste of time. Professing to be Johnson's friend, that biographer has raised more objections to his character, than all the enemies to that excellent man. Sir John had a root of bitterness that *put rancours in the vessel of his peace.* Fielding, he says, was the inventor of a cant phrase, *Goodness of heart, which means little more than the virtue of a horse or a dog.* He should have known that kind affections are the essence of virtue: they are the will of God implanted in our nature, to aid and strengthen moral obligation; they incite to action; a sense of benevolence is no less necessary than a sense of duty. Good affections are an ornament not only to an author, but to his writings. He who shows himself upon a cold scent for opportunities to bark and snarl throughout a volume of six hundred pages, may, if he will, pretend to moralize; but Goodness of Heart, or, to use that politer phrase, the *virtue of a horse or a dog*, would redound more to his honour. But Sir John is no more: our business is with Johnson. The members of his club were respectable for their rank, their talents, and their literature. They attended with punctuality till about Midsummer 1784, when, with some appearance of health Johnson went into Derbyshire, and thence to Litchfield. While he was in that part of the world, his friends in town were labouring for his benefit. The air of a more southern climate they thought might prolong a valuable life. But a pension of £300 a-year was a slender fund for a travelling valetudinarian, and it was not then known that he had saved a moderate sum of money. Mr. Boswell and Sir Joshua Reynolds undertook to solicit the patronage of the Chancellor. With Lord Thurlow, while he was at the bar, Johnson was well acquainted. He was often heard to say, "Thurlow is a man of such vigour of mind, that I never knew I was to meet him, but—I was going to say, I was afraid, but that would not be true, for I never was afraid of any man; but I never knew that I was to meet Thurlow, but I knew I had something to encounter." The Chancellor undertook to recommend Johnson's case; but without success. To protract if possible the days of a man whom he respected, he offered to advance the sum of five hundred pounds. Being informed of this at Litchfield, Johnson wrote the following letter:

"My Lord,

"After a long and not inattentive observation of mankind, the generosity of your Lordship's offer raises in me not less wonder than gratitude. Bounty, so liberally bestowed, I should gladly receive if my condition made it necessary; for to such a mind who would not be proud to own his obligations? But it has pleased God to restore me to so great a measure of health, that, if I should now appropriate so much of a fortune destined to do good, I could not escape from myself the charge of advancing a false claim. My journey to the continent, though I once thought it necessary, was never much encouraged by my physicians: and I was very desirous that your Lordship should be told it by Sir Joshua Reynolds as an event very uncertain; for if I grew much better, I should not be willing; if much worse, I should not be able to migrate. Your Lordship was first solicited without my knowledge; but when I was told that you were pleased to honour me with your patronage, I did not expect to hear of a refusal: yet, as I have had no long time to brood hopes and have not rioted in imaginary opulence, this cold reception has been scarce a disappointment and from your Lordship's kindness I have received a benefit which only men like you are able to bestow. I shall now live *mihi carior* with a higher opinion of my own merit.

I am, my Lord,
Your Lordship's most obliged,
most grateful, and most humble servant,
SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"*Sept.* 1784."

We have in this instance the exertion of two congenial minds: one, with a generous impulse relieving merit in distress; and the other, with gratitude and dignity of sentiment, rising to an equal elevation.

It seems, however, that greatness of mind not confined to greatness of rank. Dr. Brock

lesby was not content to assist with his medical art; he resolved to *minister* to his patient's *mind*, and *pluck from his memory the sorrow* which the late refusal from a high quarter might occasion. To enable him to visit the south of France in pursuit of health, he offered from his own funds an annuity of one hundred pounds, payable quarterly. This was a *sweet oblivious antidote*, but it was not accepted for the reasons assigned to the Chancellor. The proposal, however, will do honour to Dr. Brocklesby, as long as liberal sentiment shall be ranked among the social virtues.

In the month of October, 1784, we find Dr. Johnson corresponding with Mr. Nichols, the intelligent compiler of the Gentleman's Magazine, and, in the languor of sickness, still desirous to contribute all in his power to the advancement of science and useful knowledge. He says, in a letter to that gentleman, dated Litchfield, October 20, that he should be glad to give so skilful a lover of antiquities any information. He adds, "At Ashburne, where I had very little company, I had the luck to borrow Mr. Bowyer's Life, a book so full of contemporary history, that a literary man must find some of his old friends. I thought that I could now and then have told you some hints worth your notice: We perhaps may talk a life over. I hope we shall be much together. You must now be to me what you were before, and what dear Mr. Allen was besides. He was taken unexpectedly away, but I think he was a very good man. I have made very little progress in recovery. I am very weak, and very sleepless; but I live on and hope."

In that languid condition he arrived, on the 16th of November, at his house in Bolt Court, there to end his days. He laboured with the dropsy and an asthma. He was attended by Dr. Heberden, Dr. Warren, Dr. Brocklesby, Dr. Butter, and Mr. Cruikshank, the eminent surgeon. Eternity presented to his mind an awful prospect, and, with as much virtue as perhaps ever is the lot of man, he shuddered at the thought of his dissolution. His friends awakened the comfortable reflection of a well-spent life; and, as his end drew near, they had the satisfaction of seeing him composed, and even cheerful, insomuch that he was able, in the course of his restless nights, to make translations of Greek epigrams from the Anthologia; and to compose a Latin epitaph for his father, his mother, and his brother Nathaniel. He meditated, at the same time, a Latin inscription to the memory of Garrick; but his vigour was exhausted.

His love of literature was a passion that stuck to his last sand. Seven days before his death he wrote the following letter to his friend Mr. Nichols:

"Sir,

"The late learned Mr. Swinton, of Oxford, having one day remarked that one man, meaning, I suppose, no man but himself, could assign all the parts of the Ancient Universal History to their proper authors, at the request of Sir Robert Chambers, or myself, gave the account which I now transmit to you in his own hand, being willing that of so great a work the history should be known, and that each writer should receive his due proportion of praise from posterity.

"I recommend to you to preserve this scrap of literary intelligence in Mr. Swinton's own hand, or to deposit it in the Museum,* that the veracity of this account may never be doubted.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most humble servant,

"Sam. Johnson.'

Dec. 6, 1784.

Mr. Swinton.

The History of the Carthaginians, Numidians, Mauritinians, Gætulians, Garamantes, Melano-Gætulians, Nigritæ, Cyrenaica, Marmarica, Regio Syrtica, Turks, Tartars, and Moguls, Indians, Chinese, Dissertation on the peopling of America, Dissertation on the Independency of the Arabs.

The Cosmogony, and a small part of the history immediately following. By M. Sale.

To the Birth of Abraham. Chiefly by Mr. Shelvock.

History of the Jews, Gauls, and Spaniards. By Mr. Psalmanazar.

Xenophon's Retreat. By the same.

History of the Persians, and the Constantinopolitan Empire. By Dr. Campbell.

History of the Romans. By Mr. Bower.†

On the morning of Dec. 7, Dr. Johnson requested to see Mr. Nichols. A few days before, he had borrowed some of the early volumes of the Magazine, with a professed intention to point out the pieces which he had written in that collection. The books lay on the table, with many leaves doubled down, and in particular those which contained his share in the Parliamentary Debates. Such was the goodness of Johnson's heart, that he then declared, that "those debates were the only parts of his writings which gave him any compunction: but that at the time he wrote them he had no

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* It is there deposited. J. N.

† Before this authentic communication, Mr. Nichols had given, in the volume of the Gentleman's Magazine for 1781, p. 370, the following account of the Universal History. The proposals were published October 6, 1729; and the authors of the first seven volumes were,

Vol. I. Mr. Sale, translator of the Koran. — II. George Psalmanazar. — III. George Psalmanazar, Archibald Bower, Captain Shelvock, Dr. Campbell. — IV. The same as vol. III. — V. Mr. Bower. — VI. Mr. Bower, Rev. John Swinton. — VII. Mr. Swinton, Mr. Bower.

conception that he was imposing upon the world, though they were frequently written from very slender materials, and often from none at all, the mere coinage of his own imagination." He added, "that he never wrote any part of his work with equal velocity. Three columns of the Magazine in an hour," he said, "was no uncommon effort; which was faster than most persons could have transcribed that quantity. In one day in particular, and that not a very long one, he wrote twelve pages, more in quantity than ever he wrote at any other time, except in the Life of Savage, of which forty-eight pages in octavo were the production of one long day, including a part of the night."

In the course of the conversation he asked, whether any of the family of Faden the printer, were living. Being told that the geographer near Charing-Cross was Faden's son, he said, after a short pause, "I borrowed a guinea of his father near thirty years ago; be so good as to take this, and pay it for me."

Wishing to discharge every duty, and every obligation, Johnson recollected another debt of ten pounds, which he had borrowed from his friend Mr. Hamilton the printer, about twenty years before. He sent the money to Mr. Hamilton, at his house in Bedford-Row, with an apology for the length of time. The Reverend Mr. Strahan was the bearer of the message, about four or five days before Johnson breathed his last.

Mr. Sastres (whom Dr. Johnson esteemed and mentioned in his will) entered the room during his illness. Dr. Johnson, as soon as he saw him, stretched forth his hand, and, in a tone of lamentation, called out, JAM MORITURUS! But the love of life was still an active principle. Feeling himself swelled with the dropsy, he conceived that by incisions in his legs, the water might be discharged. Mr. Cruikshank apprehended that a mortification might be the consequence; but, to appease a distempered fancy, he gently lanced the surface. Johnson cried out, "Deeper, deeper! I want length of life, and you are afraid of giving me pain, which I do not value."

On the 8th of December, the Reverend Mr. Strahan drew his will, by which, after a few legacies, the residue, amounting to about fifteen hundred pounds, was bequeathed to Frank, the black servant, formerly consigned to the testator by his friend Dr. Bathurst.

The history of a death-bed is painful. Mr. Strahan informs us, that the strength of religion prevailed against the infirmity of nature; and his foreboding dread of the Divine Justice subsided into a pious trust and humble hope of mercy at the Throne of Grace. On Monday the 13th day of December (the last of his existence on this side the grave), the desire of life returned with all its former vehemence. He still imagined, that, by puncturing his legs relief might be obtained. At eight in the morning he tried the experiment, but no water followed. In an hour or two after he fell into a doze, and about seven in the evening expired without a groan.

On the 20th of the month his remains, with due solemnities, and a numerous attendance of his friends, were buried in Westminster Abbey, near the foot of Shakspeare's monument, and close to the grave of the late Mr. Garrick. The funeral service was read by his friend Dr. Taylor.

A black marble over his grave has the following inscription:

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.
obiit XIII die Decembris,
Anno Domini
MDCCLXXXIV.
Ætatis suæ LXXV.

If we now look back, as from an eminence, to view the scenes of life, and the literary labours in which Dr. Johnson was engaged, we may be able to delineate the features of the man, and to form an estimate of his genius.

As a man, Dr. Johnson stands displayed in open daylight. Nothing remains undiscovered. Whatever he said is known; and without allowing him the usual privilege of hazarding sentiments, and advancing positions, for mere amusement, or the pleasure of discussion, Criticism has endeavoured to make him answerable for what, perhaps, he never seriously thought. His diary, which has been printed, discovers still more. We have before us the very heart of the man, with all his inward consciousness. And yet neither in the open paths of life, nor in his secret recesses, has any one vice been discovered. We see him reviewing every year of his life, and severely censuring himself for not keeping resolutions, which morbid melancholy, and other bodily infirmities, rendered impracticable. We see him for every little defect imposing on himself voluntary penance, going through the day with only one cup of tea without milk, and to the last, amidst paroxysms and remissions of illness, forming plans of study and resolutions to amend his life.* Many of his scruples may be called weaknesses; but they are the weaknesses of a good, a pious and most excellent man.

His person, it is well-known, was large and unwieldy. His nerves were affected by that disorder, for which, at two years of age, he was presented to the royal touch. His head shook, and involuntary motions made it uncertain that his legs and arms would, even at a tea-table, remain in their proper place. A person of Lord Chesterfield's delicacy might in his company be in a fever. He would sometimes of his own

* On the subject of voluntary penance, see the Rambler, No. CX.

accord do things inconsistent with the established modes of behaviour. Sitting at table with the celebrated Mrs. Cholmondeley, who exerted herself to circulate the subscription for Shakspeare, he took hold of her hand in the middle of dinner, and held it close to his eye, wondering at the delicacy and whiteness, till with a smile she asked, "Will he give it to me again when he has done with it?" The exteriors of politeness did not belong to Johnson. Even that civility which proceeds, or ought to proceed, from the mind, was sometimes violated. His morbid melancholy had an effect on his temper; his passions were irritable, and the pride of science, as well as of a fierce, independent spirit, inflamed him on some occasions above all bounds of moderation. Though not in the shade of academic bowers, he led a scholastic life; and the habit of pronouncing decisions to his friends and visitors gave him a dictatorial manner, which was much enforced by a voice naturally loud, and often overstretched. Metaphysical discussion, moral theory, systems of religion, and anecdotes of literature, were his favourite topics. General history had little of his regard. Biography was his delight. *The proper study of mankind is man.* Sooner than hear of the Punic war, he would be rude to the person that introduced the subject.

Johnson was born a logician; one of those, to whom only books of logic are said to be of use. In consequence of his skill in that art, he loved argumentation. No man thought more profoundly, nor with such acute discernment. A fallacy could not stand before him; it was sure to be refuted by strength of reasoning, and a precision both in idea and expression almost unequalled. When he chose by apt illustration to place the argument of his adversary in a ludicrous light, one was almost inclined to think *ridicule the test of truth.* He was surprised to be told, but it is certainly true, that, with great powers of mind, wit and humour were his shining talents. That he often argued for the sake of triumph over his adversary, cannot be dissembled. Dr. Rose, of Chiswick, has been heard to tell of a friend of his, who thanked him for introducing him to Dr. Johnson, as he had been convinced, in the course of a long dispute, that an opinion, which he had embraced as a settled truth, was no better than a vulgar error. This being reported to Johnson, "Nay,' said he, "do not let him be thankful, for he was right, and I was wrong." Like his uncle Andrew, in the ring at Smithfield, Johnson, in a circle of disputants, was determined *neither to be thrown nor conquered.* Notwithstanding all his piety, self-government, or the command of his passions in conversation, does not seem to have been among his attainments. Whenever he thought the contention was for superiority, he has been known to break out with violence, and even ferocity. When the fray was over, he generally softened into repentance, and, by conciliating measures, took care that no animosity should be left rankling in the breast of his antagonist. Of this defect he seems to have been conscious. In a letter to Mrs. Thrale, he says, "Poor Baretti! do not quarrel with him; to neglect him a little will be sufficient. He means only to be frank and manly, and independent, and perhaps, as you say a little wise. To be frank, he thinks, is to be cynical; and to be independent, is to be rude. Forgive him, dearest lady, the rather, because of his misbehaviour I am afraid he learned part of me. I hope to set him hereafter a better example." For his own intolerant and overbearing spirit he apologized by observing, that it had done some good; obscenity and impiety were repressed in his company.

It was late in life before he had the habit of mixing, otherwise than occasionally, with polite company. At Mr. Thrale's, he saw a constant succession of well-accomplished visitors. In that society he began to wear off the rugged points of his own character. He saw the advantages of mutual civility, and endeavoured to profit by the models before him. He aimed at what has been called by Swift the *lesser morals*, and by Cicero *minores virtutes.* His endeavour, though new and late, gave pleasure to all his acquaintance. Men were glad to see that he was willing to be communicative on equal terms and reciprocal complaisance. The time was then expected when he was to cease being what George Garrick, brother to the celebrated actor, called him the first time he heard him converse, "A TREMENDOUS COMPANION." He certainly wished to be polite, and even thought himself so; but his civility still retained something uncouth and harsh. His manners took a milder tone, but the endeavour was too palpably seen. He laboured even in trifles. He was a giant gaining a *purchase* to lift a feather.

It is observed by the younger Pliny, that in the confines of virtue and great qualities there are generally vices of an opposite nature. In Dr. Johnson not one ingredient can take the name of vice. From his attainments in literature grew the pride of knowledge; and from his powers of reasoning, the love of disputation and the vain-glory of superior vigour. His piety, in some instances, bordered on superstition. He was willing to believe in preternatural agency, and thought it not more strange that there should be evil spirits than evil men. Even the question about second sight held him in suspense. "Second sight," Mr. Pennant tells us, "is a power of seeing images impressed on the organs of sight by the power of fancy, or on the fancy by the disordered spirits operating on the mind. It is the faculty of seeing spectres or visions, which represent an event actually passing at a distance, or likely to happen at a future day. In 1771, a gentleman, the last who was supposed to be possessed of this faculty, had a

boat at sea in a tempestuous night, and, being anxious for his freight, suddenly started up, and said his men would be drowned, for he had seen them pass before him with wet garments and dripping locks. The event corresponded with his disordered fancy. And thus," continues Mr. Pennant, "a distempered imagination, clouded with anxiety, may make an impression on the spirits; as persons, restless and troubled with indignation, see various forms and figures while they lie awake in bed." This is what Dr. Johnson was not willing to reject. He wished for some positive proof of communications with another world. His benevolence embraced the whole race of man, and yet was tinctured with particular prejudices. He was pleased with the minister in the Isle of Sky, and loved him so much that he began to wish him not a Presbyterian. To that body of Dissenters his zeal for the Established Church made him in some degree an adversary; and his attachment to a mixed and limited Monarchy led him to declare open war against what he called a sullen Republican. He would rather praise a man of Oxford than of Cambridge. He disliked a Whig, and loved a Tory. These were the shades of his character, which it has been the business of certain party-writers to represent in the darkest colours.

Since virtue, or moral goodness, consists in a just conformity of our actions to the relations in which we stand to the Supreme Being and to our fellow-creatures, where shall we find a man who has been, or endeavoured to be, more diligent in the discharge of those essential duties? His first prayer was composed in 1738; he continued those fervent ejaculations of piety to the end of his life. In his Meditations we see him scrutinizing himself with severity, and aiming at perfection unattainable by man. His duty to his neighbour consisted in universal benevolence, and a constant aim at the production of happiness. Who was more sincere and steady in his friendships? It has been said that there was no real affection between him and Garrick. On the part of the latter, there might be some corrosions of jealousy. The character of PROSPERO, in the Rambler, No. 200, was, beyond all question, occasioned by Garrick's ostentatious display of furniture and Dresden china. It was surely fair to take from this incident a hint for a moral essay; and, though no more was intended, Garrick, we are told, remembered it with uneasiness. He was also hurt that his Litchfield friend did not think so highly of his dramatic art as the rest of the world. The fact was, Johnson could not see the passions as they rose and chased one another in the varied features of that expressive face; and by his own manner of reciting verses, which was wonderfully impressive, he plainly showed that he thought there was too much of artificial tone and measured cadence in the declamation of the theatre. The present writer well remembers being in conversation with Dr. Johnson near the side of the scenes during the tragedy of King Lear: when Garrick came off the stage, he said, "You two talk so loud you destroy all my feelings." "Prithee," replied Johnson, "do not talk of feelings, Punch has no feelings." This seems to have been his settled opinion; admirable as Garrick's imitation of nature always was, Johnson thought it no better than mere mimicry. Yet it is certain that he esteemed and loved Garrick; that he dwelt with pleasure on his praise; and used to declare, that he deserved his great success, because on all applications for charity he gave more than was asked. After Garrick's death he never talked of him without a tear in his eye. He offered, if Mrs. Garrick would desire it of him, to be the editor of his works and the historian of his life.* It has been mentioned, that on his death-bed he thought of writing a Latin inscription to the memory of his friend. Numbers are still living who know these facts, and still remember with gratitude the friendship which he showed to them with unaltered affection for a number of years. His humanity and generosity, in proportion to his slender income, were unbounded. It has been truly said, that the lame, the blind, and the sorrowful, found in his house a sure retreat. A strict adherence to truth he considered as a sacred obligation, insomuch that, in relating the most minute anecdote, he would not allow himself the smallest addition to embellish his story. The late Mr. Tyers, who knew Dr. Johnson intimately, observed, "that he always talked as if he was talking upon oath."

After a long acquaintance with this excellent man, and an attentive retrospect to his whole conduct, such is the light in which he appears to the writer of this essay. The following lines of Horace may be deemed his picture in miniature.

Iracundior est paulo, minus aptus acutis
Naribus horum hominum, rideri possit, eo quod
Rusticius tonso toga defluit, et male laxus
In pede calceus hæret; at est bonus, ut melior vir
Non alius quisquam: at tibi amicus, at ingenium ingens,
Inculto latet hoc sub corpore.

"Your friend is passionate, perhaps unfit
For the brisk petulance of modern wit.
His hair ill-cut, his robe that awkward flows,
Or his large shoes, to raillery expose
The man you love; yet is he not possess'd
Of virtues, with which very few are bless'd?
While underneath this rude, uncouth disguise,
A genius of extensive knowledge lies."

FRANCIS' HOR. Book. i. Sat. 3.

* It is to be regretted that he was not encouraged in this undertaking. The assistance, however, which he gave to Davies, in writing the Life of Garrick, has been acknowledged in general terms by that writer, and, from the evidence of style, appears to have been very considerable. C.

It remains to give a review of Johnson's works; and this, it is imagined, will not be unwelcome to the reader.

Like Milton and Addison, he seems to have been fond of his Latin poetry. Those compositions show that he was an early scholar; but his verses have not the graceful ease that gave so much suavity to the poems of Addison. The translation of the Messiah labours under two disadvantages; it is first to be compared with Pope's inimitable performance, and afterwards with the Pollio of Virgil. It may appear trifling to remark, that he has made the letter *o*, in the word *Virgo*, long and short in the same line; Virgo, Virgo parit. But the translation has great merit, and some admirable lines. In the odes there is a sweet flexibility, particularly, To his worthy friend Dr. Laurence; on himself at the theatre, March 8, 1771; the Ode in the Isle of Sky; and that to Mrs. Thrale from the same place.

His English poetry is such as leaves room to think, if he had devoted himself to the Muses, that he would have been the rival of Pope. His first production in this kind was London, a poem in imitation of the third satire of Juvenal. The vices of the metropolis are placed in the room of ancient manners. The author had heated his mind with the ardour of Juvenal, and, having the skill to polish his numbers, he became a sharp accuser of the times. The Vanity of Human Wishes is an imitation of the tenth Satire of the same author. Though it is translated by Dryden, Johnson's imitation approaches nearest to the spirit of the original. The subject is taken from the Alcibiades of Plato, and has an intermixture of the sentiments of Socrates concerning the object of prayers offered up to the Deity. The general proposition is, that good and evil are so little understood by mankind, that their wishes when granted are always destructive. This is exemplified in a variety of instances, such as riches, state preferment, eloquence, military glory, long life, and the advantages of form and beauty. Juvenal's conclusion is worthy of a Christian poet, and such a pen as Johnson's. "Let us," he says, "leave it to the Gods to judge what is fittest for us. Man is dearer to his Creator than to himself. If we must pray for special favour, let it be for a sound mind in a sound body. Let us pray for fortitude, that we may think the labours of Hercules and all his sufferings preferable to a life of luxury and the soft repose of Sardanapalus. This is a blessing within the reach of every man; this we can give ourselves. It is virtue, and virtue only, that can make us happy." In the translation the zeal of the Christian conspired with the warmth and energy of the poet; but Juvenal is not eclipsed.—For the various characters in the original, the reader is pleased, in the English poem, to meet with Cardinal Wolsey, Buckingham stabbed by Felton, Lord Strafford, Clarendon, Charles XII. of Sweden; and for Tully and Demosthenes, Lydiat, Galileo, and Archbishop Laud. It is owing to Johnson's delight in biography that the name of Lydiat is called forth from obscurity. It may, therefore, not be useless to tell, that Lydiat was a learned divine and mathematician in the beginning of the last century. He attacked the doctrine of Aristotle and Scaliger, and wrote a number of sermons on the harmony of the Evangelists. With all his merit, he lay in the prison of *Bocardo* at Oxford, till Bishop Usher, Laud, and others, paid his debts. He petitioned Charles I. to be sent to Ethiopia to procure manuscripts. Having spoken in favour of monarchy and bishops, he was plundered by the Puritans, and twice carried away a prisoner from his rectory. He died very poor in 1646.

The tragedy of Irene is founded on a passage in Knolles' History of the Turks; an author highly commended in the Rambler, No. 122. An incident in the Life of Mahomet the Great, first emperor of the Turks, is the hinge on which the fable is made to move. The substance of the story is shortly this. In 1453 Mahomet laid siege to Constantinople, and having reduced the place, became enamoured of a fair Greek, whose name was Irene. The sultan invited her to embrace the law of the Prophet, and to grace his throne. Enraged at this intended marriage, the Janizaries formed a conspiracy to dethrone the Emperor. To avert the impending danger, Mahomet, in a full assembly of the grandees, "catching with one hand," as Knolles relates it, "the fair Greek by the hair of her head, and drawing his falchion with the other, he, at one blow, struck off her head, to the great terror of them all; and, having so done, said unto them, Now, by this, judge whether your emperor is able to bridle his affections or not." The story is simple, and it remained for the author to amplify it with proper episodes, and give it complication and variety. The catastrophe is changed, and horror gives place to terror and pity. But, after all, the fable is cold and languid. There is not, throughout the piece, a single situation to excite curiosity, and raise a conflict of passions. The diction is nervous, rich, and elegant; but splendid language, and melodious numbers, will make a fine poem, not a tragedy. The sentiments are beautiful, always happily expressed, but seldom appropriated to the character, and generally too philosophic. What Johnson has said of the tragedy of Cato may be applied to Irene: "It is rather a poem in dialogue than a drama; rather a succession of just sentiments in elegant language, than a representation of natural affections. Nothing excites or assuages emotion. The events are expected without solicitude, and are remembered without joy or sorrow. Of the agents we have no care; we con-

sider not what they are doing, nor what they are suffering; we wish only to know what they have to say. It is unaffecting elegance, and chill philosophy." The following speech, in the mouth of a Turk, who is supposed to have heard of the British constitution, has been often selected from the numberless beauties with which Irene abounds:

"If there be any land, as fame reports,
Where common laws restrain the prince and subject;
A happy land, where circulating power
Flows through each member of th' embodied state;
Sure, not unconscious of the mighty blessing,
Her grateful sons shine bright with every virtue;
Untainted with the Lust of Innovation;
Sure all unite to hold her league of rule,
Unbroken as the sacred chain of nature,
That links the jarring elements in peace."

These are British sentiments. Above forty years ago they found an echo in the breast of applauding audiences; and to this hour they are the voice of the people, in defiance of the *metaphysics* and the *new lights* of certain politicians, who would gladly find their private advantage in the disasters of their country; a race of men, *quibus nulla ex honesto spes*.

The prologue to Irene is written with elegance, and, in a peculiar style, shows the literary pride and lofty spirit of the author. The epilogue, we are told in a late publication, was written by Sir William Young. This is a new discovery, but by no means probable. When the appendages to a dramatic performance are not assigned to a friend, or an unknown hand, or a person of fashion, they are always supposed to be written by the author of the play. It is to be wished, however, that the epilogue in question could be transferred to any other writer. It is the worst *jeu d'esprit* that ever fell from Johnson's pen.*

An account of the various pieces contained in this edition, such as miscellaneous tracts, and philological dissertations, would lead beyond the intended limits of this essay. It will suffice to say, that they are the productions of a man who never wanted decorations of language, and always taught his readers to think. The life of the late king of Prussia, as far as it extends, is a model of the biographical style. The Review of the Origin of Evil was, perhaps, written with asperity; but the angry epitaph which it provoked from Soame Jenyns, was an ill-timed resentment, unworthy of the genius of that amiable author.

The Rambler may be considered as Johnson's great work. It was the basis of that high reputation which went on increasing to the end of his days. The circulation of those periodical essays was not, at first, equal to their merit. They had not, like the Spectators, the art of charming by variety; and indeed how could it be expected? The wits of Queen Anne's reign sent their contributions to the Spectator; and Johnson stood alone. "A stage-coach," says Sir Richard Steele, "must go forward on stated days, whether there are passengers or not." So it was with the Rambler, every Tuesday and Saturday, for two years. In this collection Johnson is the great moral teacher of his countrymen; his essays form a body of ethics; the observations on life and manners are acute and instructive; and the papers, professedly critical, serve to promote the cause of literature. It must, however, be acknowledged, that a settled gloom hangs over the author's mind; and all the essays, except eight or ten, coming from the same fountain-head, no wonder that they have the raciness of the soil from which they sprang. Of this uniformity Johnson was sensible. He used to say, that if he had joined a friend or two, who would have been able to intermix papers of a sprightly turn, the collection would have been more miscellaneous, and by consequence more agreeable to the generality of readers. This he used to illustrate by repeating two beautiful stanzas from his own Ode to Cave, or *Sylvanus Urban*;

Non ulla Musis pagina gratior,
Quam quæ severis ludicra jungere
Novit, fatigatamque nugis
Utilibus recreare mentem.

Texente nymphis serta Lycoride,
Rosæ ruborem sic viola adjuvat
Immista, sic Iris refulget
Æthereis variata fucis

It is remarkable, that the pomp of diction, which has been objected to Johnson, was first assumed in the Rambler. His Dictionary was going on at the same time, and, in the course of that work, as he grew familiar with technical and scholastic words, he thought that the bulk of his readers were equally learned; or at least would admire the splendour and dignity of the style. And yet it is well known that he praised in Cowley the easy and unaffected structure of the sentences. Cowley may be placed at the head of those who cultivated a clear and natural style. Dryden, Tillotson, and Sir William Temple, followed. Addison, Swift, and Pope, with more correctness, carried our language well nigh to perfection. Of Addison, Johnson was used to say, *He is the Raphael of Essay Writers*. How he differed so widely from such elegant models is a problem not to be solved, unless it be true that he took an early tincture from the writers of the last century, particularly Sir Thomas Browne. Hence the peculiarities of his style, new combinations, sentences of an

* Dr. Johnson informed Mr. Boswell that this Epilogue was written by Sir William Young. See Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. i. p. 166—70. 8vo. edit. 1804. The internal evidence that it is not Johnson's is very strong, particularly in the line, "But, how the devil," &c.

unusual structure, and words derived from the learned languages. His own account of the matter is, "When common words were less pleasing to the ear, or less distinct in their signification, I familiarized the terms of philosophy, by applying them to popular ideas." But he forgot the observation of Dryden: *If too many foreign words are poured in upon us, it looks as if they were designed, not to assist the natives, but to conquer them.* There is, it must be admitted, a swell of language, often out of all proportion to the sentiment; but there is, in general, a fulness of mind, and the thought seems to expand with the sound of the words. Determined to discard colloquial barbarisms and licentious idioms, he forgot the elegant simplicity that distinguishes the writings of Addison. He had what Locke calls a round-about view of his subject; and though he was never tainted, like many modern wits, with the ambition of shining in paradox, he may be fairly called an ORIGINAL THINKER. His reading was extensive. He treasured in his mind whatever was worthy of notice, but he added to it from his own meditation. He collected, *quæ reconderet, auctaque promeret.* Addison was not so profound a thinker. He was *born to write, converse, and live with ease;* and he found an early patron in Lord Somers. He depended, however, more upon a fine taste than the vigour of his mind. His Latin poetry shows, that he relished, with a just selection, all the refined and delicate beauties of the Roman classics; and when he cultivated his native language, no wonder that he formed that graceful style, which has been so justly admired; simple, yet elegant; adorned, yet never over-wrought; rich in allusion, yet pure and perspicuous; correct, without labour; and though sometimes deficient in strength, yet always musical. His essays, in general, are on the surface of life; if ever original, it was in pieces of humour. Sir Roger de Coverly, and the Tory Fox-hunter, need not to be mentioned. Johnson had a fund of humour, but he did not know it: nor was he willing to descend to the familiar idiom and the variety of diction which that mode of composition required. The letter, in the Rambler, No. 12, from a young girl that wants a place, will illustrate this observation. Addison possessed an unclouded imagination, alive to the first objects of nature and of art. He reaches the sublime without any apparent effort. When he tells us, "If we consider the fixed stars as so many oceans of flame, that are each of them attended with a different set of planets; if we still discover new firmaments and new lights that are sunk further in those unfathomable depths of æther, we are lost in a labyrinth of suns and worlds, and confounded with the magnificence and immensity of nature;" the ease with which this passage rises to unaffected grandeur, is the secret charm that captivates the reader. Johnson is always lofty; he seems, to use Dryden's phrase, to be o'er-inform'd with meaning, and his words do not appear to himself adequate to his conception. He moves in state, and his periods are always harmonious. His Oriental Tales are in the true style of Eastern magnificence, and yet none of them are so much admired as the Visions of Mirza. In matters of criticism, Johnson is never the echo of preceding writers. He thinks and decides for himself. If we except the Essays on the Pleasures of Imagination, Addison cannot be called a philosophical critic. His moral Essays are beautiful: but in that province nothing can exceed the Rambler, though Johnson used to say, that the Essay on *The burthens of mankind* (in the Spectator, No. 558) was the most exquisite he had ever read. Talking of himself, Johnson said, "Topham Beauclerk has wit, and every thing comes from him with ease; but when I say a good thing I seem to labour." When we compare him with Addison, the contrast is still stronger. Addison lends grace and ornament to truth: Johnson gives it force and energy. Addison makes virtue amiable; Johnson represents it as an awful duty. Addison insinuates himself with an air of modesty; Johnson commands like a dictator; but a dictator in his splendid robes, not labouring at the plough. Addison is the Jupiter of Virgil, with placid serenity talking to Venus:

"Vultu, quo cœlum tempestatesque serenat."

Johnson is Jupiter tonans: he darts his lightning, and rolls his thunder, in the cause of virtue and piety. The language seems to fall short of ideas; he pours along, familiarizing the terms of philosophy, with bold inversions, and sonorous periods; but we may apply to him what Pope has said of Homer: "It is the sentiment that swells and fills out the diction, which rises with it, and forms itself about it; like glass in the furnace, which grows to a greater magnitude, as the breath within is more powerful, and the heat more intense."

It is not the design of this comparison to decide between these two eminent writers. In matters of taste every reader will choose for himself. Johnson is always profound, and of course gives the fatigue of thinking. Addison charms while he instructs; and writing, as he always does, a pure, an elegant and idiomatic style, he may be pronounced the safest model for imitation.

The essays written by Johnson in the Adventurer may be called a continuation of the Rambler. The Idler, in order to be consistent with the assumed character, is written with abated vigour, in a style of ease and unlaboured elegance. It is the Odyssey after the Iliad. Intense thinking would not become the Idler. The first number presents a well-drawn portrait of an Idler, and from that character no deviation could be made. Accordingly, Johnson forgets his austere manner, and plays us into

sense. He still continues his lectures on human life, but he adverts to common occurrences, and is often content with the topic of the day. An advertisement in the beginning of the first volume informs us, that twelve entire essays were a contribution from different hands. One of these, No. 33, is the journal of a Senior Fellow at Cambridge, but as Johnson, being himself an original thinker, always revolted from servile imitation, he has printed the piece, with an apology, importing that the journal of a citizen in the *Spectator* almost precluded the attempt of any subsequent writer. This account of the Idler may be closed, after observing, that the author's mother being buried on the 23d of January, 1759, there is an admirable paper occasioned by that event, on Saturday the 27th of the same month, No. 41. The reader, if he pleases, may compare it with another fine paper in the Rambler, No. 54, on the conviction that rushes on the mind at the bed of a dying friend.

"Rasselas," says Sir John Hawkins, "is a specimen of our language scarcely to be paralleled; it is written in a style refined to a degree of *immaculate purity*, and displays the whole force of *turgid* eloquence." One cannot but smile at this encomium. Rasselas is undoubtedly both elegant and sublime. It is a view of human life, displayed, it must be owned, in gloomy colours. The author's natural melancholy, depressed, at the time, by the approaching dissolution of his mother, darkened the picture. A tale, that should keep curiosity awake by the artifice of unexpected incidents, was not the design of a mind pregnant with better things. He, who reads the heads of the chapters, will find, that it is not a course of adventures that invites him forward, but a discussion of interesting questions; Reflections on Human Life; the History of *Imlac*, the Man of Learning; a Dissertation upon Poetry; the Character of a wise and happy Man, who discourses with energy on the government of the passions, and on a sudden, when Death deprives him of his daughter, forgets all his maxims of wisdom and the eloquence that adorned them, yielding to the stroke of affliction with all the vehemence of the bitterest anguish. It is by pictures of life, and profound moral reflection, that expectation is engaged and gratified throughout the work. The History of the Mad Astronomer, who imagines that, for five years, he possessed the regulation of the weather, and that the sun passed from tropic to tropic by his direction, represents in striking colours the sad effect of a distempered imagination. It becomes the more affecting when we recollect that it proceeds from one who lived in fear of the same dreadful visitation; from one who says emphatically, "Of the uncertainties in our present state, the most dreadful and alarming is the uncertain continuance of reason." The inquiry into the cause of madness, and the dangerous prevalence of imagination, till in time some particular train of ideas fixes the attention, and the mind recurs constantly to the favourite conception, is carried on in a strain of acute observation; but it leaves us room to think that the author was transcribing from his own apprehensions. The discourse on the nature of the soul gives us all that philosophy knows, not without a tincture of superstition. It is remarkable that the vanity of human pursuits was, about the same time, the subject that employed both Johnson and Voltaire: but *Candide* is the work of a lively imagination; and Rasselas, with all its splendour of eloquence, exhibits a gloomy picture. It should, however, be remembered, that the world has known the weeping as well as the laughing philosopher.

The Dictionary does not properly fall within the province of this essay. The preface, however, will be found in this edition. He who reads the close of it, without acknowledging the force of the pathetic and sublime, must have more insensibility in his composition than usually falls to the share of a man. The work itself, though in some instances abuse has been loud, and in others malice has endeavoured to undermine its fame, still remains the MOUNT ATLAS of English Literature.

> Though storms and tempests thunder on its brow,
> And oceans break their billows at its feet,
> It stands unmoved, and glories in its height.

That Johnson was eminently qualified for the office of a commentator on Shakspeare, no man can doubt; but it was an office which he never cordially embraced. The public expected more than he had diligence to perform; and yet his edition has been the ground on which every subsequent commentator has chosen to build. One note for its singularity, may be thought worthy of notice in this place. Hamlet says; "For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a God-kissing carrion." In this Warburton discovered the *origin of evil*. Hamlet, he says, breaks off in the middle of the sentence; but the learned commentator knows what he was going to say, and being unwilling to keep the secret, he goes on in a train of philosophical reasoning that leaves the reader in astonishment. Johnson, with true piety, adopts the fanciful hypothesis, declaring it to be a noble emendation, which almost sets the critic on a level with the author. The general observations at the end of the several plays, and the preface, will be found in this edition. The former, with great elegance and precision, give a summary view of each drama. The preface is a tract of great erudition and philosophical criticism.

Johnson's political pamphlets, whatever was his motive for writing them, whether gratitude for his pension, or the solicitation of men in

power, did not support the cause for which they were undertaken. They are written in a style truly harmonious, and with his usual dignity of language. When it is said that he advanced positions repugnant to the *common rights of mankind*, the virulence of party may be suspected. It is, perhaps, true that in the clamour raised throughout the kingdom Johnson over-heated his mind; but he was a friend to the rights of man, and he was greatly superior to the littleness of spirit that might incline him to advance what he did not think and firmly believe. In the *False Alarm*, though many of the most eminent men in the kingdom concurred in petitions to the throne, yet Johnson, having well surveyed the mass of the people, has given, with great humour and no less truth, what may be called, *the birth, parentage, and education of a remonstrance*. On the subject of Falkland's Islands, the fine dissuasive from too hastily involving the world in the calamities of war, must extort applause even from the party that wished, at that time, for the scenes of tumult and commotion. It was in the same pamphlet that Johnson offered battle to JUNIUS; a writer, who, by the uncommon elegance of his style, charmed every reader, though his object was to inflame the nation in favour of a faction. Junius fought in the dark; he saw his enemy and had his full blow; while he himself remained safe in obscurity. But let us not, said Johnson, mistake the venom of the shaft for the vigour of the bow. The keen invective which he published on that occasion, promised a paper war between two combatants, who knew the use of their weapons. A battle between them was as eagerly expected as between Mendoza and Big Ben. But Junius, whatever was his reason, never returned to the field. He laid down his arms, and has, ever since, remained as secret as the *man in the mask* in Voltaire's History.

The account of his journey to the Hebrides, or Western Isles of Scotland, is a model for such as shall hereafter relate their travels. The author did not visit that part of the world in the character of an Antiquary, to amuse us with wonders taken from the dark and fabulous ages; nor as a Mathematician, to measure a degree, and settle the longitude and latitude of the several islands. Those, who expected such information, expected what was never intended. *In every work regard the writer's end.* Johnson went to see men and manners, modes of life, and the progress of civilization. His remarks are so artfully blended with the rapidity and elegance of his narrative, that the reader is inclined to wish, as Johnson did with regard to Gray, that *to travel, and to tell his travels, had been more of his employment.*

As to Johnson's Parliamentary Debates, nothing with propriety can be said in this place. They are collected in two volumes by Mr. Stockdale, and the flow of eloquence which runs through the several speeches is sufficiently known.

It will not be useless to mention two more volumes, which may form a proper supplement to this edition. They contain a set of Sermons left for publication by John Taylor, LL.D. The Reverend Mr. Hayes, who ushered these Discourses into the world, has not given them as the composition of Dr. Taylor. All he could say for his departed friend was, that he left them in silence among his papers. Mr. Hayes knew them to be the production of a superior mind; and the writer of these Memoirs owes it to the candour of that elegant scholar, that he is now warranted to give an additional proof of Johnson's ardour in the cause of piety, and every moral duty. The last discourse in the collection was intended to be delivered by Dr. Taylor at the funeral of Johnson's wife; but that reverend gentleman declined the office, because, as he told Mr. Hayes, the praise of the deceased was too much amplified. He, who reads the piece, will find it a beautiful moral lesson, written with temper, and no where over-charged with ambitious ornaments. The rest of the Discourses were the fund, which Dr. Taylor, from time to time, carried with him to his pulpit. He had the largest Bull * in England, and some of the best Sermons.

We come now to the Lives of the Poets, a work undertaken at the age of seventy, yet the most brilliant, and certainly the most popular, of all our Author's writings. For this performance he needed little preparation. Attentive always to the history of letters, and by his own natural bias fond of biography, he was the more willing to embrace the proposition of the Booksellers. He was versed in the whole body of English Poetry, and his rules of criticism were settled with precision. The dissertation, in the Life of Cowley, on the metaphysical Poets of the last century, has the attraction of novelty as well as sound observation. The writers who followed Dr. Donne, went in quest of something better than truth and nature. As Sancho says in Don Quixote, they wanted better bread than is made with wheat. They took pains to bewilder themselves, and were ingenious for no other purpose than to err. In Johnson's review of Cowley's works, false wit is detected in all its shapes, and the Gothic taste for glittering conceits, and far-fetched allusions, is exploded, never, it is hoped, to revive again.

An author who has published his observations on the Life and Writings of Dr. Johnson, speaking of the Lives of the Poets, says, "These compositions, abounding in strong and acute remark, and with many fine and even sublime

* See Johnson's Letters from Ashbourne, in this edition.

passages, have unquestionably great merit; but if they be regarded merely as containing narrations of the lives, delineations of the characters, and strictures of the several authors, they are far from being always to be depended on." He adds, "The characters are sometimes partial, and there is sometimes too much malignity of misrepresentation, to which, perhaps, may be joined no inconsiderable portion of erroneous criticism." The several clauses of this censure deserve to be answered as fully as the limits of this essay will permit.

In the first place, the facts are related upon the best intelligence, and the best vouchers that could be gleaned, after a great lapse of time. Probability was to be inferred from such materials as could be procured, and no man better understood the nature of historical evidence than Dr. Johnson; no man was more religiously an observer of truth. If his History is any where defective, it must be imputed to the want of better information, and the errors of uncertain tradition.

Ad nos vix tenuis famæ perlabitur aura.

If the strictures on the works of the various authors are not always satisfactory, and if erroneous criticism may sometimes be suspected, who can hope that in matters of taste all shall agree? The instances in which the public mind has differed from the positions advanced by the author, are few in number. It has been said, that justice has not been done to Swift; that Gay and Prior are undervalued: and that Gray has been harshly treated. This charge, perhaps, ought not to be disputed. Johnson, it is well known, had conceived a prejudice against Swift. His friends trembled for him when he was writing that life: but were pleased, at last, to see it executed with temper and moderation. As to Prior, it is probable that he gave his real opinion, but an opinion that will not be adopted by men of lively fancy. With regard to Gray, when he condemns the apostrophe, in which Father Thames is desired to tell who drives the hoop, or tosses the ball, and then adds, that Father Thames had no better means of knowing than himself; when he compares the abrupt beginning of the first stanza of the Bard to the ballad of Johnny Armstrong, "*Is there ever a man in all Scotland;*" there are, perhaps, few friends of Johnson, who would not wish to blot out both the passages. It may be questioned whether the remarks on Pope's Essay on Man can be received without great caution. It has been already mentioned, that Crousaz, a professor in Switzerland, eminent for his Treatise of Logic, started up a professed enemy to that poem. Johnson says, "his mind was one of those, in which philosophy and piety are happily united. He looked with distrust upon all metaphysical systems of theology, and was persuaded, that the positions of Pope were intended to draw mankind away from Revelation, and to represent the whole course of things as a necessary concatenation of indissoluble fatality." This is not the place for a controversy about the Leibnitzian system. Warburton, with all the powers of his large and comprehensive mind, published a Vindication of Pope; and yet Johnson says, that "in many passages a religious eye may easily discover expressions not very favourable to morals, or to liberty." This sentence is severe, and, perhaps, dogmatical. Crousaz wrote an Examen of The Essay on Man, and afterwards a Commentary on every remarkable passage; and though it now appears that Mrs. Elizabeth Carter translated the foreign Critic, yet it is certain that Johnson encouraged the work, and, perhaps, imbibed those early prejudices which adhered to him to the end of his life. He shuddered at the idea of irreligion. Hence we are told in the Life of Pope, "Never were penury of knowledge and vulgarity of sentiment so happily disguised; Pope, in the chair of wisdom tells much that every man knows, and much that he did not know himself; and gives us comfort in the position, that *though man's a fool, yet God is wise*; that human advantages are unstable; that our true honour is, not to have a great part, but to act it well; that virtue only is our own, and that happiness is always in our power. The reader, when he meets all this in its new array, no longer knows the talk of his mother and his nurse." But may it not be said, that every system of ethics must or ought to terminate in plain and general maxims for the use of life? and, though in such axioms no discovery is made, does not the beauty of the moral theory consist in the premises, and the chain of reasoning that leads to the conclusion? May not truth, as Johnson himself says, be conveyed to the mind by a new train of intermediate images? Pope's doctrine about the ruling passion does not seem to be refuted, though it is called, in harsh terms, pernicious as well as false, tending to establish a kind of moral predestination, or over-ruling principle, which cannot be resisted. But Johnson was too easily alarmed in the cause of religion. Organized as the human race is, individuals have different inlets of perception, different powers of mind, and different sensations of pleasure and pain.

All spread their charms, but charms not all alike,
On different senses different objects strike:
Hence different passions more or less inflame,
As strong or weak the organs of the frame.
And hence one master passion in the breast,
Like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest.

Brumoy says, Pascal from his infancy felt himself a geometrician; and Vandyke, in like manner, was a painter. Shakspeare, who of all poets, had the deepest insight into human nature, was aware of a prevailing bias in the operations of every mind. By him we are told, "Masterless passion sways us to the mood o what it likes or loathes."

It remains to inquire whether in the lives before us the characters are partial, and too often drawn with malignity of misrepresentation. To prove this it is alleged, that Johnson has misrepresented the circumstance relative to the translation of the first Iliad, and maliciously ascribed that performance to Addison, instead of Tickell, with too much reliance on the testimony of Pope, taken from the account in the papers left by Mr. Spence. For a refutation of the fallacy imputed to Addison, we are referred to a note in the Biographia Britannica, written by the late Judge Blackstone, who, it is said, examined the whole matter with accuracy, and found that the first regular statement of the accusation against Addison was published by Ruffhead, in his Life of Pope, from the materials which he received from Dr. Warburton. But with all due deference to the learned Judge, whose talents deserve all praise, this account is by no means accurate.

Sir Richard Steele, in a dedication of the Comedy of the Drummer to Mr. Congreve, gave the first insight into that business. He says, in a style of anger and resentment, "If that gentleman (Mr. Tickell) thinks himself injured, I will allow I have wronged him upon this issue, that (if the reputed translator of the first book of Homer shall please to give us another book) there shall appear another good judge of poetry, besides Mr. Alexander Pope, who shall like it." The authority of Steele outweighs all opinions founded on vain conjecture, and, indeed, seems to be decisive, since we do not find that Tickell, though warmly pressed, thought proper to vindicate himself.

But the grand proof of Johnson's malignity is the manner in which he has treated the character and conduct of Milton. To enforce this charge has wearied sophistry, and exhausted the invention of a party. What they cannot deny, they palliate; what they cannot prove, they say is probable. But why all this rage against Dr. Johnson? Addison, before him, had said of Milton:

> Oh! had the Poet ne'er prophaned his pen,
> To varnish o'er the guilt of faithless men!

And had not Johnson an equal right to avow his sentiments? Do his enemies claim a privilege to abuse whatever is valuable to Englishmen, either in Church or State? and must the liberty of UNLICENSED PRINTING be denied to the friends of the British constitution?

It is unnecessary to pursue the argument through all its artifices, since, dismantled of ornament and seducing language, the plain truth may be stated in a narrow compass. Johnson knew that Milton was a republican; he says, "an acrimonious and surly republican, for which it is not known that he gave any better reason than that a popular government was the most frugal; for, the trappings of a monarchy would set up an ordinary commonwealth." Johnson knew that Milton talked aloud "of the danger of RE-ADMITTING KINGSHIP in this nation;" and when Milton adds, "that a commonwealth was commended, or rather enjoined, by our Saviour himself, to all Christians, not without a remarkable disallowance, and the brand of Gentilism UPON KINGSHIP," Johnson thought him no better than a wild enthusiast. He knew as well as Milton, "that the happiness of a nation must needs be firmest and certainest in a full and free council of their own electing, where no single person but reason only sways;" but the example of all the republics, recorded in the annals of mankind, gave him no room to hope that REASON only would be heard. He knew that the republican form of government, having little or no complication, and no consonance of parts by a nice mechanism forming a regular whole, was too simple to be beautiful even in theory. In practice, it perhaps never existed. In its most flourishing state, at Athens, Rome, and Carthage, it was a constant scene of tumult and commotion. From the mischiefs of a wild democracy, the progress has ever been to the dominion of an aristocracy: and the word *aristocracy* fatally includes the boldest and most turbulent citizens, who rise by their crimes, and call themselves the best men in the state. By intrigue, by cabal, and faction, a pernicious oligarchy is sure to succeed, and end at last in the tyranny of a single ruler. Tacitus, the great master of political wisdom, saw, under the mixed authority of king, nobles, and people, a better form of government than Milton's boasted republic; and what Tacitus admired in theory, but despaired of enjoying, Johnson saw established in this country. He knew that it had been overturned by the rage of frantic men; but he knew that, after the iron rod of Cromwell's usurpation, the constitution was once more restored to its first principles. Monarchy was established, and this country was regenerated. It was regenerated a second time at the Revolution: the rights of men were then defined, and the blessings of good order and civil liberty have been ever since diffused through the whole community.

The peace and happiness of society were what Dr. Johnson had at heart. He knew that Milton called his defence of the Regicides a defence of the people of England, but, however glossed and varnished, he thought it an apology for murder. Had the men, who, under a show of liberty, brought their king to the scaffold, proved by their subsequent conduct, that the public good inspired their actions, the end might have given some sanction to the means; but usurpation and slavery followed. Milton undertook the office of secretary under the despotic power of Cromwell, offering the incense of adulation to his master, with the titles of *Director of public Councils, the Leader of unconquered*

Armies, the Father of his Country. Milton declared at the same time, that *nothing is more pleasing to God, or more agreeable to reason, than that the highest mind should have the sovereign power.* In this strain of servile flattery Milton gives us the right divine of tyrants. But it seems, in the same piece, he exhorts Cromwell "not to desert those great principles of liberty which he had professed to espouse; for, it would be a grievous enormity, if, after having successfully opposed tyranny, he should himself act the part of a tyrant, and betray the cause that he had defended." This desertion of every honest principle the advocate for liberty lived to see. Cromwell acted the tyrant; and with vile hypocrisy, told the people, that he had consulted the Lord, and the Lord would have it so. Milton took an underpart in the tragedy. Did that become the defender of the people of England? Brutus saw his country enslaved; he struck the blow for freedom, and he died with honour in the cause. Had he lived to be a secretary under Tiberius, what would now be said of his memory?

But still, it seems, the prostitution with which Milton is charged, since it cannot be defended, is to be retorted on the character of Johnson. For this purpose a book has been published, called *Remarks on Dr. Johnson's Life of Milton; to which are added Milton's Tractate of Education, and Areopagitica.* In this laboured tract we are told, "There is one performance ascribed to the pen of the Doctor, where the prostitution is of so singular a nature, that it would be difficult to select an adequate motive for it out of the mountainous heap of conjectural causes of human passions or human caprice. It is the speech of the late unhappy Dr. William Dodd, when he was about to hear the sentence of the law pronounced upon him, in consequence of an indictment for forgery. The voice of the public has given the honour of manufacturing this speech to Dr. Johnson; and the style and figuration of the speech itself confirm the imputation. But it is hardly possible to divine what could be his motive for accepting the office. A man, to express the precise state of mind of another, about to be destined to an ignominious death for a capital crime, should, one would imagine, have some consciousness, that he himself had incurred some guilt of the same kind." In all the schools of sophistry is there to be found so vile an argument? In the purlieus of Grub-street is there such another mouthful of dirt? In the whole quiver of malice is there so envenomed a shaft?

After this it is to be hoped, that a certain class of men will talk no more of Johnson's malignity. The last apology for Milton is, that he acted according to his principles. But Johnson thought those principles detestable; pernicious to the constitution in Church and State, destructive of the peace of society, and hostile to the great fabric of civil policy, which the wisdom of ages has taught every Briton to revere, to love and cherish. He reckoned Milton in that class of men, of whom the Roman historian says, when they want, by a sudden convulsion, to overturn the government, they roar and clamour for liberty; if they succeed, they destroy liberty itself. *Ut imperium evertant, libertatem præferunt; si perverterint, libertatem ipsam aggredientur.* Such were the sentiments of Dr. Johnson; and it may be asked, in the language of Bolingbroke, "Are these sentiments, which any man, who is born a Briton, in any circumstances, in any situation, ought to be ashamed or afraid to avow?" Johnson has done ample justice to Milton's poetry: the Criticism on Paradise Lost is a sublime composition. Had he thought the author as good and pious a citizen as Dr. Watts, he would have been ready, notwithstanding his non-conformity, to do equal honour to the memory of the man.

It is now time to close this Essay, which the author fears has been drawn too much into length. In the progress of the work, feeble as it may be, he thought himself performing the last human office to the memory of a friend, whom he loved, esteemed, and honoured.

> His saltem accumulem donis, et fungar inani
> Munere.——

The author of these Memoirs has been anxious to give the features of the man, and the true character of the author. He has not suffered the hand of partiality to colour his excellences with too much warmth; nor has he endeavoured to throw his singularities too much into the shade. Dr. Johnson's failings may well be forgiven for the sake of his virtues. His defects were spots in the sun. His piety, his kind affections, and the goodness of his heart, present an example worthy of imitation. His works still remain a monument of genius and of learning. Had he written nothing but what is contained in this edition, the quantity shows a life spent in study and meditation. If to this be added the labour of his Dictionary and other various productions, it may be fairly allowed, as he used to say of himself, that he has written his share. In the volumes here presented to the public, the reader will find a perpetual source of pleasure and instruction. With due precautions authors may learn to grace their style with elegance, harmony, and precision; they may be taught to think with vigour and perspicuity; and to crown the whole, by a diligent attention to these books, all may advance in virtue.

THE

RAMBLER;

A PERIODICAL PAPER,

PUBLISHED IN 1750, 1751, 1752.

BY

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.

Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri,
Quo me cunque rapit tempestas, deferor hospes.
HOR.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY JONES & COMPANY,
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1826.

HISTORICAL PREFACE.

The long space which intervened between the Guardian and the Rambler, from 1713 to 1750, was filled up by many attempts of the periodical kind, but scarcely any of these had a reformation of manners and morals for their object. A few valuable papers on general and useful topics appeared, but so encumbered with angry political contests, as to be soon forgotten. Dr. Johnson was the first to restore the periodical essay to its original purpose, and it will appear soon that there is none of his works on which he set a higher value than on his Rambler. He seems to have thought, that it would constitute his principal fame, and the learned world appear to have been of the same opinion.

Its commencement was a matter of great importance with him; and he was so desirous to benefit the age by this production, that he began to write with the solemnity of preparatory prayer. In the volume of his Devotions, published soon after his death, we find the following, entitled "Prayer on the Rambler."

"Almighty God, the giver of all good things, without whose help all labour is ineffectual, and without whose grace all wisdom is folly; grant, I beseech thee, that in this my undertaking, thy Holy Spirit may not be withheld from me, but that I may promote thy glory, and the salvation both of myself and others: grant this, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ, Amen."

The first paper was published on Tuesday, March 20, 1750, and the work continued without the least interruption, every Tuesday and Saturday, until Saturday, March 14, 1752, on which day it closed.

The sale was very inconsiderable, and seldom exceeded five hundred copies: and it is very remarkable that the only paper which had a prosperous sale (No. 97.) was one of the very few which Dr. Johnson did not write. It was written by Richardson, author of Clarissa, Pamela, and Sir Charles Grandison. Modern taste will not allow it a very high place, but its style was at that time better adapted to the readers of the Rambler than that of Dr. Johnson.—It may here be noticed, that the assistance our Author received from correspondents amounted to a very small proportion. The four billets in No. 10. were written by Miss Mulso, afterwards Mrs. Chapone; No. 30. was written by Miss Talbot, and Nos. 44. and 100. by the learned and celebrated Mrs. Carter.

Of the characters described in the Rambler, some were not altogether fictitious, yet they were not exact portraits. The Author employed some adventitious circumstances to produce effect. *Prospero* in No. 200. was intended for the celebrated actor Garrick. By *Gelidus* in No. 24. the Author is said to have meant Mr. Coulson, a mathematician, who formerly lived at Rochester. The man "immortalized for purring like a cat," was one Busby, a proctor in the Commons. He who barked so ingeniously, and then called the drawer to drive away the dog, was father to Dr. Saltar of the Charterhouse. He who sung a song, and by correspondent motions of his arm chalked out a giant on the wall, was one Richardson an attorney. *Polyphilus*, in No. 19. is said to have been drawn from the various studies of Floyer Sydenhem, but no produce of his studies is known except his translations.

It has been remarked by the Editor of the "British Essayists" that the Rambler made its way very slowly into the world. This may be true, if spoken of its appearance in numbers. The style was new; it appeared harsh, involved, and perplexed: it required more than a transitory inspection to be understood; but this repulsive appearance was soon overcome: and few works have been more successful, when reprinted in volumes. It was admired by scholars and recommended by the friends of religion

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and literature, as a book by which a man might be taught to think: and the Author lived to see ten large editions printed in England, besides those which were clandestinely printed in other parts of Great Britain, in Ireland, and in America. For some years past the demand for it has been greater than for any of the "British Essayists;" its influence on the literature of the age has been great. Dr. Johnson is certainly not to be imitated with perfect success, yet the attempt to imitate him, where it has neither been servile or artificial, has elevated the style of every species of literary composition. "In every thing we perceive more vigour, more spirit, more elegance. He not only began a revolution in our language, but lived till it was almost completed."

It has already been said that Dr. Johnson set a high value on the RAMBLER, and it may now be added that he bestowed a labour upon it, with which he never favoured any other of his works. This circumstance, which escaped the researches of all his biographers, was lately discovered by the editor of the "British Essayists," whose words we shall borrow on the present occasion.

After noticing the mistakes Mr. Boswell had fallen into, on the subject of the *perfection* of the RAMBLERS at their first appearance, the Editor of the "Essayists" says, "Is it not surprising that this friend and companion of our illustrious Author, who has obliged the public with the most perfect delineation ever exhibited of any human being, and who declared so often that he was determined

'To lose no drop of that immortal man —

that one so inquisitive after the most trifling circumstance connected with Dr. Johnson's character or history, should have never heard or discovered that Dr. Johnson almost *re-wrote* the RAMBLER after the first folio edition. Yet the alterations made by him in the second and third editions of the RAMBLER far exceed *six thousand*; a number which may justify the use of the word *re-wrote*, although it must not be taken in its literal acceptation. A comparison of the first edition with the fourth or any subsequent edition will show the curious examiner in what these alterations consist. In the mean time we may apply to the Author what he says of Pope—'He laboured his works, first to gain reputation, and afterwards to keep it.' He was not content to satisfy; he desired to excel, and therefore always endeavoured to do his best: he did not court the candour, but dared the judgment of his readers; and expecting no indulgence from others, he showed none himself. He examined lines and words with minute and punctilious observation, and retouched every part with indefatigable diligence till he had left nothing to be forgiven."

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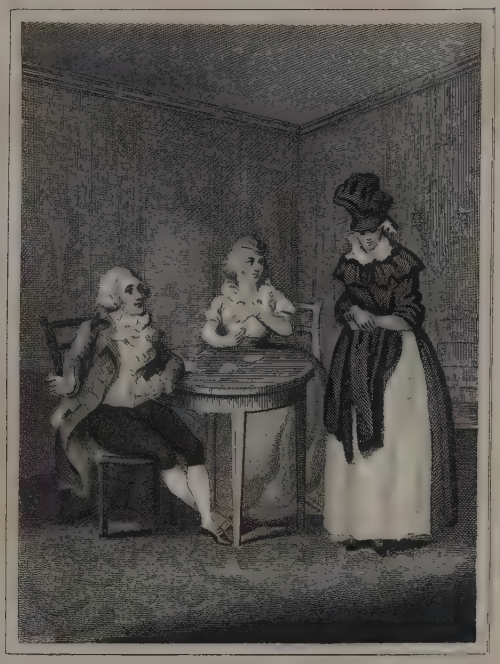
RAMBLER. Nº 182.

THEN SHEWED HIM THE DOOR

Engraved by Simmons

FROM A PAINTING BY CORBOULD



RAMBLER, Nº 12.

IS THAT COLOUR YOUR OWN CHILD!

Engraved by C. H. Rigaud

FROM A PAINTING BY CORBOULD

London, Published by Jones & Cº Decº 1ˢᵗ 1815

RAMBLER, No. 44.

FANATICISM & SUPERSTITION.

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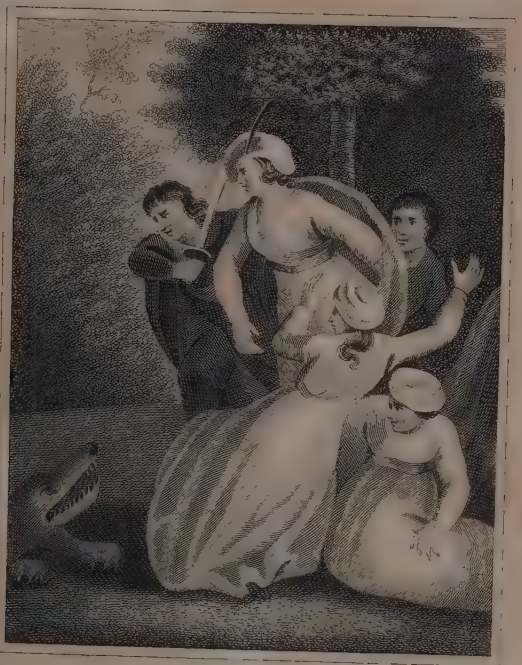

RAMBLER, N° 202

THE RAMBLER.

No. 1.] TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 1749-50.

Cur tamen hoc libeat potius decurrere campo,
Per quem magnus equos Auruncæ flexit alumnus,
Si vacat, et placidi rationem admittitis, edam.

JUV.

Why to expatiate in this beaten field,
Why arms, oft used in vain, I mean to wield;
If time permit, and candour will attend,
Some satisfaction this essay may lend.

ELPHINSTON.

THE difficulty of the first address on any new occasion, is felt by every man in his transactions with the world, and confessed by the settled and regular forms of salutation which necessity has introduced into all languages. Judgment was wearied with the perplexity of being forced upon choice, where there was no motive to preference; and it was found convenient that some easy method of introduction should be established, which, if it wanted the allurement of novelty, might enjoy the security of prescription.

Perhaps few authors have presented themselves before the public, without wishing that such ceremonial modes of entrance had been anciently established, as might have freed them from those dangers which the desire of pleasing is certain to produce, and precluded the vain expedients of softening censure by apologies, or rousing attention by abruptness.

The epic writers have found the proemial part of the poem such an addition to their undertaking, that they have almost unanimously adopted the first lines of Homer, and the reader needs only be informed of the subject, to know in what manner the poem will begin.

But this solemn repetition is hitherto the peculiar distinction of heroic poetry; it has never been legally extended to the lower orders of literature, but seems to be considered as an hereditary privilege, to be enjoyed only by those who claim it from their alliance to the genius of Homer.

The rules which the injudicious use of this prerogative suggested to Horace, may indeed be applied to the direction of candidates for inferior fame; it may be proper for all to remember, that they ought not to raise expectation which it is not in their power to satisfy, and that it is more pleasing to see smoke brightening into flame, than flame sinking into smoke.

This precept has been long received, both from regard to the authority of Horace, and its conformity to the general opinion of the world; yet there have been always some, that thought it no deviation from modesty to recommend their own labours, and imagined themselves entitled by indisputable merit to an exemption from general restraints, and to elevations not allowed in common life. They, perhaps, believed, that when, like Thucydides, they bequeathed to mankind κτῆμα ἐς ἀεὶ, *an estate for ever*, it was an additional favour to inform them of its value.

It may, indeed, be no less dangerous to claim on certain occasions, too little than too much. There is something captivating in spirit and intrepidity, to which we often yield, as to a resistless power; nor can he reasonably expect the confidence of others, who too apparently distrusts himself.

Plutarch, in his enumeration of the various occasions on which a man may without just offence proclaim his own excellences, has omitted the case of an author entering the world; unless it may be comprehended under his general position, that a man may lawfully praise himself for those qualities which cannot be known but from his own mouth; as when he is among strangers, and can have no opportunity of an actual exertion of his powers. That the case of an author is parallel will scarcely be granted, because he necessarily discovers the degree of his merit to his judges, when he appears at his trial. But it should be remembered, that unless his judges are inclined to favour him, they will hardly be persuaded to hear the cause.

In love, the state which fills the heart with a degree of solicitude next that of an author, it

has been held a maxim, that success is most easily obtained by indirect and unperceived approaches; he who too soon professes himself a lover, raises obstacles to his own wishes, and those whom disappointments have taught experience, endeavour to conceal their passion till they believe their mistress wishes for the discovery. The same method, if it were practicable to writers, would save many complaints of the severity of the age, and the caprices of criticism. If a man could glide imperceptibly into the favour of the public, and only proclaim his pretensions to literary honours when he is sure of not being rejected, he might commence author with better hopes, as his failings might escape contempt, though he shall never attain much regard.

But since the world supposes every man that writes, ambitious of applause, as some ladies have taught themselves to believe that every man intends love, who expresses civility, the miscarriage of any endeavour in learning raises an unbounded contempt, indulged by most minds without scruple, as an honest triumph over unjust claims, and exorbitant expectations. The artifices of those who put themselves in this hazardous state, have therefore been multiplied in proportion to their fear as well as their ambition; and are to be looked upon with more indulgence, as they are incited at once by the two great movers of the human mind, the desire of good and the fear of evil. For who can wonder that, allured on one side, and frightened on the other, some should endeavour to gain favour by bribing the judge with an appearance of respect which they do not feel, to excite compassion by confessing weakness of which they are not convinced; and others to attract regard by a show of openness and magnanimity, by a daring profession of their own deserts, and a public challenge of honours and rewards?

The ostentatious and haughty display of themselves has been the usual refuge of diurnal writers; in vindication of whose practice it may be said, that what it wants in prudence is supplied by sincerity, and who at least may plead, that if their boasts deceive any into the perusal of their performances, they defraud them of but little time.

——*Quid enim? Concurritur—horæ*
Momento cita mors venit, aut victoria læta.

The battle join, and in a moment's flight,
Death, or a joyful conquest, ends the fight.
FRANCIS.

The question concerning the merit of the day is soon decided, and we are not condemned to toil through half a folio, to be convinced that the writer has broke his promise.

It is one among many reasons for which I purpose to endeavour the entertainment of my countrymen by a short essay on Tuesday and Saturday, that I hope not much to tire those whom I shall not happen to please; and if I am not commended for the beauty of my works, to be at least pardoned for their brevity. But whether my expectations are most fixed on pardon or praise, I think it not necessary to discover; for having accurately weighed the reasons for arrogance and submission, I find them so nearly equiponderant, that my impatience to try the event of my first performance will not suffer me to attend any longer the trepidations of the balance.

There are, indeed, many conveniences almost peculiar to this method of publication, which may naturally flatter the author, whether he be confident or timorous. The man to whom the extent of his knowledge, or the sprightliness of his imagination, has, in his own opinion, already secured the praises of the world, willingly takes that way of displaying his abilities which will soonest give him an opportunity of hearing the voice of fame; it heightens his alacrity to think in how many places he shall hear what he is now writing, read with ecstacies to-morrow. He will often please himself with reflecting, that the author of a large treatise must proceed with anxiety, lest, before the completion of his work, the attention of the public may have changed its object; but that he who is confined to no single topic, may follow the national taste through all its variations, and catch the *aura popularis*, the gale of favour, from what point soever it shall blow.

Nor is the prospect less likely to ease the doubts of the cautious, and the terrors of the fearful, for to such the shortness of every single paper is a powerful encouragement. He that questions his abilities to arrange the dissimilar parts of an extensive plan, or fears to be lost in a complicated system, may yet hope to adjust a few pages without perplexity; and if, when he turns over the repositories of his memory, he finds his collection too small for a volume, he may yet have enough to furnish out an essay. He that would fear to lay out too much time upon an experiment of which he knows not the event, persuades himself that a few days will show him what he is to expect from his learning and his genius. If he thinks his own judgment not sufficiently enlightened, he may, by attending to the remarks which every paper will produce, rectify his opinions. If he should with too little premeditation encounter himself by an unwieldy subject, he can quit it without confessing his ignorance, and pass to other topics less dangerous, or more tractable. And if he finds, with all his industry, and all his artifices, that he cannot deserve regard, or cannot attain it, he may let the design fall at once, and, without injury to others or himself, retire to amusements of greater pleasure, or to studies of better prospect.

No. 2.] SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 1749-50.

Stare loco nescit, pereunt vestigia mille
Ante fugam, absentemque ferit gravis ungula campum. STATIUS.

Th' impatient courser pants in every vein,
And pawing seems to beat the distant plain;
Hills, vales, and floods appear already cross'd,
And ere he starts a thousand steps are lost.
POPE.

THAT the mind of man is never satisfied with the objects immediately before it, but is always breaking away from the present moment, and losing itself in schemes of future felicity; and that we forget the proper use of the time now in our power, to provide for the enjoyment of that which, perhaps, may never be granted us, has been frequently remarked; and as this practice is a commodious subject of raillery to the gay, and of declamation to the serious, it has been ridiculed with all the pleasantry of wit, and exaggerated with all the amplifications of rhetoric. Every instance, by which its absurdity might appear most flagrant, has been studiously collected; it has been marked with every epithet of contempt, and all the tropes and figures have been called forth against it.

Censure is willingly indulged, because it always implies some superiority; men please themselves with imagining that they have made a deeper search, or wider survey, than others, and detected faults and follies, which escape vulgar observation. And the pleasure of wantoning in common topics is so tempting to a writer, that he cannot easily resign it; a train of sentiments generally received enables him to shine without labour, and to conquer without a contest. It is so easy to laugh at the folly of him who lives only in idea, refuses immediate ease for distant pleasures, and, instead of enjoying the blessings of life, lets life glide away in preparations to enjoy them; it affords such opportunities of triumphant exultation, to exemplify the uncertainty of the human state, to rouse mortals from their dream, and inform them of the silent celerity of time, that we may believe authors willing rather to transmit than examine so advantageous a principle, and more inclined to pursue a track so smooth and so flowery, than attentively to consider whether it leads to truth.

This quality of looking forward into futurity, seems the unavoidable condition of a being, whose motions are gradual, and whose life is progressive: as his powers are limited, he must use means for the attainment of his ends, and intend first what he performs last; as by continual advances from his first stage of existence, he is perpetually varying the horizon of his prospects, he must always discover new motives of action, new excitements of fear, and allurements of desire.

The end therefore which at present calls forth our efforts, will be found, when it is once gained to be only one of the means to some remoter end. The natural flights of the human mind are not from pleasure to pleasure, but from hope to hope.

He that directs his steps to a certain point, must frequently turn his eyes to that place which he strives to reach; he that undergoes the fatigue of labour, must solace his weariness with the contemplation of its reward. In agriculture, one of the most simple and necessary employments, no man turns up the ground but because he thinks of the harvest, that harvest which blights may intercept, which inundations may sweep away, or which death or calamity may hinder him from reaping.

Yet as few maxims are widely received or long retained but for some conformity with truth and nature, it must be confessed, that this caution against keeping our view too intent upon remote advantages is not without its propriety or usefulness, though it may have been recited with too much levity, or enforced with too little distinction; for, not to speak of that vehemence of desire which presses through right and wrong to its gratification, or that anxious inquietude which is justly chargeable with distrust of Heaven, subjects too solemn for my present purpose; it frequently happens that by indulging early the raptures of success, we forget the measures necessary to secure it, and suffer the imagination to riot in the fruition of some possible good, till the time of obtaining it has slipped away.

There would, however, be few enterprises of great labour or hazard undertaken, if we had not the power of magnifying the advantages which we persuade ourselves to expect from them. When the knight of La Mancha gravely recounts to his companion the adventures by which he is to signalize himself in such a manner, that he shall be summoned to the support of empires, solicited to accept the heiress of the crown which he has preserved, have honours and riches to scatter about him, and an island to bestow on his worthy squire, very few readers, amidst their mirth or pity, can deny that they have admitted visions of the same kind; though they have not, perhaps, expected events equally strange, or by means equally inadequate. When we pity him, we reflect on our own disappointments; and when we laugh, our hearts inform us that he is not more ridiculous than ourselves, except that he tells what we have only thought.

The understanding of a man naturally sanguine, may, indeed, be easily vitiated by the luxurious indulgence of hope, however necessary to the production of every thing great or excellent, as some plants are destroyed by too open exposure to that sun which gives life and beauty to the vegetable world.

Perhaps no class of the human species requir more to be cautioned against this anticipation

happiness, than those that aspire to the name of authors. A man of lively fancy no sooner finds a hint moving in his mind, than he makes momentaneous excursions to the press, and to the world, and, with a little encouragement from flattery, pushes forward into future ages, and prognosticates the honours to be paid him, when envy is extinct, and faction forgotten, and those, whom partiality now suffers to obscure him, shall have given way to the triflers of as short duration as themselves.

Those who have proceeded so far as to appeal to the tribunal of succeeding times, are not likely to be cured of their infatuation; but all endeavours ought to be used for the prevention of a disease, for which, when it has attained its height, perhaps no remedy will be found in the gardens of philosophy, however she may boast her physic of the mind, her cathartics of vice, or lenitives of passion.

I shall, therefore, while I am yet but lightly touched with the symptoms of the writer's malady, endeavour to fortify myself against the infection, not without some weak hope that my preservatives may extend their virtue to others, whose employment exposes them to the same danger.

Laudis amore tumes? Sunt certa piacula, quæ te
Ter pure lecto poterunt recreare libello.

Is fame your passion? Wisdom's powerful charm,
If thrice read over, shall its force disarm.

FRANCIS.

It is the sage advice of Epictetus, that a man should accustom himself often to think of what is most shocking and terrible, that by such reflections he may be preserved from too ardent wishes for seeming good, and from too much dejection in real evil.

There is nothing more dreadful to an author than neglect; compared with which, reproach, hatred, and opposition, are names of happiness; yet this worst, this meanest fate, every one who dares to write has reason to fear.

I nunc, et versus tecum meditare canoros.

Go now, and meditate thy tuneful lays.

ELPHINSTON.

It may not be unfit for him who makes a new entrance into the lettered world, so far to suspect his own powers, as to believe that he possibly may deserve neglect; that nature may not have qualified him much to enlarge or embellish knowledge, nor sent him forth entitled by indisputable superiority to regulate the conduct of the rest of mankind: that, though the world must be granted to be yet in ignorance, he is not destined to dispel the cloud, nor to shine out as one of the luminaries of life. For this suspicion, every catalogue of a library will furnish sufficient reason; as he will find it crowded with names of men, who, though now forgotten, were once no less enterprising or confident than himself, equally pleased with their own productions, equally caressed by their patrons, and flattered by their friends.

But, though it should happen that an author is capable of excelling, yet his merit may pass without notice, huddled in the variety of things, and thrown into the general miscellany of life. He that endeavours after fame by writing, solicits the regard of a multitude fluctuating in pleasures, or immersed in business, without time for intellectual amusements; he appeals to judges, prepossessed by passions, or corrupted by prejudices, which preclude their approbation of any new performance. Some are too indolent to read any thing, till its reputation is established; others too envious to promote that fame which gives them pain by its increase. What is new is opposed, because most are unwilling to be taught; and what is known is rejected, because it is not sufficiently considered, that men more frequently require to be reminded than informed. The learned are afraid to declare their opinion early, lest they should put their reputation in hazard; the ignorant always imagine themselves giving some proof of delicacy, when they refuse to be pleased: and he that finds his way to reputation through all these obstructions, must acknowledge that he is indebted to other causes besides his industry, his learning, or his wit.

No. 3.] TUESDAY, MARCH 27, 1750.

Virtus, repulsæ nescia sordidæ,
Intaminatis fulget honoribus,
Nec sumit aut ponit secures
Arbitrio popularis auræ. HOR.

Undisappointed in designs,
With native honours virtue shines;
Nor takes up power, nor lays it down,
As giddy rabbles smile or frown.

ELPHINSTON.

THE task of an author is, either to teach what is not known, or to recommend known truths by his manner of adorning them; either to let new light in upon the mind, and open new scenes to the prospect, or to vary the dress and situation of common objects, so as to give them fresh grace and more powerful attractions, to spread such flowers over the regions through which the intellect has already made its progress, as may tempt it to return, and take a second view of things hastily passed over, or negligently regarded.

Either of these labours is very difficult, because that they may not be fruitless, men must not only be persuaded of their errors, but reconciled to their guide; they must not only confess their ignorance, but, what is still less pleasing,

must allow that he from whom they are to learn is more knowing than themselves.

It might be imagined that such an employment was in itself sufficiently irksome and hazardous; that none would be found so malevolent as wantonly to add weight to the stone of Sisyphus; and that few endeavours would be used to obstruct those advances to reputation, which must be made at such an expense of time and thought, with so great hazard in the miscarriage, and with so little advantage from the success.

Yet there is a certain race of men, that either imagine it their duty, or make it their amusement, to hinder the reception of every work of learning, or genius, who stand as centinels in the avenues of fame, and value themselves upon giving Ignorance and Envy the first notice of a prey.

To these men, who distinguish themselves by the appellation of Critics, it is necessary for a new author to find some means of recommendation. It is probable, that the most malignant of these persecutors might be somewhat softened, and prevailed on, for a short time, to remit their fury. Having for this purpose considered many expedients, I find in the records of ancient times, that Argus was lulled by music, and Cerberus quieted with a sop; and am therefore inclined to believe that modern critics, who, if they have not the eyes, have the watchfulness of Argus, and can bark as loud as Cerberus, though, perhaps, they cannot bite with equal force, might be subdued by methods of the same kind. I have heard how some have been pacified with claret and a supper, and others laid asleep with the soft notes of flattery.

Though the nature of my undertaking gives me sufficient reason to dread the united attacks of this virulent generation, yet I have not hitherto persuaded myself to take any measures for flight or treaty. For I am in doubt whether they can act against me by lawful authority, and suspect that they have presumed upon a forged commission, styled themselves the ministers of Criticism, without any authentic evidence of delegation, and uttered their own determinations as the decrees of a higher judicature.

Criticism, from whom they derive their claim to decide the fate of writers, was the eldest daughter of Labour and of Truth: she was, at her birth, committed to the care of Justice, and brought up by her in the palace of Wisdom. Being soon distinguished by the celestials, for her uncommon qualities, she was appointed the governess of Fancy, and empowered to beat time to the chorus of the Muses, when they sung before the throne of Jupiter.

When the Muses condescended to visit this lower world, they came accompanied by Criticism, to whom, upon her descent from her native regions, Justice gave a sceptre, to be carried aloft in her right hand, one end of which was tinctured with ambrosia, and inwreathed with a golden foliage of amaranths and bays; the other end was encircled with cypress and poppies, and dipped in the waters of oblivion. In her left hand she bore an unextinguishable torch, manufactured by Labour, and lighted by Truth, of which it was the particular quality immediately to show every thing in its true form, however it might be disguised to common eyes. Whatever Art could complicate, or Folly could confound, was, upon the first gleam of the torch of Truth, exhibited in its distinct parts and original simplicity; it darted through the labyrinths of sophistry, and showed at once all the absurdities to which they served for refuge; it pierced through the robes which rhetoric often sold to falsehood, and detected the disproportion of parts which artificial veils had been contrived to cover.

Thus furnished for the execution of her office, Criticism came down to survey the performances of those who professed themselves the votaries of the Muses. Whatever was brought before her, she beheld by the steady light of the torch of Truth, and when her examination had convinced her, that the laws of just writing had been observed, she touched it with the amaranthine end of the sceptre, and consigned it over to immortality.

But it more frequently happened, that in the works which required her inspection, there was some imposture attempted; that false colours were laboriously laid; that some secret inequality was found between the words and sentiments, or some dissimilitude of the ideas and the original objects; that incongruities were linked together, or that some parts were of no use but to enlarge the appearance of the whole, without contributing to its beauty, solidity, or usefulness.

Wherever such discoveries were made, and they were made whenever these faults were committed, Criticism refused the touch which conferred the sanction of immortality, and, when the errors were frequent and gross, reversed the sceptre, and let drops of Lethe distil from the poppies and cypress, a fatal mildew, which immediately began to waste the work, away, till it was at last totally destroyed.

There were some compositions brought to the test, in which, when the strongest light was thrown upon them, their beauties and faults appeared so equally mingled, that Criticism stood with her sceptre poised in her hand, in doubt whether to shed Lethe, or ambrosia, upon them. These at last increased to so great a number, that she was weary of attending such doubtful claims, and for fear of using improperly the sceptre of Justice, referred the cause to be considered by Time.

The proceedings of Time, though very dilatory, were, some few caprices excepted, con-

formable to justice; and many who thought themselves secure by a short forbearance, have sunk under his sithe, as they were posting down with their volumes in triumph to futurity. It was observable that some were destroyed by little and little, and others crushed for ever by a single blow.

Criticism having long kept her eye fixed steadily upon Time, was at last so well satisfied with his conduct, that she withdrew from the earth with her patroness Astrea, and left Prejudice and False Taste to ravage at large as the associates of Fraud and Mischief; contenting herself thenceforth to shed her influence from afar upon some select minds, fitted for its reception by learning and by virtue.

Before her departure she broke her sceptre, of which the shivers, that formed the ambrosial end, were caught up by Flattery, and those that had been infected with the waters of Lethe were, with equal haste, seized by Malevolence. The followers of Flattery, to whom she distributed her part of the sceptre, neither had nor desired light, but touched indiscriminately whatever Power or Interest happened to exhibit. The companions of Malevolence were supplied by the Furies with a torch, which had this quality peculiar to infernal lustre, that its light fell only upon faults.

> No light, but rather darkness visible,
> Served only to discover sights of wo.

With these fragments of authority, the slaves of Flattery and Malevolence marched out, at the command of their mistresses, to confer immortality, or condemn to oblivion. But this sceptre had now lost its power; and Time passes his sentence at leisure, without any regard to their determinations.

No. 4.] SATURDAY, MARCH 31, 1750.

Simul et jucunda et idonea dicere vitæ. HOR.

And join both profit and delight in one.

CREECH.

THE works of fiction, with which the present generation seems more particularly delighted, are such as exhibit life in its true state, diversified only by accidents that daily happen in the world, and influenced by passions and qualities which are really to be found in conversing with mankind.

This kind of writing may be termed not improperly the comedy of romance, and is to be conducted nearly by the rules of comic poetry. Its province is to bring about natural events by easy means, and to keep up curiosity without the help of wonder: it is therefore precluded from the machines and expedients of the heroic romance, and can neither employ giants to snatch away a lady from the nuptial rites, nor knights to bring her back from captivity; it can neither bewilder its personages in deserts, nor lodge them in imaginary castles.

I remember a remark made by Scaliger upon Pontanus, that all his writings are filled with the same images; and that if you take from him his lilies and his roses, his satyrs and his dryads, he will have nothing left that can be called poetry. In like manner almost all the fictions of the last age will vanish, if you deprive them of a hermit and a wood, a battle and a shipwreck.

Why this wild strain of imagination found reception so long in polite and learned ages, it is not easy to conceive; but we cannot wonder that while readers could be procured, the authors were willing to continue it; for when a man had by practice gained some fluency of language, he had no further care than to retire to his closet, let loose his invention, and heat his mind with incredibilities; a book was thus produced without fear of criticism, without the toil of study, without knowledge of nature, or acquaintance with life.

The task of our present writers is very different; it requires, together with that learning which is to be gained from books, that experience which can never be attained by solitary diligence, but must arise from general converse and accurate observation of the living world. Their performances have, as Horace expresses it, *plus oneris quantum veniæ minus*, little indulgence, and therefore more difficulty. They are engaged in portraits of which every one knows the original, and can detect any deviation from exactness of resemblance. Other writings are safe, except from the malice of learning, but these are in danger from every common reader: as the slipper ill executed was censured by a shoemaker who happened to stop in his way at the Venus of Apelles.

But the fear of not being approved as just copiers of human manners, is not the most important concern that an author of this sort ought to have before him. These books are written chiefly to the young, the ignorant, and the idle, to whom they serve as lectures of conduct, and introductions into life. They are the entertainment of minds unfurnished with ideas, and therefore easily susceptible of impressions; not fixed by principles, and therefore easily following the current of fancy; not informed by experience, and consequently open to every false suggestion and partial account.

That the highest degree of reverence should be paid to youth, and that nothing indecent should be suffered to approach their eyes or ears, are precepts extorted by sense and virtue from an ancient writer, by no means eminent for chastity of thought. The same kind, though not the same degree of caution, is required in every thing which is laid before them, to secure

them from unjust prejudices, perverse opinions, and incongruous combinations of images.

In the romances formerly written, every transaction and sentiment was so remote from all that passes among men, that the reader was in very little danger of making any applications to himself; the virtues and crimes were equally beyond his sphere of activity; and he amused himself with heroes and with traitors, deliverers and persecutors, as with beings of another species, whose actions were regulated upon motives of their own, and who had neither faults nor excellences in common with himself.

But when an adventurer is levelled with the rest of the world, and acts in such scenes of the universal drama, as may be the lot of any other man; young spectators fix their eyes upon him with closer attention, and hope, by observing his behaviour and success, to regulate their own practices, when they shall be engaged in the like part.

For this reason, these familiar histories may perhaps be made of greater use than the solemnities of professed morality, and convey the knowledge of vice and virtue with more efficacy than axioms and definitions. But if the power of example is so great, as to take possession of the memory by a kind of violence, and produce effects almost without the intervention of the will, care ought to be taken, that, when the choice is unrestrained, the best examples only should be exhibited; and that which is likely to operate so strongly, should not be mischievous or uncertain in its effects.

The chief advantage which these fictions have over real life is, that their authors are at liberty, though not to invent, yet to select objects, and to cull from the mass of mankind, those individuals upon which the attention ought most to be employed: as a diamond, though it cannot be made, may be polished by art, and placed in such a situation, as to display that lustre which before was buried among common stones.

It is justly considered as the greatest excellency of art, to imitate nature; but it is necessary to distinguish those parts of nature, which are most proper for imitation: greater care is still required in representing life, which is so often discoloured by passion, or deformed by wickedness. If the world be promiscuously described, I cannot see of what use it can be to read the account: or why it may not be as safe to turn the eye immediately upon mankind as upon a mirror which shows all that presents itself without discrimination.

It is therefore not a sufficient vindication of a character, that it is drawn as it appears; for many characters ought never to be drawn: nor of a narrative, that the train of events is agreeable to observation and experience; for that observation which is called knowledge of the world, will be found much more frequently to make men cunning than good. The purpose of these writings is surely not only to show mankind, but to provide that they may be seen hereafter with less hazard; to teach the means of avoiding the snares which are laid by Treachery for Innocence, without infusing any wish for that superiority with which the betrayer flatters his vanity; to give the power of counteracting fraud, without the temptation to practise it; to initiate youth by mock encounters in the art of necessary defence, and to increase prudence without impairing virtue.

Many writers, for the sake of following nature, so mingle good and bad qualities in their principal personages, that they are both equally conspicuous; and as we accompany them through their adventures with delight, and are led by degrees to interest ourselves in their favour, we lose the abhorrence of their faults, because they do not hinder our pleasure, or, perhaps, regard them with some kindness, for being united with so much merit.

There have been men indeed splendidly wicked, whose endowments threw a brightness on their crimes, and whom scarce any villany made perfectly detestable, because they never could be wholly divested of their excellences; but such have been in all ages the great corrupters of the world, and their resemblance ought no more to be preserved, than the art of murdering without pain.

Some have advanced, without due attention to the consequences of this notion, that certain virtues have their correspondent faults, and therefore that to exhibit either apart is to deviate from probability. Thus men are observed by Swift to be "grateful in the same degree as they are resentful." This principle, with others of the same kind, supposes man to act from a brute impulse, and pursue a certain degree of inclination, without any choice of the object; for, otherwise, though it should be allowed that gratitude and resentment arise from the same constitution of the passions, it follows not that they will be equally indulged when reason is consulted; yet, unless that consequence be admitted, this sagacious maxim becomes an empty sound, without any relation to practice or to life.

Nor is it evident, that even the first motions to these effects are always in the same proportion. For pride, which produces quickness of resentment, will obstruct gratitude, by unwillingness to admit that inferiority which obligation implies; and it is very unlikely that he who cannot think he receives a favour, will acknowledge or repay it.

It is of the utmost importance to mankind, that positions of this tendency should be laid open and confuted; for while men consider good and evil as springing from the same root, they will spare the one for the sake of the other, and in judging, if not of others, at least of them-

selves, will be apt to estimate their virtues by their vices. To this fatal error all those will contribute, who confound the colours of right and wrong, and, instead of helping to settle their boundaries, mix them with so much art, that no common mind is able to disunite them.

In narratives where historical veracity has no place, I cannot discover why there should not be exhibited the most perfect idea of virtue; of virtue not angelical, nor above probability, for what we cannot credit, we shall never imitate, but the highest and purest that humanity can reach, which, exercised in such trials as the various revolutions of things shall bring upon it, may, by conquering some calamities, and enduring others, teach us what we may hope, and what we can perform. Vice, for vice is necessary to be shown, should always disgust; nor should the graces of gayety, or the dignity of courage, be so united with it, as to reconcile it to the mind. Wherever it appears, it should raise hatred by the malignity of its practices, and contempt by the meanness of its stratagems: for while it is supported by either parts or spirit, it will be seldom heartily abhorred. The Roman tyrant was content to be hated, if he was but feared; and there are thousands of the readers of romances willing to be thought wicked, if they may be allowed to be wits. It is therefore to be steadily inculcated, that virtue is the highest proof of understanding, and the only solid basis of greatness; and that vice is the natural consequence of narrow thoughts; that it begins in mistake, and ends in ignominy.*

No. 5.] TUESDAY, APRIL 3, 1750.

Et nunc omnis ager, nunc omnis parturit arbos,
Nunc frondent silvæ, nunc formosissimus annus.

VIRG.

Now every field, now every tree is green;
Now genial Nature's fairest face is seen.

ELPHINSTON.

EVERY man is sufficiently discontented with some circumstances of his present state, to suffer his imagination to range more or less in quest of future happiness, and to fix upon some point of time, in which, by the removal of the inconvenience which now perplexes him, or acquisition of the advantage which he at present wants, he shall find the condition of his life very much improved.

When this time, which is too often expected with great impatience, at last arrives, it generally comes without the blessing for which it was desired; but we solace ourselves with some new prospect, and press forward again with equal eagerness.

It is lucky for a man, in whom this temper prevails, when he turns his hopes upon things wholly out of his own power; since he forbears then to precipitate his affairs, for the sake of the great event that is to complete his felicity, and waits for the blissful hour with less neglect of the measures necessary to be taken in the mean time.

I have long known a person of this temper, who indulged his dream of happiness with less hurt to himself than such chimerical wishes commonly produce, and adjusted his scheme with such address, that his hopes were in full bloom three parts of the year, and in the other part never wholly blasted. Many, perhaps, would be desirous of learning by what means he procured to himself such a cheap and lasting satisfaction. It was gained by a constant practice of referring the removal of all his uneasiness to the coming of the next spring; if his health was impaired, the spring would restore it; if what he wanted was at a high price, it would fall its value in the spring.

The spring indeed did often come without any of these effects, but he was always certain that the next would be more propitious; nor was ever convinced, that the present spring would fail him before the middle of summer; for he always talked of the spring as coming till it was past, and when it was once past, every one agreed with him that it was coming.

By long converse with this man, I am, perhaps, brought to feel immoderate pleasure in the contemplation of this delightful season; but I have the satisfaction of finding many, whom it can be no shame to resemble, infected with the same enthusiasm; for there is, I believe, scarce any poet of eminence, who has not left some testimony of his fondness for the flowers, the zephyrs, and the warblers of the spring. Nor has the most luxuriant imagination been able to describe the serenity and happiness of the golden age, otherwise than by giving a perpetual spring, as the highest reward of uncorrupted innocence.

There is, indeed, something inexpressibly pleasing in the annual renovation of the world, and the new display of the treasures of nature. The cold and darkness of winter, with the naked deformity of every object on which we turn our eyes, make us rejoice at the succeeding season, as well for what we have escaped, as for what we may enjoy; and every budding flower, which a warm situation brings early to our view, is considered by us as a messenger to notify the approach of more joyous days.

The Spring affords to a mind, so free from the disturbance of cares or passions as to be vacant to calm amusements, almost every thing that our present state makes us capable of enjoy-

* This excellent paper was occasioned by the popularity of "Roderick Random," and "Tom Jones," which appeared about this time, and have been the models of that species of romance, now known by the more common name of *Novel*.—C.

ing. The variegated verdure of the fields and woods, the succession of grateful odours, the voice of pleasure pouring out its notes on every side, with the gladness apparently conceived by every animal, from the growth of his food, and the clemency of the weather, throw over the whole earth an air of gayety, significantly expressed by the smile of nature.

Yet there are men to whom these scenes are able to give no delight, and who hurry away from all the varieties of rural beauty, to lose their hours and divert their thoughts by cards or assemblies, a tavern dinner, or the prattle of the day.

It may be laid down as a position which will seldom deceive, that when a man cannot bear his own company, there is something wrong. He must fly from himself either because he feels a tediousness in life from the equipoise of an empty mind, which, having no tendency to one motion more than another, but as it is impelled by some external power, must always have recourse to foreign objects; or he must be afraid of the intrusion of some unpleasing ideas, and perhaps is struggling to escape from the remembrance of a loss, the fear of a calamity, or some other thought of greater horror.

Those whom sorrow incapacitates to enjoy the pleasures of contemplation, may properly apply to such diversions, provided they are innocent, as lay strong hold on the attention; and those, whom fear of any future affliction chains down to misery, must endeavour to obviate the danger.

My considerations shall, on this occasion, be turned on such as are burdensome to themselves merely because they want subjects for reflection, and to whom the volume of nature is thrown open without affording them pleasure or instruction, because they never learned to read the characters.

A French author has advanced this seeming paradox, that *very few men know how to take a walk*; and, indeed, it is true, that few know how to take a walk with a prospect of any other pleasure, than the same company would have afforded them at home.

There are animals that borrow their colour from the neighbouring body, and consequently vary their hue as they happen to change their place. In like manner, it ought to be the endeavour of every man to derive his reflections from the objects about him; for it is to no purpose that he alters his position, if his attention continues fixed to the same point. The mind should be kept open to the access of every new idea, and so far disengaged from the predominance of particular thoughts, as easily to accomodate itself to occasional entertainment.

A man that has formed this habit of turning every new object to his entertainment, finds in the productions of nature an inexhaustible stock of materials upon which he can employ himself without any temptations to envy or malevolence; faults, perhaps, seldom totally avoided by those, whose judgment is much exercised upon the works of art. He has always a certain prospect of discovering new reasons for adoring the sovereign Author of the universe, and probable hopes of making some discovery of benefit to others, or of profit to himself. There is no doubt but many vegetables and animals have qualities that might be of great use, to the knowledge of which there is not required much force of penetration, or fatigue of study, but only frequent experiments, and close attention. What is said by the chemists of their darling mercury, is, perhaps, true of every body through the whole creation, that if a thousand lives should be spent upon it, all its properties would not be found out.

Mankind must necessarily be diversified by various tastes, since life affords and requires such multiplicity of employments, and a nation of naturalists is neither to be hoped or desired; but it is surely not improper to point out a fresh amusement to those who languish in health, and repine in plenty, for want of some source of diversion that may be less easily exhausted, and to inform the multitudes of both sexes, who are burdened with every new day, that there are many shows which they have not seen.

He that enlarges his curiosity after the works of nature, demonstrably multiplies the inlets to happiness; and, therefore, the younger part of my readers, to whom I dedicate this vernal speculation, must excuse me for calling upon them, to make use at once of the spring of the year, and the spring of life; to acquire, while their minds may be yet impressed with new images, a love of innocent pleasures, and an ardour for useful knowledge; and to remember, that a blighted spring makes a barren year, and that the vernal flowers, however beautiful and gay, are only intended by nature as preparatives to autumnal fruits.

No. 6.] SATURDAY, APRIL 7, 1750.

Strenua nos exercet inertia, navibus atque
Quadrigis petimus bene vivere: quod petis, hic est;
Est Ulubris, animus si te non deficit æquus. HOR.

Active in indolence, abroad we roam
In quest of happiness which dwells at home:
With vain pursuits fatigued, at length you'll find,
No place excludes it from an equal mind
ELPHINSTON.

THAT man should never suffer his happiness to depend upon external circumstances, is one of the chief precepts of the stoical philosophy; a precept, indeed, which that lofty sect has extended beyond the condition of human life, and in which some of them seem to have comprised

an utter exclusion of all corporeal pain and pleasure from the regard or attention of a wise man.

Such *sapientia insaniens*, as Horace calls the doctrine of another sect, such extravagance of philosophy, can want neither authority nor argument for its confutation: it is overthrown by the experience of every hour, and the powers of nature rise up against it. But we may very properly inquire, how near to this exalted state it is in our power to approach? how far we can exempt ourselves from outward influences, and secure to our minds a state of tranquillity? for though the boast of absolute independence is ridiculous and vain, yet a mean flexibility to every impulse, and a patient submission to the tyranny of casual troubles, is below the dignity of that mind, which, however depraved or weakened, boasts its derivation from a celestial original, and hopes for a union with infinite goodness, and unvariable felicity.

Ni vitiis pejora fovens
Proprium deserat ortum.

Unless the soul, to vice a thrall,
Desert her own original.

The necessity of erecting ourselves to some degree of intellectual dignity, and of perceiving resources of pleasure, which may not be wholly at the mercy of accident, is never more apparent than when we turn our eyes upon those whom fortune has let loose to their own conduct; who, not being chained down by their condition to a regular and stated allotment of their hours, are obliged to find themselves business or diversion, and having nothing within that can entertain or employ them, are compelled to try all the arts of destroying time.

The numberless expedients practised by this class of mortals to alleviate the burden of life, are not less shameful, nor, perhaps, much less pitiable, than those to which a trader on the edge of a bankruptcy is reduced. I have seen melancholy overspread a whole family at the disappointment of a party for cards; and when, after the proposal of a thousand schemes, and the despatch of the footman upon a hundred messages, they have submitted, with gloomy resignation, to the misfortune of passing one evening in conversation with each other; on a sudden, such are the revolutions of the world, an unexpected visitor has brought them relief, acceptable as provision to a starving city, and enabled them to hold out till the next day.

The general remedy of those who are uneasy without knowing the cause, is change of place; they are willing to imagine that their pain is the consequence of some local inconvenience, and endeavour to fly from it, as children from their shadows; always hoping for some more satisfactory delight from every new scene, and always returning home with disappointment and complaints.

Who can look upon this kind of infatuation, without reflecting on those that suffer under the dreadful symptoms of canine madness, termed by physicians the *dread of water?* These miserable wretches, unable to drink, though burning with thirst, are sometimes known to try various contortions, or inclinations of the body, flattering themselves that they can swallow in one posture that liquor which they find in another to repel their lips.

Yet such folly is not peculiar to the thoughtless or ignorant, but sometimes seizes those minds which seem most exempted from it, by the variety of attainments, quickness of penetration, or severity of judgment; and, indeed, the pride of wit and knowledge is often mortified by finding that they confer no security against the common errors, which mislead the weakest and meanest of mankind.

These reflections arose in my mind upon the remembrance of a passage in Cowley's preface to his poems, where, however exalted by genius, and enlarged by study, he informs us of a scheme of happiness to which the imagination of a girl, upon the loss of her first lover, could have scarcely given way; but which he seems to have indulged, till he had totally forgotten its absurdity, and would probably have put in execution, had he been hindered only by his reason.

"My desire," says he, "has been for some years past, though the execution has been accidentally diverted, and does still vehemently continue, to retire myself to some of our American plantations, not to seek for gold, or enrich myself with the traffic of those parts, which is the end of most men that travel thither; but to forsake this world for ever, with all the vanities and vexations of it, and to bury myself there in some obscure retreat, but not without the consolation of letters and philosophy."

Such was the chimerical provision which Cowley had made in his own mind, for the quiet of his remaining life, and which he seems to recommend to posterity, since there is no other reason for disclosing it. Surely no stronger instance can be given of a persuasion that content was the inhabitant of particular regions, and that a man might set sail with a fair wind, and leave behind him all his cares, incumbrances, and calamities.

If he travelled so far with no other purpose than to *bury himself in some obscure retreat*, he might have found, in his own country, innumerable coverts sufficiently dark to have concealed the genius of Cowley; for whatever might be his opinion of the importunity with which he might be summoned back into public life, a short experience would have convinced him, that privation is easier than acquisition, and that it would require little continuance to free himself from the intrusion of the world.

There is pride enough in the human heart to prevent much desire of acquaintance with a man, by whom we are sure to be neglected, however his reputation for science or virtue may excite our curiosity or esteem; so that the lover of retirement needs not be afraid lest the respect of strangers should overwhelm him with visits. Even those to whom he has formerly been known, will very patiently support his absence, when they have tried a little to live without him, and found new diversions for those moments which his company contributed to exhilarate.

It was, perhaps, ordained by Providence, to hinder us from tyrannising over one another, that no individual should be of such importance, as to cause, by his retirement or death, any chasm in the world. And Cowley had conversed to little purpose with mankind, if he had never remarked, how soon the useful friend, the gay companion, and the favoured lover, when once they are removed from before the sight, give way to the succession of new objects.

The privacy, therefore, of his hermitage might have been safe enough from violation, though he had chosen it within the limits of his native island; he might have found here preservatives against the *vanities* and *vexations* of the world, not less efficacious than those which the woods or fields of America could afford him: but having once his mind embittered with disgust, he conceived it impossible to be far enough from the cause of his uneasiness; and was posting away with the expedition of a coward, who, for want of venturing to look behind him, thinks the enemy perpetually at his heels.

When he was interrupted by company, or fatigued with business, he so strongly imaged to himself the happiness of leisure and retreat, that he determined to enjoy them for the future without interruption, and to exclude for ever all that could deprive him of his darling satisfaction. He forgot, in the vehemence of desire, that solitude and quiet owe their pleasures to those miseries, which he was so studious to obviate: for such are the vicissitudes of the world, through all its parts, that day and night, labour and rest, hurry and retirement, endear each other; such are the changes that keep the mind in action; we desire, we pursue, we obtain, we are satiated: we desire something else, and begin a new pursuit.

If he had proceeded in his project, and fixed his habitation in the most delightful part of the new world, it may be doubted, whether his distance from the *vanities* of life would have enabled him to keep away the *vexations*. It is common for a man, who feels pain, to fancy that he could bear it better in any other part. Cowley having kown the troubles and perplexities of a particular condition, readily persuaded himself that nothing worse was to be found, and that every alteration would bring some improvement: he never suspected that the cause of his unhappiness was within, that his own passions were not sufficiently regulated, and that he was harassed by his own impatience, which could never be without something to awaken it, would accompany him over the sea, and find its way to his American elysium. He would, upon the trial, have been soon convinced, that the fountain of content must spring up in the mind; and that he who has so little knowledge of human nature, as to seek happiness by changing any thing but his own dispositions, will waste his life in fruitless efforts, and multiply the griefs which he purposes to remove.*

No. 7.] TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 1750.

O qui perpetuâ mundum ratione gubernas,
Terrarum cœlique sator!——
Disjice terrenæ nebulas et pondera molis,
Atque tuo splendore mica! Tu namque serenum,
Tu requies tranquilla piis. Te cernere, finis,
Principium, vector, dux, semita, terminus, idem.

BOETHIUS.

O thou whose power o'er moving worlds presides,
Whose voice created, and whose wisdom guides,
On darkling man in pure effulgence shine,
And cheer the clouded mind with light divine.
'Tis thine alone to calm the pious breast
With silent confidence and holy rest:
From thee, great God, we spring, to thee we tend,
Path, motive, guide, original, and end.

THE love of retirement has, in all ages, adhered closely to those minds, which have been most enlarged by knowledge, or elevated by genius. Those who enjoyed every thing generally supposed to confer happiness, have been forced to seek it in the shades of privacy. Though they possessed both power and riches, and were, therefore, surrounded by men who considered it as their chief interest to remove from them every thing that might offend their ease, or interrupt their pleasure, they have soon felt the languors of satiety, and found themselves unable to pursue the race of life without frequent respirations of intermediate solitude.

To produce this disposition, nothing appears requisite but quick sensibility and active imagination; for, though not devoted to virtue, or science, the man, whose faculties enable him to make ready comparisons of the present with the past, will find such a constant recurrence of the same pleasures and troubles, the same expectations and disappointments, that he will gladly snatch an hour of retreat, to let his thoughts expatiate at large, and seek for that variety in his own ideas, which the objects of sense cannot afford him.

* See Dr. Johnson's Life of Cowley, vol. ix. p 10—16

Nor will greatness, or abundance, exempt him from the importunities of this desire, since, if he is born to think, he cannot restrain himself from a thousand inquiries and speculations, which he must pursue by his own reason, and which the splendour of his condition can only hinder: for those who are most exalted above dependence or controul, are yet condemned to pay so large a tribute of their time to custom, ceremony, and popularity, that, according to the Greek proverb, no man in the house is more a slave than the master.

When a king asked Euclid, the mathematician, whether he could not explain his art to him in a more compendious manner? he was answered, That there was no royal way to geometry. Other things may be seized by might, or purchased with money, but knowledge is to be gained only by study, and study to be prosecuted only in retirement.

These are some of the motives which have had power to sequester kings and heroes from the crowds that soothed them with flatteries, or inspirited them with acclamations; but their efficacy seems confined to the higher mind, and to operate little upon the common classes of mankind, to whose conceptions the present assemblage of things is adequate, and who seldom range beyond those entertainments and vexations, which solicit their attention by pressing on their senses.

But there is a universal reason for some stated intervals of solitude, which the institutions of the church call upon me now especially to mention; a reason which extends as wide as moral duty, or the hopes of Divine favour in a future state; and which ought to influence all ranks of life, and all degrees of intellect; since none can imagine themselves not comprehended in its obligation, but such as determine to set their Maker at defiance by obstinate wickedness, or whose enthusiastic security of his approbation places them above external ordinances, and all human means of improvement.

The great task of him who conducts his life by the precepts of religion, is to make the future predominate over the present, to impress upon his mind so strong a sense of the importance of obedience to the Divine will, of the value of the reward promised to virtue, and the terrors of the punishment denounced against crimes, as may overbear all the temptations which temporal hope or fear can bring in his way, and enable him to bid equal defiance to joy and sorrow, to turn away at one time from the allurements of ambition, and push forward at another against the threats of calamity.

It is not without reason that the apostle represents our passage through this stage of our existence by images drawn from the alarms and solicitude of a military life; for we are placed in such a state, that almost every thing about us conspires against our chief interest. We are in danger from whatever can get possession of our thoughts; all that can excite in us either pain or pleasure, has a tendency to obstruct the way that leads to happiness, and either to turn us aside, or retard our progress.

Our senses, our appetites, and our passions, are our lawful and faithful guides, in most things that relate solely to this life; and, therefore, by the hourly necessity of consulting them, we gradually sink into an implicit submission, and habitual confidence. Every act of compliance with their motions facilitates a second compliance, every new step towards depravity is made with less reluctance than the former, and thus the descent to life merely sensual is perpetually accelerated.

The senses have not only that advantage over conscience, which things necessary must always have over things chosen, but they have likewise a kind of prescription in their favour. We feared pain much earlier than we apprehended guilt, and were delighted with the sensations of pleasure, before we had capacities to be charmed with the beauty of rectitude. To this power, thus early established, and incessantly increasing, it must be remembered that almost every man has, in some part of his life, added new strength by a voluntary or negligent subjection of himself; for who is there that has not instigated his appetites by indulgence, or suffered them, by an unresisting neutrality, to enlarge their dominion, and multiply their demands?

From the necessity of dispossessing the sensitive faculties of the influence which they must naturally gain by this pre-occupation of the soul, arises that conflict between opposite desires in the first endeavours after a religious life; which, however enthusiastically it may have been described, or however contemptuously ridiculed, will naturally be felt in some degree, though varied without end, by different tempers of mind, and innumerable circumstances of health or condition, greater or less fervour, more or fewer temptations to relapse.

From the perpetual necessity of consulting the animal faculties, in our provision for the present life, arises the difficulty of withstanding their impulses, even in cases where they ought to be of no weight; for the motions of sense are instantaneous, its objects strike unsought, we are accustomed to follow its directions, and therefore often submit to the sentence without examining the authority of the judge.

Thus it appears, upon a philosophical estimate, that, supposing the mind, at any certain time, in an equipoise between the pleasures of this life, and the hopes of futurity, present objects falling more frequently into the scale, would in time preponderate, and that our regard for an invisible state would grow every moment

weaker, till at last it would lose all its activity, and become absolutely without effect.

To prevent this dreadful event, the balance is put into our own hands, and we have power to transfer the weight to either side. The motives to a life of holiness are infinite, not less than the favour or anger of Omnipotence, not less than eternity of happiness or misery. But these can only influence our conduct as they gain our attention, which the business or diversions of the world are always calling off by contrary attractions.

The great art therefore of piety, and the end for which all the rites of religion seem to be instituted, is the perpetual renovation of the motives to virtue, by a voluntary employment of our mind in the contemplation of its excellence, its importance, and its necessity, which, in proportion as they are more frequently and more willingly revolved, gain a more forcible and permanent influence, till in time they become the reigning ideas, the standing principles of action, and the test by which every thing proposed to the judgment is rejected or approved.

To facilitate this change of our affections, it is necessary that we weaken the temptations of the world, by retiring at certain seasons from it; for its influence arising only from its presence, is much lessened when it becomes the object of solitary meditation. A constant residence amidst noise and pleasure, inevitably obliterates the impressions of piety, and a frequent abstraction of ourselves into a state, where this life, like the next, operates only upon the reason, will reinstate religion in its just authority, even without those irradiations from above, the hope of which I have no intention to withdraw from the sincere and the diligent.

This is that conquest of the world and of ourselves, which has been always considered as the perfection of human nature; and this is only to be obtained by fervent prayer, steady resolutions, and frequent retirement from folly and vanity, from the cares of avarice, and the joys of intemperance, from the lulling sounds of deceitful flattery, and the tempting sight of prosperous wickedness.

No. 8.] SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 1750.

——Patitur pœnas peccandi sola voluntas;
Nam scelus intra se tacitum qui cogitat ullum,
Facti crimen habet.

JUV.

For he that but conceives a crime in thought,
Contracts the danger of an actual fault.

CREECH.

IF the most active and industrious of mankind was able, at the close of life, to recollect distinctly his past moments, and distribute them in a regular account, according to the manner in which they have been spent, it is scarcely to be imagined how few would be marked out to the mind, by any permanent or visible effects, how small a proportion his real action would bear to his seeming possibilities of action, how many chasms he would find of wide and continued vacuity, and how many interstitial spaces unfilled, even in the most tumultuous hurries of business, and the most eager vehemence of pursuit.

It is said by modern philosophers, that not only the great globes of matter are thinly scattered through the universe, but the hardest bodies are so porous, that, if all matter were compressed to perfect solidity, it might be contained in a cube of a few feet. In like manner, if all the employment of life were crowded into the time which it really occupied, perhaps a few weeks, days, or hours, would be sufficient for its accomplishment, so far as the mind was engaged in the performance. For such is the inequality of our corporeal to our intellectual faculties, that we contrive in minutes what we execute in years, and the soul often stands an idle spectator of the labour of the hands, and expedition of the feet.

For this reason the ancient generals often found themselves at leisure to pursue the study of philosophy in the camp; and Lucan, with historical veracity, makes Cæsar relate of himself that he noted the revolutions of the stars in the midst of preparations for battle.

——Media inter prælia semper
Sideribus, cælique plagis, superisque vacavi.

Amid the storms of war, with curious eyes
I trace the planets and survey the skies.

That the soul always exerts her peculiar powers, with greater or less force, is very probable, though the common occasions of our present condition require but a small part of that incessant cogitation; and by the natural frame of our bodies, and general combination of the world, we are so frequently condemned to inactivity, that as through all our time we are thinking, so for a great part of our time we can only think.

Lest a power so restless should be either unprofitably or hurtfully employed, and the superfluities of intellect run to waste, it is no vain speculation to consider how we may govern our thoughts, restrain them from irregular motions, or confine them from boundless dissipation.

How the understanding is best conducted to the knowledge of science, by what steps it is to be led forwards in its pursuit, how it is to be cured of its defects, and habituated to new studies, has been the inquiry of many acute and learned men, whose observations I shall not either adopt or censure: my purpoes being to consider the moral discipline of the mind, and to promote the increase of virtue rather than of learning.

This inquiry seems to have been neglected for want of remembering, that all action has its origin in the mind, and that therefore to suffer the thoughts to be vitiated, is to poison the fountains of morality; irregular desires will produce licentious practices; what men allow themselves to wish they will soon believe, and will be at last incited to execute what they please themselves with contriving.

For this reason the casuists of the Roman church, who gain, by confession, great opportunities of knowing human nature, have generally determined that what is a crime to do, it is a crime to think.* Since by revolving with pleasure the facility, safety, or advantage of a wicked deed, a man soon begins to find his constancy relax, and his detestation soften; the happiness of success glittering before him, withdraws his attention from the atrociousness of the guilt, and acts are at last confidently perpetrated, of which the first conception only crept into the mind, disguised in pleasing complications, and permitted rather than invited.

No man has ever been drawn to crimes by love or jealousy, envy or hatred, but he can tell how easily he might at first have repelled the temptation, how readily his mind would have obeyed a call to any other object, and how weak his passion has been after some casual avocation, till he has recalled it again to his heart, and revived the viper by too warm a fondness.

Such, therefore, is the importance of keeping reason a constant guard over imagination, that we have otherwise no security for our own virtue, but may corrupt our hearts in the most recluse solitude, with more pernicious and tyrannical appetites and wishes than the commerce of the world will generally produce; for we are easily shocked by crimes which appear at once in their full magnitude, but the gradual growth of our own wickedness, endeared by interest, and palliated by all the artifices of self-deceit, gives us time to form distinctions in our own favour, and reason by degrees submits to absurdity, as the eye is in time accommodated to darkness.

In this disease of the soul, it is of the utmost importance to apply remedies at the beginning: and therefore I shall endeavour to show what thoughts are to be rejected or improved, as they regard the past, present, or future; in hopes that some may be awakened to caution and vigilance, who, perhaps, indulge themselves in dangerous dreams, so much the more dangerous, because, being yet only dreams, they are concluded innocent.

The recollection of the past is only useful by way of provision for the future; and, therefore, in reviewing all occurrences that fall under a religious consideration, it is proper that a man stop at the first thoughts, to remark how he was led thither, and why he continues the reflection. If he is dwelling with delight upon a stratagem of successful fraud, a night of licentious riot, or an intrigue of guilty pleasure, let him summon off his imagination as from an unlawful pursuit, expel those passages from his remembrance, of which, though he cannot seriously approve them, the pleasure overpowers the guilt, and refer them to a future hour, when they may be considered with greater safety. Such an hour will certainly come; for the impressions of past pleasure are always lessening, but the sense of guilt, which respects futurity, continues the same.

The serious and impartial retrospect of our conduct, is indisputable necessary to the confirmation or recovery of virtue, and is, therefore, recommended under the name of self-examination, by divines, as the first act previous to repentance. It is, indeed, of so great use, that without it we should always be to begin life, be seduced for ever by the same allurements, and misled by the same fallacies. But in order that we may not lose the advantage of our experience, we must endeavour to see every thing in its proper form, and excite in ourselves those sentiments, which the great Author of nature has decreed the concomitants or followers of good or bad actions.

Μηδ' ὕπνον μαλακοῖσιν ἐπ' ὄμμασι προσδέξασθαι,
Πρὶν τῶν ἡμερινῶν ἔργων τρὶς ἕκαστον ἐπελθεῖν
Πῃ παρέβην; τί δ' ἔρεξα; τί μοι δέον οὐκ ἐτελέσθη;
Ἀρξάμενος δ' ἀπὸ πρώτου ἐπέξιθι· καὶ μετέπειτα,
Δειλὰ μὲν ἐκπρήξας, ἐπιπλήσσεο, χρηστὰ δὲ, τέρπου.

Let not sleep (says Pythagoras*) fall upon thy eyes till thou hast thrice reviewed the transactions of the past day. Where have I turned aside from rectitude? What have I been doing? What have I left undone, which I ought to have done? Begin thus from the first act, and proceed; and in conclusion, at the ill which thou hast done be troubled, and rejoice for the good.*

Our thoughts on present things being determined by the objects before us, fall not under those indulgences, or excursions, which I am now considering. But I cannot forbear, under this head, to caution pious and tender minds, that are disturbed by the irruptions of wicked imaginations, against too great dejection, and too anxious alarms; for thoughts are only criminal, when they are first chosen, and then voluntarily continued.

Evil into the mind of God or man
May come and go, so unapproved, and leave
No spot or stain behind. MILTON.

In futurity chiefly are the snares lodged, by which the imagination is entangled. Futurity

* This was determined before their time. See Matt. 28.—C.

is the proper abode of hope and fear, with all their train and progeny of subordinate apprehensions and desires. In futurity events and chances are yet floating at large, without apparent connexion with their causes, and we therefore easily indulge the liberty of gratifying ourselves with a pleasing choice. To pick and cull among possible advantages is, as the civil law terms it, *in vacuum venire*, to take what belongs to nobody; but it has this hazard in it, that we shall be unwilling to quit what we have seized, though an owner should be found. It is easy to think on that which may be gained, till at last we resolve to gain it, and to image the happiness of particular conditions, till we can be easy in no other. We ought, at least, to let our desires fix upon nothing in another's power for the sake of our quiet, or in another's possession for the sake of our innocence. When a man finds himself led, though by a train of honest sentiments, to wish for that to which he has no right, he should start back as from a pitfal covered with flowers. He that fancies he should benefit the public more in a great station than the man that fills it, will in time imagine it an act of virtue to supplant him; and as opposition readily kindles into hatred, his eagerness to do that good, to which he is not called, will betray him to crimes, which in his original scheme were never proposed.

He therefore that would govern his actions by the laws of virtue, must regulate his thoughts by those of reason; he must keep guilt from the recesses of his heart, and remember that the pleasures of fancy, and the emotions of desire, are more dangerous as they are more hidden, since they escape the awe of observation, and operate equally in every situation, without the concurrence of external opportunities.

No. 9.] TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 1750

Quod sis esse velis, nihilque malis. MART.

Chuse what you are; no other state prefer.

ELPHINSTON.

It is justly remarked by Horace, that howsoever every man may complain occasionally of the hardships of his condition, he is seldom willing to change it for any other on the same level: for whether it be that he, who follows an employment, made choice of it at first on account of its suitableness to his inclination; or that when accident, or the determination of others, have placed him in a particular station, he, by endeavouring to reconcile himself to it, gets the custom of viewing it only on the fairest side; or whether every man thinks that class to which he belongs the most illustrious, merely because he has honoured it with his name; it is certain that, whatever be the reason, most men have a very strong and active prejudice in favour of their own vocation, always working upon their minds, and influencing their behaviour.

This partiality is sufficiently visible in every rank of the human species: but it exerts itself more frequently and with greater force among those who have never learned to conceal their sentiments for reasons of policy, or to model their expressions by the laws of politeness; and therefore the chief contests of wit among artificers and handicraftsmen arise from a mutual endeavour to exalt one trade by depreciating another.

From the same principle are derived many consolations to alleviate the inconveniences to which every calling is peculiarly exposed. A blacksmith was lately pleasing himself at his anvil, with observing, that though his trade was hot and sooty, laborious and unhealthy, yet he had the honour of living by his hammer, he got his bread like a man, and if his son should rise in the world, and keep his coach, nobody could reproach him that his father was a tailor.

A man, truly zealous for his fraternity is never so irresistibly flattered, as when some rival calling is mentioned with contempt. Upon this principle a linen-draper boasted that he had got a new customer, whom he could safely trust, for he could have no doubt of his honesty, since it was known, from unquestionable authority, that he was now filing a bill in chancery to delay payment for the clothes which he had worn the last seven years; and he himself had heard him declare, in a public coffee-house, that he looked upon the whole generation of woollen-drapers to be such despicable wretches, that no gentleman ought to pay them.

It has been observed that physicians and lawyers are no friends to religion; and many conjectures have been formed to discover the reason of such a combination between men who agree in nothing else, and who seem less to be affected, in their own provinces, by religious opinions, than any other part of the community. The truth is, very few of them have thought about religion; but they have all seen a parson: seen him in a habit different from their own, and therefore declared war against him. A young student from the inns of court, who has often attacked the curate of his father's parish with such arguments as his acquaintances could furnish, and returned to town without success, is now gone down with a resolution to destroy him; for he has learned at last how to manage a prig, and if he pretends to hold him again to syllogism, he has a catch in reserve, which neither logic nor metaphysics can resist.

I laugh to think how your unshaken *Cato*
Will look aghast, when unforeseen destruction
Pours in upon him thus.

The malignity of soldiers and sailors against each other has been often experienced at the cost

of their country; and, perhaps, no orders of men have an enmity of more acrimony, or longer continuance. When, upon our late successes at sea, some new regulations were concerted for establishing the rank of the naval commanders, a captain of foot very acutely remarked, that nothing was more absurd than to give any honorary rewards to seamen; "for honour," says he, "ought only to be won by bravery, and all the world knows that in a sea-fight there is no danger, and therefore no evidence of courage."

But although this general desire of aggrandizing themselves, by raising their profession, betrays men to a thousand ridiculous and mischievous acts of supplantation and detraction, yet as almost all passions have their good as well as bad effects, it likewise excites ingenuity, and sometimes raises an honest and useful emulation of diligence. It may be observed in general, that no trade had ever reached the excellence to which it is now improved, had its professors looked upon it with the eyes of indifferent spectators; the advances, from the first rude essays, must have been made by men who valued themselves for performances, for which scarce any other would be persuaded to esteem them.

It is pleasing to contemplate a manufacture rising gradually from its first mean state by the successive labours of innumerable minds; to consider the first hollow trunk of an oak, in which, perhaps, the shepherd could scarce venture to cross a brook swelled with a shower, enlarged at last into a ship of war, attacking fortresses, terrifying nations, setting storms and billows at defiance, and visiting the remotest parts of the globe. And it might contribute to dispose us to a kinder regard for the labours of one another, if we were to consider from what unpromising beginnings the most useful productions of art have probably arisen. Who, when he saw the first sand or ashes, by a casual intenseness of heat, melted into a metalline form, rugged with excrescences, and clouded with impurities, would have imagined, that in this shapeless lump lay concealed so many conveniences of life, as would in time constitute a great part of the happiness of the world? Yet by some such fortuitous liquefaction was mankind taught to procure a body at once in a high degree solid and transparent, which might admit the light of the sun, and exclude the violence of the wind: which might extend the sight of the philosopher to new ranges of existence, and charm him at one time with the unbounded extent of the material creation, and at another with the endless subordination of animal life; and, what is yet of more importance might supply the decays of nature, and succour old age with subsidiary sight. Thus was the first artificer in glass employed, though without his own knowledge or expectation. He was facilitating and prolonging the enjoyment of light, enlarging the avenues of science, and conferring the highest and most lasting pleasures; he was enabling the student to contemplate nature, and the beauty to behold herself.

This passion for the honour of a profession, like that for the grandeur of our own country, is to be regulated, not extinguished. Every man, from the highest to the lowest station, ought to warm his heart and animate his endeavours with the hopes of being useful to the world, by advancing the art which it is his lot to exercise, and for that end he must necessarily consider the whole extent of its application, and the whole weight of its importance. But let him not too readily imagine that another is ill employed, because, for want of fuller knowledge of his business, he is not able to comprehend its dignity. Every man ought to endeavour at eminence, not by pulling others down, but by raising himself, and enjoy the pleasure of his own superiority, whether imaginary or real, without interrupting others in the same felicity. The philosopher may very justly be delighted with the extent of his views, and the artificer with the readiness of his hands; but let the one remember, that, without mechanical performances, refined speculation is an empty dream; and the other, that, without theoretical reasoning, dexterity is little more than a brute instinct.

No. 10.] SATURDAY, APRIL 21, 1750.

Posthabui tamen illorum mea seria ludo

VIRG.

For trifling sports I quitted grave affairs.

THE number of correspondents which increase every day upon me, shows that my paper is at least distinguished from the common productions of the press. It is no less a proof of eminence to have many enemies than many friends; and I look upon every letter, whether it contains encomiums or reproaches, as an equal attestation of rising credit. The only pain which I can feel from my correspondence, is the fear of disgusting those, whose letters I shall neglect; and therefore I take this opportunity of reminding them, that in disapproving their attempts, whenever it may happen, I only return the treatment which I often receive. Besides, many particular motives influence a writer, known only to himself, or his private friends; and it may be justly concluded, that not all letters which are postponed are rejected, nor all that are rejected, critically condemned.

Having thus eased my heart of the only apprehension that sat heavy on it, I can please myself with the candour of Benevolus, who encourages me to proceed, without sinking under the anger of Flirtilla, who quarrels with me for being old and ugly, and for wanting both activity of body and sprightliness of mind; feed

er monkey with my lucubrations, and refuses any reconciliation till I have appeared in vindication of masquerades. That she may not however imagine me without support, and left to rest wholly upon my own fortitude, I shall now publish some letters which I have received from men as well dressed, and as handsome, as her favourite; and others from ladies, whom I sincerely believe as young, as rich, as gay, as pretty, as fashionable, and as often toasted and treated as herself.

"A SET of candid readers send their respects to the Rambler, and acknowledge his merit in so well beginning a work that may be of public benefit. But, superior as his genius is to the impertinences of a trifling age, they cannot but have a wish, that he would condescend to the weakness of minds softened by perpetual amusements, and now and then throw in, like his predecessors, some papers of a gay and humourous turn. Too fair a field now lies open, with too plentiful a harvest of follies! let the cheerful Thalia put in her sickle, and, singing at her work, deck her hair with red and blue."

"A LADY sends her compliments to the Rambler, and desires to know by what other name she may direct to him; what are his set of friends, his amusements; what his way of thinking, with regard to the living world, and its ways; in short, whether he is a person now alive, and in town? If he be, she will do herself the honour to write to him pretty often, and hopes, from time to time, to be the better for his advice and animadversions; for his animadversions on her neighbours at least. But, if he is a mere essayist, and troubles not himself with the manners of the age, she is sorry to tell him, that even the genius and correctness of an Addison will not secure him from neglect."

No man is so much abstracted from common life, as not to feel a particular pleasure from the regard of the female world; the candid writers of the first billet will not be offended, that my haste to satisfy a lady has hurried their address too soon out of my mind, and that I refer them for a reply to some future paper, in order to tell this curious inquirer after my other name, the answer of a philosopher to a man, who meeting him in the street, desired to see what he carried under his cloak; "I carry it there," says he, "that you may not see it." But, though she is never to know my name, she may often see my face; for I am of her opinion, that a diurnal writer ought to view the world, and that he who neglects his contemporaries, may be with justice neglected by them.

"LADY RACKET sends compliments to the Rambler, and lets him know she shall have cards at her house, every Sunday, the remainder of the season, where he will be sure of meeting all the good company in town. By this means she hopes to see his papers interspersed with living characters. She longs to see the torch of Truth produced at an assembly, and to admire the charming lustre it will throw on the jewels, complexions, and behaviour, of every dear creature there."

It is a rule with me to receive every offer with the same civility as it is made; and, therefore, though Lady Racket may have had some reason to guess, that I seldom frequent card-tables on Sundays, I shall not insist upon an exception, which may to her appear of so little force. My business has been to view, as opportunity was offered, every place in which mankind was to be seen; but at card-tables, however brilliant, I have always thought my visit lost, for I could know nothing of the company, but their clothes and their faces. I saw their looks clouded at the beginning of every game with a uniform solicitude, now and then in its progress varied with a short triumph, at one time wrinkled with cunning, at another deadened with despondency, or by accident flushed with rage at the unskilful or unlucky play of a partner. From such assemblies, in whatever humour I happened to enter them, I was quickly forced to retire; they were too trifling for me when I was grave, and too dull when I was cheerful.

Yet I cannot but value myself upon this token of regard from a lady who is not afraid to stand before the torch of Truth. Let her not, however, consult her curiosity more than her prudence; but reflect a moment on the fate of Semele, who might have lived the favourite of Jupiter, if she could have been content without his thunder. It is dangerous for mortal beauty, or terrestrial virtue, to be examined by too strong a light. The torch of Truth shows much that we cannot, and all that we would not see. In a face dimpled with smiles, it has often discovered malevolence and envy, and detected, under jewels and brocade, the frightful forms of poverty and distress. A fine hand of cards have changed before it into a thousand spectres of sickness, misery and vexation; and immense sums of money, while the winner counted them with transport, have at the first glimpse of this unwelcome lustre vanished from before him. If her ladyship therefore designs to continue her assembly, I would advise her to shun such dangerous experiments, to satisfy herself with common appearances, and to light up her apartments rather with myrtle than the torch of Truth.

"A MODEST young man sends his service to the author of the Rambler, and will be very willing to assist him in his work, but is sadly afraid of being discouraged by having his first essay rejected, a disgrace he has wofully experienced in every offer he had made of it to every

new writer of every new paper; but he comforts himself by thinking, without vanity, that this has been from a peculiar favour of the Muses, who saved his performance from being buried in trash, and reserved it to appear with lustre in the Rambler."

I am equally a friend to modesty and enterprize; and therefore shall think it an honour to correspond with a young man who possesses both in so eminent a degree. Youth is, indeed, the time in which these qualities ought chiefly to be found; modesty suits well with inexperience, and enterprize with health and vigour, and an extensive prospect of life. One of my predecessors has justly observed, that, though modesty has an amiable and winning appearance, it ought not to hinder the exertion of the active powers, but that a man should show under his blushes a latent resolution. This point of perfection, nice as it is, my correspondent seems to have attained. That he is modest, his own declaration may evince; and, I think, the *latent resolution* may be discovered in his letter by an acute observer. I will advise him, since he so well deserves my precepts, not to be discouraged though the Rambler should prove equally envious, or tasteless, with the rest of this fraternity. If his paper is refused, the presses of England are open, let him try the judgment of the public. If, as it has sometimes happened in general combinations against merit, he cannot persuade the world to buy his works, he may present them to his friends; and if his friends are seized with the epidemical infatuation, and cannot find his genius, or will not confess it, let him then refer his cause to posterity, and reserve his labours for a wiser age.

Thus have I despatched some of my correspondents in the usual manner, with fair words and general civility. But to Flirtilla, the gay Flirtilla, what shall I reply? Unable as I am to fly, at her command, over land and seas, or to supply her from week to week with the fashions of Paris, or the intrigues of Madrid, I am yet not willing to incur her further displeasure, and would save my papers from her monkey on any reasonable terms. By what propitiation, therefore, may I atone for my former gravity, and open without trembling, the future letters of this sprightly persecutor? To write in defence of masquerades is no easy task; yet something difficult and daring may well be required, as the price of so important an approbation. I therefore consulted, in this great emergency, a man of high reputation in gay life, who having added, to his other accomplishments, no mean proficiency in the minute philosophy, after the fifth perusal of her letter, broke out with rapture into these words: "And can you, Mr. Rambler, stand out against this charming creature? Let her know, at least, that from this moment Nigrinus devotes his life and his labours to her service. Is there any stubborn prejudice of education, that stands between thee and the most amiable of mankind? Behold, Flirtilla, at thy feet, a man grown gray in the study of those noble arts by which right and wrong may be confounded; by which reason may be blinded, when we have a mind to escape from her inspection; and caprice and appetite instated in uncontrolled command and boundless dominion! Such a casuist may surely engage, with certainty of success, in vindication of an entertainment, which in an instant gives confidence to the timorous, and kindles ardour in the cold; an entertainment where the vigilance of jealousy has so often been eluded, and the virgin is set free from the necessity of languishing in silence; where all the outworks of chastity are at once demolished; where the heart is laid open without a blush; where bashfulness may survive virtue, and no wish is crushed under the frown of modesty. Far weaker influence than Flirtilla's might gain over an advocate for such amusements. It was declared by Pompey, that if the commonwealth was violated, he could stamp with his foot, and raise an army out of the ground; if the rights of pleasure are again invaded, let but Flirtilla crack her fan, neither pens nor swords shall be wanting at the summons; the wit and the colonel shall march out at her command, and neither law nor reason shall stand before us."*

No. 11.] TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 1750.

Non Dindymene, non adytis quatit
Mentem sacerdotum incola Pythius,
Non Liber æque, non acuta
Sic geminant Corybantes æra,
Tyristes ut iræ. HOR.

Yet O! remember, nor the god of wine,
Nor *Pythian Phœbus* from his inmost shrine,
Nor *Dindymene*, nor her priests possess'd,
Can with their sounding cymbals shake the breast,
Like furious anger. FRANCIS.

THE maxim which Periander of Corinth, one of the seven sages of Greece, left as a memorial of his knowledge and benevolence, was χόλου κράτει, *Be master of thy anger.* He considered anger as the great disturber of human life, the chief enemy both of public happiness and private tranquillity, and thought that he could not lay on posterity a stronger obligation to reverence his memory, than by leaving them a salutary caution against this outrageous passion.

* The four billets in this paper were written by Miss Mulso, afterwards Mrs. Chapone, who survived this work more than half a century, and died Dec. 25, 1801; See an account of her in the Preface to the Adventurer, "British Essayists," vol. 23.—C.

To what latitude Periander might extend the word, the brevity of his precept will scarce allow us to conjecture. From anger, in its full import, protracted into malevolence, and exerted in revenge, arise, indeed, many of the evils to which the life of man is exposed. By anger operating upon power are produced the subversion of cities, the desolation of countries, the massacre of nations, and all those dreadful and astonishing calamities which fill the histories of the world, and which could not be read at any distant point of time, when the passions stand neutral, and every motive and principle are left to its natural force, without some doubt of the truth of the relation, did we not see the same causes still tending to the same effects, and only acting with less vigour for want of the same concurrent opportunities.

But this gigantic and enormous species of anger falls not properly under the animadversion of a writer, whose chief end is the regulation of common life, and whose precepts are to recommend themselves by their general use. Nor is this essay intended to expose the tragical or fatal effects even of private malignity. The anger which I propose now for my subject, is such as makes those who indulge it more troublesome than formidable, and ranks them rather with hornets and wasps, than with basilisks and lions. I have, therefore, prefixed a motto, which characterises this passion, not so much by the mischief that it causes, as by the noise that it utters.

There is in the world a certain class of mortals, known, and contentedly known, by the appellation of *passionate men*, who imagine themselves entitled by that distinction to be provoked on every slight occasion, and to vent their rage in vehement and fierce vociferations, in furious menaces and licentious reproaches. Their rage, indeed, for the most part, fumes away in outcries of injury, and protestations of vengeance, and seldom proceeds to actual violence, unless a drawer or linkboy falls in their way; but they interrupt the quiet of those that happen to be within the reach of their clamours, obstruct the course of conversation, and disturb the enjoyment of society.

Men of this kind are sometimes not without understanding or virtue, and are, therefore, not always treated with the severity which their neglect of the ease of all about them might justly provoke; they have obtained a kind of prescription for their folly, and are considered by their companions as under a predominant influence, that leaves them not masters of their conduct or language, as acting without consciousness, and rushing into mischief with a mist before their eyes; they are therefore pitied rather than censured, and their sallies are passed over as the involuntary blows of a man agitated by the spasms of a convulsion.

It is surely not to be observed without indignation, that men may be found of minds mean enough to be satisfied with this treatment; wretches who are proud to obtain the privilege of madmen, and can, without shame, and without regret, consider themselves as receiving hourly pardons from their companions, and giving them continual opportunities of exercising their patience, and boasting their clemency.

Pride is undoubtedly the original of anger; but pride, like every other passion, if it once breaks loose from reason, counteracts its own purposes. A passionate man, upon the review of his day, will have very few gratifications to offer to his pride, when he has considered how his outrages were caused, why they were borne, and in what they are likely to end at last.

Those sudden bursts of rage generally break out upon small occasions; for life, unhappy as it is, cannot supply great evils as frequently as the man of fire thinks it fit to be enraged; therefore the first reflection upon his violence, must show him that he is mean enough to be driven from his post by every petty incident, that he is the mere slave of casualty, and that his reason and virtue are in the power of the wind.

One motive there is of these loud extravagances, which a man is careful to conceal from others, and does not always discover to himself. He that finds his knowledge narrow, and his arguments weak, and by consequence his suffrage not much regarded, is sometimes in hope of gaining that attention by his clamours which he cannot otherwise obtain, and is pleased with remembering, that at least he made himself heard, that he had the power to interrupt those whom he could not confute, and suspend the decision which he could not guide.

Of this kind is the fury to which many men give way among their servants and domestics; they feel their own ignorance, they see their own insignificance; and therefore they endeavour, by their fury, to fright away contempt from before them, when they know it must follow them behind, and think themselves eminently masters, when they see one folly tamely complied with, only lest refusal or delay should provoke them to a greater.

These temptations cannot but be owned to have some force. It is so little pleasing to any man to see himself wholly overlooked in the mass of things, that he may be allowed to try a few expedients for procuring some kind of supplemental dignity, and use some endeavour to add weight, by the violence of his temper, to the lightness of his other powers. But this has now been long practised, and found, upon the most exact estimate, not to produce advantages equal to its inconveniences; for it appears not that a man can by uproar, tumult, and bluster, alter any one's opinion of his understanding, or gain influence, except over those

whom fortune or nature have made his dependents. He may, by a steady perseverance in his ferocity, fright his children, and harass his servants, but the rest of the world will look on and laugh; and he will have the comfort at last of thinking, that he lives only to raise contempt and hatred, emotions to which wisdom and virtue would be always unwilling to give occasion. He has contrived only to make those fear him, whom every reasonable being is endeavouring to endear by kindness, and must content himself with the pleasure of a triumph obtained by trampling on them who could not resist. He must perceive that the apprehension which his presence causes is not the awe of his virtue, but the dread of his brutality, and that he has given up the felicity of being loved, without gaining the honour of being reverenced.

But this is not the only ill consequence of the frequent indulgence of this blustering passion, which a man, by often calling to his assistance, will teach in a short time, to intrude before the summons, to rush upon him with resistless violence, and without any previous notice of its approach. He will find himself liable to be inflamed at the first touch of provocation, and unable to retain his resentment, till he has a full conviction of the offence, to proportion his anger to the cause, or to regulate it by prudence or by duty. When a man has once suffered his mind to be thus vitiated, he becomes one of the most hateful and unhappy beings. He can give no security to himself that he shall not, at the next interview, alienate by some sudden transport his dearest friend; or break out, upon some slight contradiction, into such terms of rudeness as can never be perfectly forgotten. Whoever converses with him, lives with the suspicion and solicitude of a man that plays with a tame tiger, always under a necessity of watching the moment in which the capricious savage shall begin to growl.

It is told by Prior, in a panegyric on the Earl of Dorset, that his servants used to put themselves in his way when he was angry, because he was sure to recompense them for any indignities which he made them suffer. This is the round of a passionate man's life; he contracts debts when he is furious, which his virtue, if he has virtue, obliges him to discharge at the return of reason. He spends his time in outrage and acknowledgment, injury and reparation. Or, if there be any who hardens himself in oppression, and justifies the wrong, because he has done it, his insensibility can make small part of his praise, or his happiness; he only adds deliberate to hasty folly, aggravates petulance by contumacy, and destroys the only plea that he can offer for the tenderness and patience of mankind.

Yet, even this degree of depravity we may be content to pity, because it seldom wants a punishment equal to its guilt. Nothing is more despicable or more miserable than the old age of a passionate man. When the vigour of youth fails him, and his amusements pall with frequent repetition, his occasional rage sinks by decay of strength into peevishness; that peevishness, for want of novelty and variety, becomes habitual; the world falls off from around him, and he is left, as Homer expresses it, *φθινυθων φίλον ἦτορ*, to devour his own heart in solitude and contempt.

No. 12.] SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 1750.

——Miserum parva stipe fœcillat, ut pudibundos
Exercere sales inter convivia possit.——
——Tu mitis, et acri
Asperitate carens, positoque per omnia fastu,
Inter ut æquales unus numeraris amicos,
Obsequiumque doces, et amorem quæris amando.

LUCANUS *ad* PISONEM.

Unlike the ribald whose licentious jest
Pollutes his banquet, and insults his guest;
From wealth and grandeur easy to descend,
Thou joy'st to lose the master in the friend:
We round thy board the cheerful menials see,
Gay with the smile of bland equality;
No social care the gracious lord disdains;
Love prompts to love, and reverence reverence gains.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As you seem to have devoted your labours to virtue, I cannot forbear to inform you of one species of cruelty with which the life of a man of letters perhaps does not often make him acquainted; and which, as it seems to produce no other advantage to those that practise it than a short gratification of thoughtless vanity, may become less common when it has been once exposed in its various forms, and its full magnitude.

I am the daughter of a country gentleman, whose family is numerous, and whose estate, not at first sufficient to supply us with affluence, has been lately so much impaired by an unsuccessful lawsuit, that all the younger children are obliged to try such means as their education affords them, for procuring the necessaries of life. Distress and curiosity concurred to bring me to London, where I was received by a relation with the coldness which misfortune generally finds. A week, a long week, I lived with my cousin, before the most vigilant inquiry could procure us the least hopes of a place, in which time, I was much better qualified to bear all the vexations of servitude. The first two days she was content to pity me, and only wished I had not been quite so well bred; but people must comply with their circumstances. This lenity, however, was soon at an end; and, for the remaining part of the week, I heard

every hour of the pride of my family, the obstinacy of my father, and of people better born than myself that were common servants.

At last, on Saturday noon, she told me, with very visible satisfaction, that Mrs. Bombasine, the great silk-mercer's lady, wanted a maid, and a fine place it would be, for there would be nothing to do but to clean my mistress's room, get up her linen, dress the young ladies, wait at tea in the morning, take care of a little miss just come from nurse, and then sit down to my needle. But madam was a woman of great spirit, and would not be contradicted, and therefore I should take care, for good places were not easily to be got.

With these cautions I waited on Madam Bombasine, of whom the first sight gave me no ravishing ideas. She was two yards round the waist, her voice was at once loud and squeaking, and her face brought to my mind the picture of the full moon. Are you the young woman, says she, that are come to offer yourself? It is strange when people of substance want a servant, how soon it is the town-talk. But they know they shall have a belly-full that live with me. Not like people at the other end of the town, we dine at one o'clock. But I never take any body without a character; what friends do you come off? I then told her that my father was a gentleman, and that we had been unfortunate.—A great misfortune indeed, to come to me, and have three meals a-day! So your father was a gentleman, and you are a gentlewoman I suppose: such gentlewomen!—Madam, I did not mean to claim any exemptions, I only answered your inquiry—Such gentlewomen! people should set their children to good trades, and keep them off the parish. Pray go to the other end of the town, there are gentlewomen, if they would pay their debts: I am sure we have lost enough by gentlewomen. Upon this, her broad face grew broader with triumph, and I was afraid she would have taken me for the pleasure of continuing her insult; but happily the next word was, Pray, Mrs. gentlewoman, troop down stairs.—You may believe I obeyed her.

I returned and met with a better reception from my cousin than I expected; for while I was out, she had heard that Mrs. Standish, whose husband had lately been raised from a clerk in an office, to be commissioner of the excise, had taken a fine house, and wanted a maid.

To Mrs. Standish I went, and, after having waited six hours, was at last admitted to the top of the stairs, when she came out of her room, with two of her company. There was a smell of punch. So, young woman, you want a place; whence do you come?—From the country, Madam.—Yes, they all come out of the country. And what brought you to town, a bastard? Where do you lodge?—At the Seven-Dials.—What, you never heard of the foundling-house! Upon this, they all laughed so obstreperously, that I took the opportunity of sneaking off in the tumult.

I then heard of a place at an elderly lady's. She was at cards; but in two hours, I was told, she would speak to me. She asked me if I could keep an account, and ordered me to write. I wrote two lines out of some book that lay by her. She wondered what people meant to breed up poor girls to write at that rate. I suppose, Mrs. Flirt, if I was to see your work, it would be fine stuff!—You may walk, I will not have love-letters written from my house to every young fellow in the street.

Two days after, I went on the same pursuit to Lady Lofty, dressed as I was directed, in what little ornaments I had, because she had lately got a place at court. Upon the first sight of me, she turns to the woman that showed me in. Is this the lady that wants a place? Pray what place would you have, Miss? a maid of honour's place? Servants now-a-days!—Madam, I heard you wanted—Wanted what? Somebody finer than myself? A pretty servant indeed! I should be afraid to speak to her. I suppose, Mrs. Minx, these fine hands cannot bear wetting—a servant indeed! Pray move off—I am resolved to be the head person in this house. You are ready dressed, the taverns will be open.

I went to inquire for the next place in a clean linen gown, and heard the servant tell his lady, there was a young woman, but he saw she would not do. I was brought up, however. Are you the trollop that has the impudence to come for my place? What, you have hired that nasty gown, and are come to steal a better.—Madam, I have another, but being obliged to walk.—Then these are your manners, with your blushes and your courtesies, to come to me in your worst gown.—Madam, give me leave to wait upon you in my other.—Wait on me, you saucy slut! Then you are sure of coming. I could not let such a drab come near me. Here, you girl that came up with her, have you touched her? If you have, wash your hands before you dress me. Such trollops! Get you down. What, whimpering? Pray walk.

I went away with tears; for my cousin had lost all patience. However, she told me, that having a respect for my relations, she was willing to keep me out of the street, and would let me have another week.

The first day of this week I saw two places. At one I was asked where I had lived? And upon my answer, was told by the lady, that people should qualify themselves in ordinary places, for she should never have done if she was to follow girls about. At the other house I was a smirking hussy, and that sweet face I might make money of—For her part, it was a rule

with her never to take any creature that thought herself handsome.

The three next days were spent in Lady Bluff's entry, where I waited six hours every day for the pleasure of seeing the servants peep at me, and go away laughing.—Madam will stretch her small shanks in the entry; she will know the house again.—At sunset the two first days I was told, that my lady would see me to-morrow, and on the third, that her woman stayed.

My week was now near its end, and I had no hopes of a place. My relation, who always laid upon me the blame of every miscarriage, told me that I must learn to humble myself, and that all great ladies had particular ways: that if I went on in that manner, she could not tell who would keep me; she had known many that had refused places, sell their clothes, and beg in the streets.

It was to no purpose that the refusal was declared by me to be never on my side; I was reasoning against interest and against stupidity; and therefore I comforted myself with the hope of succeeding better in my next attempt, and went to Mrs. Courtly, a very fine lady, who had routes at her house, and saw the best company in town.

I had not waited two hours before I was called up, and found Mr. Courtly and his lady at piquet, in the height of good humour. This I looked on as a favourable sign, and stood at the lower end of the room, in expectation of the common questions. At last Mr. Courtly called out, after a whisper, Stand facing the light, that one may see you.—I changed my place, and blushed. They frequently turned their eyes upon me, and seemed to discover many subjects of merriment; for at every look they whispered and laughed with the most violent agitations of delight. At last Mr. Courtly cried out, Is that colour your own, child?—Yes, says the lady, if she has not robbed the kitchen hearth.—This was so happy a conceit, that it renewed the storm of laughter, and they threw down their cards in hopes of better sport. The lady then called me to her, and began with an affected gravity to inquire what I could do? But first turn about, and let us see your fine shape. Well, what are you fit for, Mrs. Mum? You would find your tongue, I suppose, in the kitchen.—No, no, says Mr. Courtly, the girl's a good girl yet, but I am afraid a brisk young fellow, with fine tags on his shoulder—Come, child, hold up your head; what! you have stole nothing.—Not yet, says the lady, but she hopes to steal your heart quickly.—Here was a laugh of happiness and triumph, prolonged by the confusion which I could no longer repress. At last the lady recollected herself: Stole! no—but if I had her, I should watch her: for that downcast eye—why cannot you look people in the face?—Steal! says her husband, she would steal nothing but, perhaps, a few ribands before they were left off by her lady.—Sir, answered I, why should you, by supposing me a thief, insult one from whom you have received no injury?—Insult! says the lady; are you come here to be a servant, you saucy baggage, and talk of insulting? What will this world come to, if a gentleman may not jest with a servant! Well, such servants! pray be gone, and see when you will have the honour to be so insulted again. Servants insulted!—a fine time!—Insulted! Get down stairs, you slut, or the footman shall insult you.

The last day of the last week was now coming, and my kind cousin talked of sending me down in the waggon to preserve me from bad courses. But in the morning she came and told me that she had one trial more for me; Euphemia wanted a maid, and perhaps I might do for her; for, like me, she must fall her crest, being forced to lay down her chariot upon the loss of half her fortune by bad securities, and with her way of giving her money to every body that pretended to want it, she could have little beforehand; therefore I might serve her; for, with all her fine sense, she must not pretend to be nice.

I went immediately, and met at the door a young gentlewoman, who told me she had herself been hired that morning, but that she was ordered to bring any that offered up stairs. I was accordingly introduced to Euphemia, who, when I came in, laid down her book, and told me that she sent for me not to gratify an idle curiosity, but lest my disappointment might be made still more grating by incivility; that she was in pain to deny any thing, much more what was no favour; that she saw nothing in my appearance which did not make her wish for my company; but that another, whose claims might perhaps be equal, had come before me. The thought of being so near to such a place, and missing it, brought tears into my eyes, and my sobs hindered me from returning my acknowledgments. She rose up confused, and supposing by my concern that I was distressed, placed me by her, and made me tell her my story: which when she had heard, she put two guineas in my hand, ordering me to lodge near her, and make use of her table till she could provide for me. I am now under her protection, and know not how to show my gratitude better than by giving this account to the Rambler.

ZOSIMA.

No. 13.] TUESDAY, MAY 1, 1750.

Commissumque tege, et vino tortus et ira.— HOR.

And let not wine or anger wrest
Th' intrusted secret from your breast.—

FRANCIS.

IT is related by Quintus Curtius, that the Persians always conceived an invincible contempt

of a man who had violated the laws of secrecy; for they thought, that, however he might be deficient in the qualities requisite to actual excellence, the negative virtues at least were in his power, and though he perhaps could not speak well if he was to try, it was still easy for him not to speak.

In forming this opinion of the easiness of secrecy, they seem to have considered it as opposed, not to treachery, but loquacity, and to have conceived the man whom they thus censured, not frighted by menaces to reveal, or bribed by promises to betray, but incited by the mere pleasure of talking, or some other motive equally trifling, to lay open his heart without reflection and to let whatever he knew slip from him, only for want of power to retain it. Whether, by their settled and avowed scorn of thoughtless talkers, the Persians were able to diffuse to any great extent the virtue of taciturnity, we are hindered by the distance of those times from being able to discover, there being very few memoirs remaining of the court of Persepolis, nor any distinct accounts handed down to us of their office-clerks, their ladies of the bed-chamber, their attorneys, their chamber-maids, or their footmen.

In these latter ages, though the old animosity against a prattler is still retained, it appears wholly to have lost its effect upon the conduct of mankind; for secrets are so seldom kept, that it may with some reason be doubted, whether the ancients were not mistaken in their first postulate, whether the quality of retention be so generally bestowed, and whether a secret has not some subtle volatility, by which it escapes imperceptibly at the smallest vent, or some power of fermentation, by which it expands itself so as to burst the heart that will not give it way.

Those that study either the body or the mind of man, very often find the most specious and pleasing theory falling under the weight of contrary experience; and, instead of gratifying their vanity by inferring effects from causes, they are always reduced at last to conjecture causes from effects. That it is easy to be secret, the speculatist can demonstrate in his retreat, and therefore thinks himself justified in placing confidence; the man of the world knows, that, whether difficult or not, it is uncommon, and therefore finds himself rather inclined to search after the reason of this universal failure in one of the most important duties of society.

The vanity of being known to be trusted with a secret, is generally one of the chief motives to disclose it; for however absurd it may be thought to boast an honour by an act which shows that it was conferred without merit, yet most men seem rather inclined to confess the want of virtue than of importance, and more willingly show their influence, though at the expense of their probity, than glide through life with no other pleasure than the private consciousness of fidelity; which, while it is preserved, must be without praise, except from the single person who tries and knows it.

There are many ways of telling a secret, by which a man exempts himself from the reproaches of his conscience, and gratifies his pride, without suffering himself to believe that he impairs his virtue. He tells the private affairs of his patron, or his friend, only to those from whom he would not conceal his own; he tells them to those who have no temptation to betray the trust, or with a denunciation of a certain forfeiture of his friendship, if he discovers that they become public.

Secrets are very frequently told in the first ardour of kindness, or of love, for the sake of proving, by so important a sacrifice, sincerity or tenderness; but with this motive, though it be strong in itself, vanity concurs, since every man desires to be most esteemed by those whom he loves, or with whom he converses, with whom he passes his hours of pleasure, and to whom he retires from business and from care.

When the discovery of secrets is under consideration, there is always a distinction carefully to be made between our own and those of another; those of which we are fully masters, as they affect only our own interest, and those which are reposited with us in trust, and involve the happiness or convenience of such as we have no right to expose to hazard. To tell our own secrets is generally folly, but that folly is without guilt; to communicate those with which we are intrusted is always treachery, and treachery for the most part combined with folly.

There have, indeed, been some enthusiastic and irrational zealots for friendship, who have maintained, and perhaps believed, that one friend has a right to all that is in possession of another; and that, therefore, it is a violation of kindness to exempt any secret from this boundless confidence. Accordingly, a late female minister of state* has been shameless enough to inform the world, that she used, when she wanted to extract any thing from her sovereign, to remind her of Montaigne's reasoning, who has determined, that to tell a secret to a friend is no breach of fidelity, because the number of persons trusted is not multiplied, a man and his friend being virtually the same.

That such a fallacy could be imposed upon any human understanding, or that an author could have advanced a position so remote from truth and reason, any other ways than as a declaimer, to show to what extent he could stretch his imagination, and with what strength he could press his principle, would scarcely have been credible, had not this lady kindly shown

* Sarah, Dutchess of Marlborough.—C.

as how far weakness may be deluded, or indolence amused. But since it appears, that even this sophistry, has been able, with the help of a strong desire, to repose in quiet upon the understanding of another to mislead honest intentions, and an understanding not contemptible,* it may not be superfluous to remark, that those things which are common among friends are only such as either possesses in his own right, and can alienate or destroy without injury to any other person. Without this limitation, confidence must run on without end, the second person may tell the secret to the third, upon the same principle as he received it from the first, and a third may hand it forward to a fourth, till at last it is told in the round of friendship to them from whom it was the first intention to conceal it.

The confidence which Caius has of the faithfulness of Titius is nothing more than an opinion which himself cannot know to be true, and which Claudius, who first tells his secret to Caius, may know to be false; and therefore the trust is transferred by Caius, if he reveal what has been told him, to one from whom the person originally concerned would have withheld it: and whatever may be the event, Caius has hazarded the happiness of his friend, without necessity and without permission, and has put that trust in the hand of fortune which was given only to virtue.

All the arguments upon which a man who is telling the private affairs of another may ground his confidence of security, he must upon reflection know to be uncertain, because he finds them without effect upon himself. When he is imagining that Titius will be cautious, from a regard to his interest, his reputation, or his duty, he ought to reflect that he is himself at that instant acting in opposition to all these reasons, and revealing what interest, reputation, and duty, direct him to conceal.

Every one feels that in his own case he should consider the man incapable of trust, who believed himself at liberty to tell whatever he knew to the first whom he should conclude deserving of his own confidence; therefore Caius, in admitting Titius to the affairs imparted only to himself must know that he violates his faith, since he acts contrary to the intention of Claudius, to whom that faith was given. For promises of friendship are, like all others, useless and vain, unless they are made in some known sense, adjusted and acknowledged by both parties.

I am not ignorant that many questions may be started relating to the duty of secrecy, where the affairs are of public concern; where subsequent reasons may arise to alter the appearance and nature of the trust; that the manner in which the secret was told may change the degree of obligation, and that the principles upon which a man is chosen for a confidant may not always equally constrain him. But these scruples, if not too intricate, are of too extensive consideration for my present purpose, nor are they such as generally occur in common life; and though casuistical knowledge be useful in proper hands, yet it ought by no means to be carelessly exposed, since most will use it rather to lull than to awaken their own consciences; and the threads of reasoning, on which truth is suspended, are frequently drawn to such subtilty, that common eyes cannot perceive, and common sensibility cannot feel them.

The whole doctrine as well as practice of secrecy, is so perplexing and dangerous, that, next to him who is compelled to trust, I think him unhappy who is chosen to be trusted; for he is often involved in scruples without the liberty of calling in the help of any other understanding; he is frequently drawn into guilt, under the appearance of friendship and honesty; and sometimes subjected to suspicion by the treachery of others, who are engaged without his knowledge in the same schemes; for he that has one confidant has generally more, and when he is at last betrayed is in doubt on whom he shall fix the crime.

The rules therefore that I shall propose concerning secrecy, and from which I think it not safe to deviate, without long and exact deliberation, are—Never to solicit the knowledge of a secret. Not willingly, nor without many limitations, to accept such confidence when it is offered. When a secret is once admitted, to consider the trust as of a very high nature, important as society, and sacred as truth, and therefore not to be violated for any incidental convenience, or slight appearance of contrary fitness.

* That of Queen Anne.—C.

No. 14.] SATURDAY, MAY 5, 1750.

——*Nil fuit unquam*
Sic impar sibi—— HOR.

Sure such a various creature ne'er was known.
FRANCIS.

AMONG the many inconsistencies which folly produces, or infirmity suffers, in the human mind, there has often been observed a manifest and striking contrariety between the life of an author and his writings; and Milton, in a letter to a learned stranger, by whom he had been visited, with great reason congratulates himself upon the consciousness of being found equal to his own character, and having preserved in a private and familiar interview, that reputation which his works had procured him.

Those whom the appearance of virtue, or the evidence of genius, have tempted to a nearer knowledge of the writer in whose per-

formances they may be found, have indeed had frequent reason to repent their curiosity: the bubble that sparkled before them has become common water at the touch; the phantom of perfection has vanished when they wished to press it to their bosom. They have lost the pleasure of imagining how far humanity may be exalted, and, perhaps, felt themselves less inclined to toil up the steeps of virtue, when they observe those who seem best able to point the way, loitering below, as either afraid of the labour, or doubtful of the reward.

It has long been the custom of the oriental monarchs to hide themselves in gardens and palaces, to avoid the conversation of mankind, and to be known to their subjects only by their edicts. The same policy is no less necessary to him that writes, than to him that governs; for men would not more patiently submit to be taught than commanded, by one known to have the same follies and weaknesses with themselves. A sudden intruder into the closet of an author would perhaps feel equal indignation with the officer, who having long solicited admission into the presence of Sardanapalus, saw him not consulting upon laws, inquiring into grievances, or modelling armies, but employed in feminine amusements, and directing the ladies in their work.

It is not difficult to conceive, however, that for many reasons a man writes much better than he lives. For without entering into refined speculations, it may be shown much easier to design than to perform. A man proposes his schemes of life in a state of abstraction and disengagement, exempt from the enticements of hope, the solicitations of affection, the importunities of appetite, or the depressions of fear, and is in the same state with him that teaches upon land the art of navigation, to whom the sea is always smooth, and the wind always prosperous.

The mathematicians are well acquainted with the difference between pure science, which has to do only with ideas, and the application of its laws to the use of life, in which they are constrained to submit to the imperfection of matter and the influence of accidents. Thus, in moral discussions, it is to be remembered, that many impediments obstruct our practice, which very easily give way to theory. The speculatist is only in danger of erroneous reasoning; but the man involved in life has his own passions and those of others to encounter, and is embarrassed with a thousand inconveniences which confound him with variety of impulse, and either perplex or obstruct his way. He is forced to act without deliberation, and obliged to choose before he can examine; he is surprised by sudden alterations of the state of things, and changes his measures according to superficial appearances; he is led by others, either because he is indolent, or because he is timorous; he is sometimes afraid to know what is right, and sometimes finds friends or enemies diligent to deceive him.

We are, therefore, not to wonder that most fail, amidst tumult, and snares, and danger, in the observance of those precepts, which they lay down in solitude, safety, and tranquillity, with a mind unbiased, and with liberty unobstructed. It is the condition of our present state to see more than we can attain; the exactest vigilance and caution can never maintain a single day of unmingled innocence, much less can the utmost efforts of incorporated mind reach the summits of speculative virtue.

It is, however, necessary for the idea of perfection to be proposed, that we may have some object to which our endeavours are to be directed; and he that is the most deficient in the duties of life, makes some atonement for his faults, if he warns others against his own failings, and hinders, by the salubrity of his admonitions, the contagion of his example.

Nothing is more unjust, however common, than to charge with hypocrisy him that expresses zeal for those virtues which he neglects to practise; since he may be sincerely convinced of the advantages of conquering his passions, without having yet obtained the victory, as a man may be confident of the advantages of a voyage, or a journey, without having courage or industry to undertake it, and may honestly recommend to others those attempts which he neglects himself.

The interest which the corrupt part of mankind have in hardening themselves against every motive to amendment, has disposed them to give to these contradictions, when they can be produced against the cause of virtue, that weight which they will not allow them in any other case. They see men act in opposition to their interest, without supposing that they do not know it; those who give way to the sudden violence of passion, and forsake the most important pursuits for petty pleasures, are not supposed to have changed their opinions, or to approve their own conduct. In moral or religious questions alone, they determine the sentiments by the actions, and charge every man with endeavouring to impose upon the world, whose writings are not confirmed by his life. They never consider that themselves neglect or practise something every day inconsistently with their own settled judgment, nor discover that the conduct of the advocates for virtue can little increase or lessen the obligations of their dictates; argument is to be invalidated only by argument, and is in itself of the same force, whether or not it convinces him by whom it is proposed.

Yet since this prejudice, however unreasonable, is always likely to have some prevalence,

it is the duty of every man to take care lest he should hinder the efficacy of his own instructions. When he desires to gain the belief of others, he should show that he believes himself; and when he teaches the fitness of virtue by his reasonings, he should, by his example, prove its possibility. Thus much at least may be required of him, that he shall not act worse than others, because he writes better; nor imagine that, by the merit of his genius, he may claim indulgence, beyond mortals of the lower classes, and be excused for want of prudence, or neglect of virtue.

Bacon, in his history of the winds, after having offered something to the imagination as desirable, often proposes lower advantages in its place to the reason as attainable. The same method may be sometimes pursued in moral endeavours, which this philosopher has observed in natural inquiries; having first set positive and absolute excellence before us, we may be pardoned though we sink down to humbler virtue, trying, however, to keep our point always in view, and struggling not to lose ground, though we cannot gain it.

It is recorded of Sir Matthew Hale, that he, for a long time, concealed the consecration of himself to the stricter duties of religion, lest, by some flagitious and shameful action, he should bring piety into disgrace. For the same reason it may be prudent for a writer, who apprehends that he shall not enforce his own maxims by his domestic character, to conceal his name that he may not injure them.

There are, indeed, a great number whose curiosity to gain a more familiar knowledge of successful writers, is not so much prompted by an opinion of their power to improve as to delight, and who expect from them not arguments against vice, or dissertations on temperance or justice, but flights of wit, and sallies of pleasantry, or, at least, acute remarks, nice distinctions, justness of sentiment, and elegance of diction.

This expectation is, indeed, specious and probable, and yet, such is the fate of all human hopes, that it is very often frustrated, and those who raise admiration by their books, disgust by their company. A man of letters, for the most part spends, in the privacies of study, that season of life in which the manners are to be softened into ease, and polished into elegance; and, when he has gained knowledge enough to be respected, has neglected the minuter acts by which he might have pleased. When he enters life, if his temper be soft and timorous, he is diffident and bashful, from the knowledge of his defects; or if he was born with spirit and resolution, he is ferocious and arrogant, from the consciousness of his merit: he is either dissipated by the awe of company, and unable to recollect his reading, and arrange his arguments; or he is hot and dogmatical, quick in opposition, and tenacious in defence, disabled by his own violence, and confused by his haste to triumph.

The graces of writing and conversation are of different kinds: and though he who excels in one might have been, with opportunities and application, equally successful in the other, yet as many please by extemporary talk, though utterly unacquainted with the more accurate method, and more laboured beauties, which composition requires; so it is very possible that men, wholly accustomed to works of study, may be without that readiness of conception, and affluence of language, always necessary to colloquial entertainment. They may want address to watch the hints which conversation offers for the display of their particular attainments, or they may be so much unfurnished with matter on common subjects, that discourse not professedly literary glides over them as heterogeneous bodies, without admitting their conceptions to mix in the circulation.

A transition from an author's book to his conversation, is too often like an entrance into a large city, after a distant prospect. Remotely, we see nothing but spires of temples and turrets of palaces, and imagine it the residence of splendour, grandeur and magnificence; but, when we have passed the gates, we find it perplexed with narrow passages, disgraced with despicable cottages, embarrassed with obstructions, and clouded with smoke.

No. 15.] Tuesday, May 8, 1750.

Et quando uberior vitiorum copia? Quando Major avaritiæ patuit sinus? Alea quando Hos animos? JUV.

What age so large a crop of vices bore?
Or when was avarice extended more?
When were the dice with more profusion thrown?
DRYDEN.

There is no grievance, public or private, o which, since I took upon me the office of a per iodical monitor, I have received so many or s earnest complaints, as of the predominance play; of a fatal passion for cards and dic which seems to have overturned, not only th ambition of excellence, but the desire of plea ure; to have extinguished the flames of th lover, as well as of the patriot; and threaten in its further progress, to destroy all distinc tions, both of rank and sex, to crush all emula tion but that of fraud, to corrupt all those class of our people whose ancestors have, by their vi tue, their industry, or their parsimony, give them the power of living in extravagance, idl ness, and vice, and to leave them without know ledge, but of the modish games, and withc wishes, but for lucky hands.

I have found, by long experience, that there are few enterprises so hopeless as contests with the fashion, in which the opponents are not only made confident by their numbers, and strong by their union, but are hardened by contempt of their antagonist, whom they always look upon as a wretch of low notions, contracted views, mean conversation, and narrow fortune, who envies the elevations which he cannot reach, who would gladly embitter the happiness which his inelegance or indigence deny him to partake, and who has no other end in his advice than to revenge his own mortification by hindering those whom their birth and taste have set above him, from the enjoyment of their superiority, and bringing them down to a level with himself.

Though I have never found myself much affected by this formidable censure, which I have incurred often enough to be acquainted with its full force, yet I shall, in some measure, obviate it on this occasion, by offering very little in my own name, either of argument or entreaty, since those who suffer by this general infatuation may be supposed best able to relate its effects.

SIR,

There seems to be so little knowledge left in the world, and so little of that reflection practised, by which knowledge is to be gained, that I am in doubt, whether I shall be understood, when I complain of want of opportunity for thinking; or whether a condemnation, which at present seems irreversible, to perpetual ignorance, will raise any compassion, either in you or your readers: yet I will venture to lay my state before you, because I believe it is natural to most minds, to take some pleasure in complaining of evils, of which they have no reason to be ashamed.

I am the daughter of a man of great fortune, whose diffidence of mankind, and perhaps the pleasure of continual accumulation, incline him to reside upon his own estate, and to educate his children in his own house, where I was bred, if not with the most brilliant examples of virtue before my eyes, at least remote enough from any incitements to vice; and, wanting neither leisure nor books, nor the acquaintance of some persons of learning in the neighbourhood, I endeavoured to acquire such knowledge as might most recommend me to esteem, and thought myself able to support a conversation upon most of the subjects, which my sex and condition made it proper for me to understand.

I had, besides my knowledge, as my mamma and my maid told me, a very fine face and elegant shape, and with all these advantages had been seventeen months the reigning toast for twelve miles round, and never came to the monthly assembly, but I heard the old ladies that sat by wishing that *it might end well*, and their daughters criticising my air, my features, or my dress.

You know, Mr. Rambler, that ambition is natural to youth, and curiosity to understanding, and therefore will hear, without wonder, that I was desirous to extend my victories over those who might give more honour to the conqueror; and that I found in a country life a continual repetition of the same pleasures, which was not sufficient to fill up the mind for the present, or raise any expectations of the future; and I will confess to you, that I was impatient for a sight of the town, and filled my thoughts with the discoveries which I should make, the triumphs that I should obtain, and the praises that I should receive.

At last the time came. My aunt, whose husband has a seat in Parliament, and a place at court, buried her only child, and sent for me to supply the loss. The hope that I should so far insinuate myself into their favour, as to obtain a considerable augmentation to my fortune, procured me every convenience for my departure, with great expedition; and I could not, amidst all my transports, forbear some indignation to see with what readiness the natural guardians of my virtue sold me to a state, which they thought more hazardous than it really was, as soon as a new accession of fortune glittered in their eyes.

Three days I was upon the road, and on the fourth morning my heart danced at the sight of London. I was set down at my aunt's, and entered upon the scene of action. I expected now, from the age and experience of my aunt, some prudential lessons; but, after the first civilities and first tears were over, was told what pity it was to have kept so fine a girl so long in the country; for the people who did not begin young, seldom dealt their cards handsomely, or played them tolerably.

Young persons are commonly inclined to slight the remarks and counsels of their elders. I smiled, perhaps, with too much contempt, and was upon the point of telling her that my time had not been passed in such trivial attainments. But I soon found that things are to be estimated, not by the importance of their effects, but the frequency of their use.

A few days after, my aunt gave me notice, that some company, which she had been six weeks in collecting, was to meet that evening, and she expected a finer assembly than had been seen all the winter. She expressed this in the jargon of a gamester, and, when I asked an explication of her terms of art, wondered where I had lived. I had already found my aunt so incapable of any rational conclusion, and so ignorant of every thing, whether great or little, that I had lost all regard to her opinion, and dressed myself with great expectations of an opportunity to display my charms among rivals, whose competition would not dishonour me. The company came in, and after the cursory compliments of salutation, alike easy to the lowest and the

highest understanding, what was the result? The cards were broken open, the parties were formed, the whole night passed in a game, upon which the young and old were equally employed; nor was I able to attract an eye, or gain an ear, but being compelled to play without skill I perpetually embarrassed my partner, and soon perceived the contempt of the whole table gathering upon me.

I cannot but suspect, Sir, that this odious fashion is produced by a conspiracy of the old, the ugly, and the ignorant, against the young and beautiful, the witty and the gay, as a contrivance to level all distinctions of nature and of art, to confound the world in a chaos of folly, and to take from those who could outshine them all the advantages of mind and body, to withhold youth from its natural pleasures, deprive wit of its influence, and beauty of its charms, to fix those hearts upon money, to which love has hitherto been entitled, to sink life into a tedious uniformity, and to allow it no other hopes or fears, but those of robbing, and being robbed.

Be pleased, Sir, to inform those of my sex who have minds capable of nobler sentiments, that, if they will unite in vindication of their pleasures and their prerogatives, they may fix a time, at which cards shall cease to be in fashion, or be left only to those who have neither beauty to be loved, nor spirit to be feared; neither knowledge to teach, nor modesty to learn; and who, having passed their youth in vice, are justly condemned to spend their age in folly.

I am, Sir, &c.

CLEORA.

SIR,

VEXATION will burst my heart, if I do not give it vent. As you publish a paper, I insist upon it that you insert this in your next, as ever you hope for the kindness and encouragement of any woman of taste, spirit, and virtue. I would have it published to the world, how deserving wives are used by imperious coxcombs, that henceforth no woman may marry who has not the patience of Grizzel. Nay, if even Grizzel had been married to a gamester, her temper would never have held out. A wretch that loses his good humour and humanity along with his money, and will not allow enough from his own extravagances to support a woman of fashion in the necessary amusements of life! Why does not he employ his wise head to make a figure in parliament, raise an estate, and get a title? That would be fitter for the master of a family, than rattling a noisy dice-box; and then he might indulge his wife in a few slight expenses and elegant diversions.

What if I was unfortunate at brag? should he not have stayed to see how luck would turn another time? Instead of that, what does he do, but picks a quarrel, upbraids me with loss of beauty, abuses my acquaintance, ridicules my play, and insults my understanding; says forsooth, that women have not heads enough to play with any thing but dolls, and that they should be employed in things proportionable to their understanding, keep at home, and mind family affairs.

I do stay at home, Sir, and all the world knows I am at home every Sunday. I have had six routes this winter, and sent out ten packs of cards in invitations to private parties. As for management, I am sure he cannot call me extravagant, or say I do not mind my family. The children are out at nurse in villages as cheap as any two little brats can be kept, nor have I ever seen them since; so he has no trouble about them. The servants live at board wages. My own dinners come from the Thatched House; and I have never paid a penny for any thing I have bought since I was married. As for play, I do think I may, indeed, indulge in that, now I am my own mistress. Papa made me drudge at whist till I was tired of it; and, far from wanting a head, Mr. Hoyle, when he had not given me above forty lessons, said I was one of his best scholars. I thought then with myself, that, if once I was at liberty, I would leave play, and take to reading romances, things so forbidden at our house, and so railed at, that it was impossible not to fancy them very charming. Most fortunately, to save me from absolute undutifulness, just as I was married, came dear brag into fashion, and ever since it has been the joy of my life; so easy, so cheerful and careless, so void of thought, and so genteel! Who can help loving it? Yet the perfidious thing has used me very ill of late, and to-morrow I should have changed it for faro. But, oh! this detestable to-morrow, a thing always expected, and never found.——Within these few hours must I be dragged into the country. The wretch, Sir, left me in a fit, which his threatenings had occasioned, and unmercifully ordered a post-chaise. Stay I cannot, for money I have none, and credit I cannot get.—But I will make the monkey play with me at picquet upon the road for all I want. I am almost sure to beat him, and his debts of honour I know he will pay. Then who can tell but I may still come back and conquer Lady Packer? Sir, you need not print this last scheme; and, upon second thoughts, you may.——Oh, distraction! the post-chaise is at the door, Sir, publish what you will, only let it be printed without a name.

No. 16.] SATURDAY, MAY 12, 1750,

——*Torrens dicendi copia multis,*
Et sua mortifera est facundia—— JUV.

Some who the depths of eloquence have found,
In that unnavigable stream were drown'd.
DRYDEN.

SIR,

I AM the modest young man whom you favoured with your advice in a late paper; and, as I am very far from suspecting that you foresaw the numberless inconveniences which I have, by following it, brought upon myself, I will lay my condition open before you, for you seem bound to extricate me from the perplexities in which your counsel, however innocent in the intention, has contributed to involve me.

——*Facilis descensus Averni,*
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis.
VIRG.

The gates of hell are open night and day;
Smooth the descent and easy is the way.
DRYDEN.

The means of doing hurt to ourselves are always at hand. I immediately sent to a printer, and contracted with him for an impression of several thousands of my pamphlet. While it was at the press, I was seldom absent from the printing-house, and continually urged the workmen, to haste, by solicitations, promises, and rewards. From the day all other pleasures were excluded, by the delightful employment of correcting the sheets; and from the night, sleep was generally banished, by anticipations of the happiness which every hour was bringing nearer.

At last the time of publication approached, and my heart beat with the raptures of an author. I was above all little precautions, and, in defiance of envy or of criticism, set my name upon the title, without sufficiently considering, that what has once passed the press is irrevocable, and that though the printing-house may properly be compared to the infernal regions, for the facility of its entrance, and the difficulty with which authors return from it; yet there is this difference, that a great genius can never return to his former state, by a happy draught of the waters of oblivion.

I am now, Mr. Rambler, known to be an author, and am condemned, irreversibly condemned, to all the miseries of high reputation. The first morning after publication my friends assembled about me; I presented each, as is usual, with a copy of my book. They looked to the first pages, but were hindered, by their admiration, from reading further. The first pages are, indeed, very elaborate. Some passages they particularly dwelt upon, as more eminently beautiful than the rest; and some delicate strokes, and secret elegancies, I pointed out to them, which had escaped their observation. I then begged of them to forbear their compliments, and invited them, I could do no less, to dine with me at a tavern. After dinner, the book was resumed; but their praises very often so much overpowered my modesty, that I was forced to put about the glass, and had often no means of repressing the clamours of their admiration, but by thundering to the drawer for another bottle.

Next morning another set of my acquaintance congratulated me upon my performance, with such importunity of praise, that I was again forced to obviate their civilities by a treat. On the third day, I had yet a greater number of applauders to put to silence in the same manner; and, on the fourth, those whom I had entertained the first day came again, having, in the perusal of the remaining part of the book, discovered so many forcible sentences and masterly touches, that it was impossible for me to bear the repetition of their commendations. I therefore persuaded them once more to adjourn to the tavern, and choose some other subject, on which I might share in their conversation. But it was not in their power to withhold their attention from my performance, which had so entirely taken possession of their minds, that no entreaties of mine could change their topic, and I was obliged to stifle, with claret, that praise, which neither my modesty could hinder, nor my uneasiness repress.

The whole week was thus spent in a kind of literary revel, and I have now found that nothing is so expensive as great abilities, unless there is joined with them an insatiable eagerness of praise; for to escape from the pain of hearing myself exalted above the greatest names, dead and living, of the learned world, it has already cost me two hogsheads of port, fifteen gallons of arrack, ten dozen of claret, and five-and-forty bottles of champaign.

I was resolved to stay at home no longer, and therefore rose early and went to the coffee-house; but found that I had now made myself too eminent for happiness, and that I was no longer to enjoy the pleasure of mixing, upon equal terms, with the rest of the world. As soon as I enter the room, I see part of the company raging with envy, which they endeavour to conceal, sometimes with the appearance of laughter, and sometimes with that of contempt; but the disguise is such, that I can discover the secret rancour of their hearts, and as envy is deservedly its own punishment, I frequently indulge myself in tormenting them with my presence.

But, though there may be some slight satisfaction received from the mortification of my enemies, yet my benevolence will not suffer me to take any pleasure in the terrors of my friends, I have been cautious, since the appearance of

my work, not to give myself more premeditated airs of superiority, than the most rigid humility might allow. It is, indeed, not impossible that I may sometimes have laid down my opinion, in a manner that showed a consciousness of my ability to maintain it, or interrupted the conversation, when I saw its tendency, without suffering the speaker to waste his time in explaining his sentiments; and, indeed, I did indulge myself for two days in a custom of drumming with my fingers, when the company began to lose themselves in absurdities, or to encroach upon subjects which I knew them unqualified to discuss. But I generally acted with great appearance of respect, even to those whose stupidity I pitied in my heart. Yet, notwithstanding this exemplary moderation, so universal is the dread of uncommon powers, and such the unwillingness of mankind to be made wiser, that I have now for some days found myself shunned by all my acquaintance. If I knock at a door, nobody is at home; if I enter a coffee-house, I have the box to myself. I live in the town like a lion in his desert, or an eagle on his rock, too great for friendship or society, and condemned to solitude by unhappy elevation and dreaded ascendancy.

Nor is my character only formidable to others, but burdensome to myself. I naturally love to talk without much thinking, to scatter my merriment at random, and to relax my thoughts with ludicrous remarks and fanciful images; but such is now the importance of my opinion, that I am afraid to offer it, lest, by being established too hastily into a maxim, it should be the occasion of error to half the nation; and such is the expectation with which I am attended, when I am going to speak, that I frequently pause to reflect, whether what I am about to utter is worthy of myself.

This, Sir, is sufficiently miserable; but there are still greater calamities behind. You must have read in Pope and Swift how men of parts have had their closets rifled, and their cabinets broken open, at the instigation of piratical booksellers, for the profit of their works; and it is apparent that there are many prints now sold in the shops, of men whom you cannot suspect of sitting for that purpose, and whose likenesses must have been certainly stolen when their names made their faces vendible. These considerations at first put me on my guard, and I have, indeed, found sufficient reason for my caution, for I have discovered many people examining my countenance, with a curiosity that showed their intention to draw it; I immediately left the house, but find the same behaviour in another.

Others may be persecuted, but I am haunted; I have good reason to believe that eleven painters are now dogging me, for they know that he who can get my face first will make his fortune. I often change my wig, and wear my hat ove my eyes, by which I hope somewhat to confoun them; for you know it is not fair to sell m face, without admitting me to share the profit.

I am, however, not so much in pain for m face as for my papers, which I dare neither car ry with me nor leave behind. I have, indeed taken some measures for their preservatio having put them in an iron chest, and fixed padlock upon my closet. I change my lodging five times a week, and always remove at the dea of night.

Thus I live, in consequence of having give too great proofs of a predominant genius, in th solitude of a hermit, with the anxiety of a misei and the caution of an outlaw; afraid to sho my face lest it should be copied; afraid to speak lest I should injure my character; and to write lest my correspondents should publish my let ters; always uneasy lest my servants shoul steal my papers for the sake of money, or m friends for that of the public. This it is to soa above the rest of mankind; and this representa tion I lay before you, that I may be informe how to divest myself of the laurels which are s cumbersome to the wearer, and descend to th enjoyment of that quiet, from which I find writer of the first class so fatally debarred.

MISELLUS.

No. 17.] TUESDAY, MAY 15, 1750.

——Me non oracula certum,
Sed mors certa facit. LUCAN.

Let those weak minds, who live in doubt and fear,
To juggling priests for oracles repair;
One certain hour of death to each decreed,
My fix'd, my certain soul, from doubt has freed.
ROWE.

It is recorded of some eastern monarch, that h kept an officer in his house, whose employmen it was to remind him of his mortality, by cal ing out every morning, at a stated hour, *Re member, prince, that thou shalt die!* And th contemplation of the frailness and uncertain of our present state appeared of so much impo tance to Solon of Athens, that he left this pr cept to future ages: *Keep thine eye fixed upon t end of life.*

A frequent and attentive prospect of that m ment, which must put a period to all o schemes, and deprive us of all our acquisitio is indeed of the utmost efficacy to the just a rational regulation of our lives; nor would ev any thing wicked, or often any thing absurd, undertaken or prosecuted by him who sho begin every day with a serious reflection that is born to die.

The disturbers of our happiness, in this wor are our desires, our griefs, and our fears; and all these, the consideration of mortality is a

tain and adequate remedy. Think, says Epictetus, frequently on poverty, banishment, and death, and thou wilt then never indulge violent desires, or give up thy heart to mean sentiments, οὐδὲν οὐδέποτε ταπεινὸν ἐνθυμήσῃ, οὔτε ἄγαν ἐπιθυμήσεις τινός.

That the maxim of Epictetus is founded on ust observation will easily be granted, when we reflect, how that vehemence of eagerness after he common objects of pursuit is kindled in our minds. We represent to ourselves the pleasures of some future possession, and suffer our thoughts to dwell attentively upon it, till it has wholly engrossed the imagination, and permits us not to conceive any happiness but its attainment, or any misery but its loss; every other satisfaction which the bounty of Providence has scattered over life is neglected as inconsiderable, in comparison of the great object which we have placed before us, and is thrown from us as incumbering our activity, or trampled under foot as standing in our way.

Every man has experienced how much of this ardour has been remitted, when a sharp or tedious sickness has set death before his eyes. The extensive influence of greatness, the glitter of wealth, the praises of admirers, and the attendance of supplicants, have appeared vain and empty things, when the last hour seemed to be approaching; and the same appearance they would always have, if the same thought was always predominant. We should then find the absurdity of stretching out our arms incessantly to grasp that which we cannot keep, and wearing out our lives in endeavours to add new turrets to the fabric of ambition, when the foundation itself is shaking, and the ground on which it stands is mouldering away.

All envy is proportionate to desire; we are uneasy at the attainments of another, according as we think our own happiness would be advanced by the addition of that which he withholds from us; and therefore whatever depresses immoderate wishes, will, at the same time, set the heart free from the corrosion of envy, and exempt us from that vice which is, above most others, tormenting to ourselves, hateful to the world, and productive of mean artifices and sordid projects. He that considers how soon he must close his life, will find nothing of so much importance as to close it well; and will, therefore, look with indifference upon whatever is useless to that purpose. Whoever reflects frequently upon the uncertainty of his own duration, will find out, that the state of others is not more permanent, and that what can confer nothing on himself very desirable, cannot so much improve the condition of a rival, as to make him much superior to those from whom he has carried the prize, a prize too mean to deserve a very obstinate opposition.

Even grief, that passion to which the virtuous and tender mind is particularly subject, will be obviated or alleviated by the same thoughts. It will be obviated, if all the blessings of our condition are enjoyed with a constant sense of this uncertain tenure. If we remember, that whatever we possess is to be in our hands but a very little time, and that the little, which our most lively hopes can promise us, may be made less by ten thousand accidents; we shall not much repine at a loss, of which we cannot estimate the value, but of which, though we are not able to tell the least amount, we know, with sufficient certainty, the greatest, and are convinced that the greatest is not much to be regretted.

But, if any passion has so much usurped our understanding, as not to suffer us to enjoy advantages with the moderation prescribed by reason, it is not too late to apply this remedy, when we find ourselves sinking under sorrow, and inclined to pine for that which is irrecoverably vanished. We may then usefully revolve the uncertainty of our own condition, and the folly of lamenting that from which, if it had stayed a little longer, we should ourselves have been taken away.

With regard to the sharpest and most melting sorrow, that which arises from the loss of those whom we have loved with tenderness, it may be observed, that friendship between mortals can be contracted on no other terms, than that one must some time mourn for the other's death: and this grief will always yield to the survivor one consolation proportionate to his affliction; for the pain, whatever it be, that he himself feels, his friend has escaped.

Nor is fear, the most overbearing and resistless of all our passions, less to be temperated by this universal medicine of the mind. The frequent contemplation of death, as it shows the vanity of all human good, discovers likewise the lightness of all terrestrial evil, which certainly can last no longer than the subject upon which it acts; and, according to the old observation, must be shorter, as it is more violent. The most cruel calamity which misfortune can produce, must, by the necessity of nature, be quickly at an end. The soul cannot long be held in prison, but will fly away, and leave a lifeless body to human malice.

——*Ridetque sui ludibria trunci.*

And soaring mocks the broken frame below.

The utmost that we can threaten to one another is that death, which, indeed, we may precipitate, but cannot retard, and from which, therefore, it cannot become a wise man to buy a reprieve at the expense of virtue, since he knows not how small a portion of time he can purchase, but knows, that whether short or long, it will be made less valuable by the remem-

brance of the price at which it has been obtained. He is sure that he destroys his happiness, but is not sure that he lengthens his life.

The known shortness of life, as it ought to moderate our passions, may likewise, with equal propriety, contract our designs. There is not time for the most forcible genius, and most active industry, to extend its effects beyond a certain sphere. To project the conquest of the world, is the madness of mighty princes; to hope for excellence in every science, has been the folly of literary heroes; and both have found at last, that they have panted for a height of eminence denied to humanity, and have lost many opportunities of making themselves useful and happy, by a vain ambition of obtaining a species of honour, which the eternal laws of Providence have placed beyond the reach of man.

The miscarriages of the great designs of princes are recorded in the histories of the world, but are of little use to the bulk of mankind, who seem very little interested in admonitions against errors which they cannot commit. But the fate of learned ambition is a proper subject for every scholar to consider; for who has not had occasion to regret the dissipation of great abilities in a boundless multiplicity of pursuits, to lament the sudden desertion of excellent designs, upon the offer of some other subject made inviting by its novelty, and to observe the inaccuracy and deficiencies, of works left unfinished by too great an extension of the plan?

It is always pleasing to observe, how much more our minds can conceive, than our bodies can perform! yet it is our duty, while we continue in this complicated state, to regulate one part of our composition by some regard to the other. We are not to indulge our corporeal appetites with pleasures that impair our intellectual vigour, nor gratify our minds with schemes which we know our lives must fail in attempting to execute. The uncertainty of our duration ought at once to set bounds to our designs, and add incitements to our industry; and when we find ourselves inclined either to immensity in our schemes, or sluggishness in our endeavours, we may either check or animate ourselves, by recollecting, with the father of physic, *that art is long, and life is short.*

No. 18.] SATURDAY, MAY 19, 1750.

Illic natre carentibus,
Privignis mulier temperat innocens,
Nec dotata regit virum
Conjux, nec nitido fidit adultero:
Dos est magna parentium
Virtus, et metuens alterius tori
Certo fœdere castitas. HOR.

No wife high portion'd rules her spouse,
Or trusts her essenced lover's faithless vows:
The lovers there for dowry claim
The father's virtue, and the spotless fame,
Which dares not break the nuptial tie.
FRANCIS.

THERE is no observation more frequently made by such as employ themselves in surveying the conduct of mankind, than that marriage though the dictate of nature, and the institution of Providence, is yet very often the cause of misery, and that those who enter into that state can seldom forbear to express their repentance, and their envy of those whom either chance or caution hath withheld from it.

This general unhappiness has given occasion to many sage maxims among the serious, and smart remarks among the gay; the moralist and the writer of epigrams have equally shown their abilities upon it; some have lamented, and some have ridiculed it; but as the faculty of writing has been chiefly a masculine endowment, the reproach of making the world miserable has been always thrown upon the women, and the grave and the merry have equally thought themselves at liberty to conclude either with declamatory complaints, or satirical censures, of female folly or fickleness, ambition or cruelty, extravagance or lust.

Led by such a number of examples, and incited by my share in the common interest, I sometimes venture to consider this universal grievance, having endeavoured to divest my heart of all partiality, and place myself as a kind of neutral being between the sexes, whose clamours being equally vented on both sides with all the vehemence of distress, all the apparent confidence of justice, and all the indignation of injured virtue, seem entitled to equal regard. The men have, indeed, by their superiority of writing, been able to collect the evidence of many ages, and raise prejudices in their favour by the venerable testimonies of philosophers, historians and poets, but the plea of the ladies appeal to passions of more forcible operation than the reverence of antiquity. If they have not so great names on their side they have stronger arguments; it is to little purpose, that Socrates, or Euripides, are produced against the sighs of softness, and the tears of beauty. The most frigid and inexorable judge would at least stand suspended between equal powers, as Lucan was perplexed in the determination of the cause where the deities were on one side, and Cato on the other.

But I, who have long studied the severest and most abstracted philosophy, have now, in the cool maturity of life, arrived at such command over my passions, that I can hear the vociferations of either sex, without catching any of the fire from those that utter them. For I have found, by long experience, that a man w

sometimes rage at his wife, when in reality his mistress has offended him; and a lady complain of the cruelty of her husband, when she has no other enemy than bad cards. I do not suffer myself to be any longer imposed upon by oaths on one side, or fits on the other, nor when the husband hastens to the tavern, and the lady retires to her closet, am I always confident that they are driven by their miseries; since I have sometimes reason to believe, that they purpose not so much to soothe their sorrows, as to animate their fury. But how little credit soever may be given to particular accusations, the general accumulation of the charge shows, with too much evidence, that married persons are not very often advanced in felicity; and, therefore, it may be proper to examine at what avenues so many evils have made their way into the world. With this purpose, I have reviewed the lives of my friends, who have been least successful in connubial contracts, and attentively considered by what motives they were incited to marry, and by what principles they regulated their choice.

One of the first of my acquaintances that resolved to quit the unsettled thoughtless condition of a bachelor, was Prudentius, a man of slow parts, but not without knowledge or judgment in things which he had leisure to consider gradually before he determined them. Whenever we met at a tavern, it was his province to settle the scheme of our entertainment, contract with the cook, and inform us when we had called for wine to the sum originally proposed. This grave considerer found, by deep meditation, that a man was no loser by marrying early, even though he contented himself with a less fortune; for estimating the exact worth of annuities, he found that considering the constant diminution of the value of life, with the probable fall of the interest of money, it was not worse to have ten thousand pounds at the age of two and twenty years, than a much larger fortune at thirty; for many opportunities, says he, occur of improving money, which if a man misses he may not afterwards recover.

Full of these reflections, he threw his eyes about him, not in search of beauty or elegance, dignity or understanding, but of a woman with ten thousand pounds. Such a woman, in a wealthy part of the kingdom, it was not very difficult to find; and by artful management with her father, whose ambition was to make his daughter a gentlewoman, my friend got her, as he boasted to us in confidence two days after his marriage, for a settlement of seventy-three pounds a year less than her fortune might have claimed, and less than he would himself have given, if the fools had been but wise enough to delay the bargain.

Thus, at once delighted with the superiority of his parts and the augmentation of his fortune, he carried Furia to his own house, in which he never afterwards enjoyed one hour of happiness. For Furia was a wretch of mean intellects, violent passions, a strong voice, and low education, without any sense of happiness but that which consisted in eating and counting money. Furia was a scold. They agreed in the desire of wealth, but with this difference, that Prudentius was for growing rich by gain, Furia by parsimony. Prudentius would venture his money with chances very much in his favour; but Furia very wisely observing, that what they had, was while they had it, *their own*, thought all trafic too great a hazard, and was for putting it out at low interest, upon good security. Prudentius ventured, however, to insure a ship at a very unreasonable price, but happening to lose his money, was so tormented with the clamours of his wife, that he never durst try a second experiment. He has now grovelled seven and forty years under Furia's direction, who never once mentioned him, since his bad luck, by any other name than that of *the insurer*.

The next that married from our society was Florentius. He happened to see Zephyretta in a chariot at a horse-race, danced with her at night, was confirmed in his first ardour, waited on her next morning, and declared himself her lover. Florentius had not knowledge enough of the world, to distinguish between the flutter of coquetry and the sprightliness of wit, or between the smile of allurement and that of cheerfulness. He was soon waked from his rapture, by conviction that his pleasure was but the pleasure of a day. Zephyretta had in four and twenty hours spent her stock of repartee, gone round the circle of her airs, and had nothing remaining for him but childish insipidity, or for herself, but the practice of the same artifices upon new men.

Melissus was a man of parts, capable of enjoying and improving life. He had passed through the various scenes of gayety with that indifference and possession of himself, natural to men who have something higher and nobler in their prospect. Retiring to spend the summer in a village little frequented, he happened to lodge in the same house with Ianthe, and was unavoidably drawn to some acquaintance, which her wit and politeness soon invited him to improve. Having no opportunity of any other company, they were always together; and as they owed their pleasures to each other, they began to forget that any pleasure was enjoyed before their meeting. Melissus, from being delighted with her company, quickly began to be uneasy in her absence, and being sufficiently convinced of the force of her understanding, and finding, as he imagined, such a conformity of temper as declared them formed for each other, addressed her as a lover, after no very long courtship obtained her for his wife, and brought her next winter to town in triumph.

Now began their infelicity. Melissus had only seen her in one scene, where there was no variety of objects, to produce the proper excitements to contrary desires. They had both loved solitude and reflection, where there was nothing but solitude and reflection to be loved; but when they came into public life, Ianthe discovered those passions which accident rather than hypocrisy had hitherto concealed. She was, indeed, not without the power of thinking, but was wholly without the exertion of that power when either gayety or splendour played on her imagination. She was expensive in her diversions, vehement in her passions, insatiate of pleasure, however dangerous to her reputation, and eager of applause, by whomsoever it might be given. This was the wife which Melissus the philosopher found in his retirement, and from whom he expected an associate in his studies, and an assistant to his virtues.

Prosapius, upon the death of his younger brother, that the family might not be extinct, married his housekeeper, and has ever since been complaining to his friends that mean notions are instilled into his children, that he is ashamed to sit at his own table, and that his house is uneasy to him for want of suitable companions.

Avaro, master of a very large estate, took a woman of bad reputation, recommended to him by a rich uncle, who made that marriage the condition on which he should be his heir. Avaro now wonders to perceive his own fortune, his wife's and his uncle's, insufficient to give him that happiness which is to be found only with a woman of virtue.

I intend to treat in more papers on this important article of life, and shall, therefore, make no reflection upon these histories, except that all whom I have mentioned failed to obtain happiness, for want of considering that marriage is the strictest tie of perpetual friendship; that there can be no friendship without confidence, and no confidence without integrity; and that he must expect to be wretched, who pays to beauty, riches, or politeness, that regard which only virtue and piety can claim.

No. 19.] TUESDAY, MAY 22, 1750.

Dum te causidicum, dum te modo rhetora fingis,
Et non decernis Taure, *quid esse velis,*
Peleos *et* Priami *transit, vel* Nestoris *ætas,*
Et serum fuerat jam tibi desinere.——
Eja, age, rumpe moras, quo te spectabimus usque?
Dum quid sis dubitas, potes esse nihil.— MART.

To rhetoric now, and now to law inclined,
Uncertain where to fix thy changing mind;
Old *Priam's* age or *Nestor's* may be out,
And thou, O *Taurus!* still go on in doubt.
Come then, how long such wavering shall we see?
Thou mayst doubt on: thou now canst nothing be.

F. LEWIS.

IT is never without very melancholy reflections, that we can observe the misconduct, or miscarriage, of those men, who seem, by the force of understanding, or extent of knowledge, exempted from the general frailties of human nature, and privileged from the common infelicities of life. Though the world is crowded with scenes of calamity, we look upon the general mass of wretchedness with very little regard, and fix our eyes upon the state of particular persons, whom the eminence of their qualities marks out from the multitude; as in reading an account of a battle, we seldom reflect on the vulgar heaps of slaughter, but follow the hero with our whole attention, through all the varieties of his fortune, without a thought of the thousands that are falling round him.

With the same kind of anxious veneration I have for many years been making observations on the life of Polyphilus, a man whom all his acquaintances have, from his first appearance in the world, feared for the quickness of his discernment, and admired for the multiplicity of his attainments, but whose progress in life, and usefulness to mankind, has been hindered by the superfluity of his knowledge, and the celerity of his mind.

Polyphilus was remarkable, at the school, for surpassing all his companions, without any visible application, and at the university was distinguished equally for his successful progress as well through the thorny mazes of science, as the flowery path of politer literature, without any strict confinement to hours of study, or remarkable forbearance of the common amusements of young men.

When Polyphilus was at the age in which men usually choose their profession, and prepare to enter into a public character, every academical eye was fixed upon him; all were curious to inquire what this universal genius would fix upon for the employment of his life; and no doubt was made but that he would leave all his contemporaries behind him, and mount to the highest honours of that class in which he should inlist himself, without those delays and pauses which must be endured by meaner abilities.

Polyphilus, though by no means insolent or assuming, had been sufficiently encouraged by uninterrupted success, to place great confidence in his own parts; and was not below his companions in the indulgence of his hopes, and expectations of the astonishment with which the world would be struck, when first his lustre should break out upon it; nor could he forbear (for whom does not constant flattery intoxicate?) to join sometimes in the mirth of his friends, at the sudden disappearance of those who, having shone awhile, and drawn the eyes of the public upon their feeble radiance, were now doomed to fade away before him.

It is natural for a man to catch advantageous notions of the condition which those with whom

he converses are striving to attain. Polyphilus, in a ramble to London, fell accidentally among the physicians, and was so much pleased with the prospect of turning philosophy to profit, and so highly delighted with a new theory of fevers which darted into his imagination, and which, after having considered it a few hours, he found himself able to maintain against all the advocates for the ancient system, that he resolved to apply himself to anatomy, botany, and chemistry, and to leave no part unconquered, either of the animal, mineral, or vegetable kingdoms.

He therefore read authors, constructed systems, and tried experiments; but unhappily, as he was going to see a new plant in flower at Chelsea, he met, in crossing Westminster to take water, the chancellor's coach; he had the curiosity to follow him into the hall, where a remarkable cause happened to be tried, and found himself able to produce so many arguments, which the lawyers had omitted on both sides, that he determined to quit physic for a profession in which he found it would be so easy to excel, and which promised higher honours, and larger profits, without melancholy attendance upon misery, mean submission to peevishness, and continual interruption of rest and pleasure.

He immediately took chambers in the Temple, bought a common-place book, and confined himself for some months to the perusal of the statutes, year-books, pleadings, and reports; he was a constant hearer of the courts, and began to put cases with reasonable accuracy. But he soon discovered, by considering the fortune of lawyers, that preferment was not to be got by acuteness, learning, and eloquence. He was perplexed by the absurdities of attorneys, and misrepresentations made by his clients of their own causes, by the useless anxiety of one, and the incessant importunity of another; he began to repent of having devoted himself to a study, which was so narrow in its comprehension, that it could never carry his name to any other country, and thought it unworthy of a man of parts to sell his life only for money. The barrenness of his fellow-students forced him generally into other company at his hours of entertainment, and among the varieties of conversation through which his curiosity was daily wandering, he, by chance, mingled at a tavern with some intelligent officers of the army. A man of letters was easily dazzled with the gayety of their appearance, and softened into kindness by the politeness of their address; he therefore, cultivated this new acquaintance, and when he saw how readily they found in every place admission and regard, and how familiarly they mingled with every rank and order of men, he began to feel his heart beat for military honours, and wondered how the prejudices of the university should make him so long insensible of that ambition, which has fired so many hearts in every age, and negligent of that calling, which is, above all others, universally and invariably illustrious, and which gives, even to the exterior appearance of its professors, a dignity and freedom unknown to the rest of mankind.

These favourable impressions were made still deeper by his conversation with ladies, whose regard for soldiers he could not observe, without wishing himself one of that happy fraternity, to which the female world seemed to have devoted their charms and their kindness. The love of knowledge, which was still his predominant inclination, was gratified by the recital of adventures, and accounts of foreign countries; and therefore he concluded that there was no way of life in which all his views could so completely concentre as in that of a soldier. In the art of war he thought it not difficult to excel, having observed his new friends not very much versed in the principles of tactics or fortification; he therefore studied all the military writers, both ancient and modern, and, in a short time, could tell how to have gained every remarkable battle that has been lost from the beginning of the world. He often showed at table how Alexander should have been checked in his conquests, what was the fatal error at Pharsalia, how Charles of Sweden might have escaped his ruin at Pultowa, and Marlborough might have been made to repent his temerity at Blenheim. He intrenched armies upon paper so that no superiority of numbers could force them, and modelled in clay many impregnable fortresses, on which all the present arts of attack would be exhausted without effect.

Polyphilus, in a short time, obtained a commission; but, before he could rub off the solemnity of a scholar, and gain the true air of military vivacity, a war was declared, and forces sent to the continent. Here Polyphilus unhappily found that study alone would not make a soldier; for being much accustomed to think, he let the sense of danger sink into his mind, and felt at the approach of any action, that terror which a sentence of death would have brought upon him. He saw that, instead of conquering their fears, the endeavour of his gay friends was only to escape them; but his philosophy chained his mind to its object, and rather loaded him with shackles than furnished him with arms. He, however, suppressed his misery in silence, and passed through the campaign with honour, but found himself utterly unable to support another.

He then had recourse again to his books, and continued to range from one study to another. As I usually visit him once a month, and am admitted to him without previous notice, I have found him within this last half year deciphering

the Chinese language, making a farce, collecting a vocabulary of the obsolete terms of the English law, writing an inquiry concerning the ancient Corinthian brass, and forming a new scheme of the variations of the needle.

Thus is this powerful genius, which might have extended the sphere of any science, or benefited the world in any profession, dissipated in a boundless variety, without profit to others or himself! He makes sudden irruptions into the regions of knowledge, and sees all obstacles give way before him: but he never stays long enough to complete his conquest, to establish laws, or bring away the spoils.

Such is often the folly of men, whom nature has enabled to obtain skill and knowledge, on terms so easy, that they have no sense of the value of the acquisition; they are qualified to make such speedy progress in learning, that they think themselves at liberty to loiter in the way, and by turning aside after every new object, lose the race, like Atalanta, to slower competitors, who press diligently forward, and whose force is directed to a single point.

I have often thought those happy that have been fixed, from the first dawn of thought, in a determination to some state of life, by the choice of one whose authority may preclude caprice, and whose influence may prejudice them in favour of his opinion. The general precept of consulting the genius is of little use, unless we are told how the genius can be known. If it is to be discovered only by experiment, life will be lost before the resolution can be fixed; if any other indications are to be found, they may, perhaps, be very early discerned. At least, if to miscarry in an attempt be a proof of having mistaken the direction of the genius, men appear not less frequently deceived with regard to themselves than to others; and therefore no one has much reason to complain that his life was planned out by his friends, or to be confident that he should have had either more honour or happiness, by being abandoned to the chance of his own fancy.

It was said of the learned Bishop Sanderson, that when he was preparing his lectures, he hesitated so much, and rejected so often, that, at the time of reading, he was often forced to produce, not what was best, but what happened to be at hand. This will be the state of every man who, in the choice of his employment, balances all the arguments on every side; the complication is so intricate, the motives and objections so numerous, there is so much play for the imagination, and so much remains in the power of others, that reason is forced at last to rest in neutrality, the decision devolves into the hands of chance, and after a great part of life spent in inquiries which can never be resolved, the rest must often pass in repenting the unnecessary delay, and can be useful to few other purposes than to warn others against the same folly; and to show, that of two states of life equally consistent with religion and virtue, he who chooses earliest chooses best.

No. 20.] SATURDAY, MAY 26, 1750.

Ad populum phaleras. Ego te intus et in cute novi.
PERSIUS.

Such pageantry be to the people shown;
There boast thy horse's trappings and thy own;
I know thee to thy bottom, from within
Thy shallow centre, to thy utmost skin.
DRYDEN.

AMONG the numerous stratagems, by which pride endeavours to recommend folly to regard, there is scarcely one that meets with less success than affectation, or a perpetual disguise of the real character, by fictitious appearances; whether it be, that every man hates falsehood, from the natural congruity of truths to his faculties of reason, or that every man is jealous of the honour of his understanding, and thinks his discernment consequently called in question, whenever any thing is exhibited under a borrowed form.

This aversion to all kinds of disguise, whatever be its cause, is universally diffused, and incessantly in action; nor is it necessary, that to exasperate detestation or excite contempt, any interest should be invaded, or any competition attempted; it is sufficient, that there is an intention to deceive, an intention which every heart swells to oppose, and every tongue is busy to detect.

This reflection was awakened in my mind by a very common practice among my correspondents, of writing under characters which they cannot support, which are of no use to the explanation or enforcement of that which they describe or recommend; and which, therefore, since they assume them only for the sake of displaying their abilities, I will advise them for the future to forbear, as laborious without advantage.

It is almost a general ambition of those who favour me with their advice for the regulation of my conduct, or their contribution for the assistance of my understanding, to affect the style and the names of ladies. And I cannot always withhold some expression of anger, like Sir Hugh in the comedy, when I happen to find that a woman has a beard. I must therefore warn the gentle Phyllis, that she send me no more letters from the Horse Guards; and require of Belinda, that she be content to resign her pretensions to female elegance, till she has lived three weeks without hearing the politics of Batson's coffee-house. I must indulge myself in the liberty of observation, that there were some allusions in Chloris's production, sufficient to show that

Bracton and Plowden are her favourite authors; nd that Euphelia has not been long enough at ome, to wear out all the traces of the phraseo- gy, which she learned in the expedition to Carthagena.

Among all my female friends, there was none who gave me more trouble to decipher her true haracter than Penthesilea, whose letter lay pon my desk three days before I could fix pon the real writer. There was a confusion f images, and medley of barbarity, which held ne long in suspense: till by perseverance I disntangled the perplexity, and found that Penhesilea is the son of a wealthy stock-jobber, who spends his morning under his father's eye n Change-alley, dines at a tavern in Coventarden, passes his evening in the playhouse, and art of the night at a gaming-table, and having earned the dialects of these various regions, has ningled them all in a studied composition.

When Lee was once told by a critic, that it was very easy to write like a madman; he answered, that it was difficult to write like a madman, but easy enough to write like a fool; nd I hope to be excused by my kind contributors, if in imitation of this great author, I preume to remind them, that it is much easier not o write like a man, than to write like a woman.

I have, indeed, some ingenious well-wishers, who, without departing from their sex, have ound very wonderful appellations. A very mart letter has been sent me from a puny nsign, signed Ajax Telamonius; another, in ecommendation of a new treatise upon cards, rom a gamester, who calls himself Sesostris: nd another upon the improvements of the shery, from Dioclesian; but as these seem nly to have picked up their appellations by hance, without endeavouring at any particuir imposture, their improprieties are rather istances of blunder than of affectation, and are, herefore, not equally fitted to inflame the hosle passions: for it is not folly but pride, not ror but deceit, which the world means to ersecute, when it raises the full cry of nature hunt down affectation.

The hatred which dissimulation always raws upon itself is so great, that if I did not now how much cunning differs from wisdom, should wonder that any men have so little nowledge of their own interest, as to aspire to ear a mask for life; to try to impose upon he world a character, to which they feel themlves void of any just claim; and to hazard eir quiet, their fame, and even their profit, by posing themselves to the danger of that reroach, malevolence, and neglect, which such a scovery as they have always to fear will cerinly bring upon them.

It might be imagined that the pleasure of retation should consist in the satisfaction of aving our opinion of our own merit confirmed by the suffrage of the public; and that, to be extolled for a quality, which a man knows himself to want, should give him no other happiness than to be mistaken for the owner of an estate, over which he chances to be travelling. But he who subsists upon affectation, knows nothing of this delicacy; like a desperate adventurer in commerce, he takes up reputation upon trust, mortgages possessions which he never had, and enjoys, to the fatal hour of bankruptcy, though with a thousand terrors and anxieties, the unnecessary splendour of borrowed riches.

Affectation is always to be distinguished from hypocrisy, as being the art of counterfeiting those qualities which we might, with innocence and safety, be known to want. Thus the man who, to carry on any fraud, or to conceal any crime, pretends to rigours of devotion, and exactness of life, is guilty of hypocrisy; and his guilt is greater, as the end, for which he puts on the false appearance, is more pernicious. But he that, with an awkward address, and unpleasing countenance, boasts of the conquests made by him among the ladies, and counts over the thousands which he might have possessed if he would have submitted to the yoke of matrimony, is chargeable only with affectation. Hypocrisy is the necessary burthen of villany, affectation part of the chosen trappings of folly; the one completes a villain, the other only finishes a fop. Contempt is the proper punishment of affectation, and detestation the just consequence of hypocrisy.

With the hypocrite it is not at present my intention to expostulate, though even he might be taught the excellency of virtue, by the necessity of seeming to be virtuous; but the man of affectation may, perhaps, be reclaimed, by finding how little he is likely to gain by perpetual constraint and incessant vigilance, and how much more securely he might make his way to esteem, by cultivating real, than displaying counterfeit qualities.

Every thing future is to be estimated, by a wise man, in proportion to the probability of attaining it, and its value, when attained; and neither of these considerations will much contribute to the encouragement of affectation. For, if the pinnacles of fame be, at best, slippery, how unsteady must his footing be who stands upon pinnacles without foundation! If praise be made by the inconstancy and maliciousness of those who must confer it, a blessing which no man can promise himself from the most conspicuous merit and vigorous industry, how faint must be the hope of gaining it, when the uncertainty is multiplied by the weakness of the pretensions! He that pursues fame with just claims, trusts his happiness to the winds: but he that endeavours after it by false merit, has to fear, not

only the violence of the storm, but the leaks of his vessel. Though he should happen to keep above water for a time, by the help of a soft breeze, and a calm sea, at the first gust he must inevitably founder, with this melancholy reflection, that, if he would have been content with his natural station, he might have escaped his calamity. Affectation may possibly succeed for a time, and a man may, by great attention, persuade others, that he really has the qualities of which he presumes to boast; but the hour will come when he should exert them, and then, whatever he enjoyed in praise, he must suffer in reproach.

Applause and admiration are by no means to be counted among the necessaries of life, and therefore any indirect arts to obtain them have very little claim to pardon or compassion. There is scarcely any man without some valuable or improveable qualities, by which he might always secure himself from contempt. And perhaps exemption from ignominy is the most eligible reputation, as freedom from pain is, among some philosophers, the definition of happiness.

If we therefore compare the value of the praise obtained by fictitious excellence, even while the cheat is yet undiscovered, with that kindness which every man may suit by his virtue, and that esteem to which most men may rise by common understanding steadily and honestly applied, we shall find that when from the adscititious happiness all the deductions are made by fear and casualty, there will remain nothing equiponderant to the security of truth. The state of the possessor of humble virtues, to the affecter of great excellences, is that of a small cottage of stone, to the palace raised with ice by the Empress of Russia; it was for a time splendid and luminous, but the first sunshine melted it to nothing.

No. 21.] TUESDAY, MAY 29, 1750.

Terra salutiferas herbas, eademque nocentes,
Nutrit; et urticæ proxima sæpe rosa est.

OVID.

Our bane and phy-ic the same earth bestows,
And near the noisome nettle blooms the rose.

EVERY man is prompted by the love of himself to imagine, that he possesses some qualities, superior, either in kind or in degree, to those which he sees allotted to the rest of the world; and, whatever apparent disadvantages he may suffer in the comparison with others, he has some invisible distinctions, some latent reserve of excellence, which he throws into the balance, and by which he generally fancies that it is turned in his favour.

The studious and speculative part of mankind always seem to consider their fraternity a placed in a state of opposition to those who are engaged in the tumult of public business; and have pleased themselves from age to age, with celebrating the felicity of their own condition and with recounting the perplexity of politics the dangers of greatness, the anxieties of ambition, and the miseries of riches.

Among the numerous topics of declamation that their industry has discovered on this subject, there is none which they press with greater efforts, or on which they have more copiously laid out their reason and their imagination, than the instability of high stations, and the uncertainty with which the profits and honours are possessed, that must be acquired with so much hazard, vigilance and labour.

This they appear to consider as an irrefragable argument against the choice of the statesman and the warrior; and swell with confidence of victory, thus furnished by the Muses with the arms which never can be blunted, and which no art or strength of their adversaries can elude or resist.

It was well known by experience to the nations which employed elephants in war, that though by the terror of their bulk, and the violence of their impression, they often threw the enemy into disorder, yet there was always danger in the use of them, very nearly equivalent to the advantage; for if their first charge could be supported, they were easily driven back upon their confederates; they then broke through the troops behind them, and made no less havoc in the precipitation of their retreat, than in the fury of their onset.

I know not whether those who have so vehemently urged the inconveniences and dangers of an active life, have not made use of arguments that may be retorted with equal force upon themselves; and whether the happiness of a candidate for literary fame be not subject to the same uncertainty with that of him who governs provinces, commands armies, presides in the senate, or dictates in the cabinet.

That eminence of learning is not to be gained without labour, at least equal to that which any other kind of greatness can require, will be allowed by those who wish to elevate the character of a scholar; since they cannot but know that every human acquisition is valuable in proportion to the difficulty employed in its attainment. And that those who have gained the esteem and veneration of the world, by the knowledge or their genius, are by no means exempt from the solicitude which any other kind of dignity produces, may be conjectured from the innumerable artifices which they make use of to degrade a superior, to repress a rival, or obstruct a follower; artifices so gross and mean, as to prove evidently how much a man may excel in learning without being either

more wise or more virtuous than those whose norance he pities or despises.

Nothing therefore remains, by which the udent can gratify his desire of appearing to ave built his happiness on a more firm basis an his antagonist, except the certainty with hich his honours are enjoyed. The garlands ained by the heroes of literature must be athered from summits equally difficult to climb ith those that bear the civic or triumphal reaths, they must be worn with equal envy, nd guarded with equal care from those hands hat are always employed in efforts to tear them way; the only remaining hope is, that their erdure is more lasting, and that they are less kely to fade by time, or less obnoxious to the lasts of accident.

Even this hope will receive very little encouragement from the examination of the history of earning, or observation of the fate of scholars the present age. If we look back into past mes, we find innumerable names of auths once in high reputation, read perhaps by the eautiful, quoted by the witty, and commented by the grave; but of whom we now know nly that they once existed. If we consider he distribution of literary fame in our own me, we shall find it a possession of very uncerain tenure; sometimes bestowed by a sudden aprice of the public, and again transferred to new favourite, for no other reason than that e is new; sometimes refused to long labour nd eminent desert, and sometimes granted very slight pretensions; lost sometimes by ecurity and negligence, and sometimes by too ligent endeavours to retain it.

A successful author is equally in danger of he diminution of his fame, whether he connues or ceases to write. The regard of the ublic is not to be kept but by tribute, and the membrance of past service will quickly nguish, unless successive performances freiently revive it. Yet in every new attempt ere is new hazard, and there are few who do t, at some unlucky time, injure their own aracters by attempting to enlarge them.

There are many possible causes of that inequaly which we may so frequently observe in the rformances of the same man, from the influce of which no ability or industry is sufficitly secured, and which have so often sullied e splendour of genius, that the wit, as well as e conqueror, may be properly cautioned not indulge his pride with too early triumphs, t to defer to the end of life his estimate of ppiness.

——Ultima semper
Expectanda dies homini, dicique beatus
Ante obitum nemo supremaque funera debet.

But no frail man, however great or high,
Can be concluded bless'd before he die.

ADDISON.

Among the motives that urge an author to undertakings by which his reputation is impaired, one of the most frequent must be mentioned with tenderness, because it is not to be counted among his follies, but his miseries. It very often happens that the works of learning or of wit are performed at the direction of those by whom they are to be rewarded; the writer has not always the choice of his subject, but is compelled to accept any task which is thrown before him, without much consideration of his own convenience, and without time to prepare himself by previous studies.

Miscarriages of this kind are likewise frequently the consequence of that acquaintance with the great, which is generally considered as one of the chief privileges of literature and genius. A man who has once learned to think himself exalted by familiarity with those whom nothing but their birth, or their fortunes, or such stations as are seldom gained by moral excellence, set above him, will not be long without submitting his understanding to their conduct; he will suffer them to prescribe the course of his studies, and employ him for their own purposes either of diversion or interest. His desire of pleasing those whose favour he has weakly made necessary to himself, will not suffer him always to consider how little he is qualified for the work imposed. Either his vanity will tempt him to conceal his deficiencies, or that cowardice, which always encroaches fast upon such as spend their lives in the company of persons higher than themselves, will not leave him resolution to assert the liberty of choice.

But, though we suppose that a man by his fortune can avoid the necessity of dependance, and by his spirit can repel the usurpations of patronage, yet he may easily, by writing long, happen to write ill. There is a general succession of events in which contraries are produced by periodical vicissitudes; labour and care are rewarded with success, success produces confidence, confidence relaxes industry, and negligence ruins that reputation which accuracy had raised.

He that happens not to be lulled by praise into supineness, may be animated by it to undertakings above his strength, or incited to fancy himself alike qualified for every kind of composition, and able to comply with the public taste through all its variations. By some opinion like this, many men have been engaged, at an advanced age in attempts which they had not time to complete, and after a few weak efforts, sunk into the grave with vexation to see the rising generation gain ground upon them. From these failures the highest genius is not exempt; that judgment which appears so penetrating, when it is employed upon the works of others, very often fails where interest or passion can

exert their power. We are blinded in examining our own labours by innumerable prejudices. Our juvenile compositions please us, because they bring to our minds the remembrance of youth; our later performances we are ready to esteem, because we are unwilling to think that we have made no improvement; what flows easily from the pen charms us, because we read with pleasure that which flatters our opinion of our own powers; what was composed with great struggles of the mind we do not easily reject, because we cannot bear that so much labour should be fruitless. But the reader has none of these prepossessions, and wonders that the author is so unlike himself, without considering that the same soil will, with different culture, afford different products.

No. 22.] SATURDAY, JUNE 2, 1750.

——Ego nec studium sine divite vena
Nec rude quid prosit video ingenium; alterius sic
Altera poscit opem res et conjurat amice.

HOR.

Without a genius learning soars in vain;
And without learning genius sinks again;
Their force united crowns the sprightly reign.

ELPHINSTON.

WIT and Learning were the children of Apollo, by different mothers: Wit was the offspring of Euphrosyne, and resembled her in cheerfulness and vivacity: Learning was born of Sophia, and retained her seriousness and caution. As their mothers were rivals, they were bred up by them from their birth in habitual opposition, and all means were so incessantly employed to impress upon them a hatred and contempt of each other, that though Apollo, who foresaw the ill effects of their discord, endeavoured to soften them, by dividing his regard equally between them, yet his impartiality and kindness were without effect; the material animosity was deeply rooted, having been intermingled with their first ideas, and was confirmed every hour, as fresh opportunities occurred of exerting it. No sooner were they of age to be received into the apartments of the other celestials, than Wit began to entertain Venus at her toilet, by aping the solemnity of Learning, and Learning to divert Minerva at her loom, by exposing the blunders and ignorance of Wit.

Thus they grew up, with malice perpetually increasing, by the encouragement which each received from those whom their mothers had persuaded to patronize and support them; and longed to be admitted to the table of Jupiter, not so much for the hope of gaining honour, as of excluding a rival from all pretensions to regard, and of putting an everlasting stop to the progress of that influence which either believed the other to have obtained by mean arts and false appearances.

At last the day came, when they were bo with the usual solemnities, received into class of superior deities, and allowed to ta nectar from the hand of Hebe. But from th hour Concord lost her authority at the table Jupiter. The rivals, animated by their n dignity, and incited by the alternate applau of the associate powers, harassed each other incessant contests, with such a regular vicis tude of victory, that neither was depressed.

It was observable, that at the beginning every debate, the advantage was on the side Wit; and that, at the first sallies, the whole sembly sparkled, according to Homer's expr sion, with unextinguishable merriment. Learning would reserve her strength till burst of applause was over, and the langu with which the violence of joy is always s ceeded, began to promise more calm and pati attention. She then attempted her defence, a by comparing one part of her antagonist's jections with another, commonly made confute himself; or, by showing how small part of the question he had taken into his vie proved that his opinion could have no weig The audience began gradually to lay aside th prepossessions, and rose, at last, with grea veneration for Learning, but with greater kin ness for Wit.

Their conduct was, whenever they desired recommend themselves to distinction, entir opposite. Wit was daring and adventurou Learning cautious and deliberate. Wit thoug nothing reproachful but dulness; Learning w afraid of no imputation, but that of error. W answered before he understood, lest his quic ness of apprehension should be questione Learning paused, where there was no difficul lest any, insidious sophism should lie und covered. Wit perplexed every debate by ra dity and confusion; Learning tired the hear with endless distinctions, and prolonged the d pute without advantage, by proving that wh never was denied. Wit, in hopes of shini would venture to produce what he had not co sidered, and often succeeded beyond his own pectation, by following the train of a luc thought; Learning would reject every new tion, for fear of being entangled in consequen which she could not foresee, and was often h dered, by her caution, from pressing her adv tages, and subduing her opponent.

Both had prejudices, which in some deg hindered their progress towards perfection, left them open to attacks. Novelty was darling of Wit, and antiquity of Learning. Wit, all that was new was specious; to Lea ing, whatever was ancient was venerable. W however, seldom failed to divert those whom could not convince, and to convince was often his ambition; Learning always suppo her opinion with so many collateral truths, t

when the cause was decided against her, her arguments were remembered with admiration.

Nothing was more common, on either side, than to quit their proper characters, and to hope for a complete conquest by the use of the weapons which had been employed against them. Wit would sometimes labour a syllogism, and Learning distort her features with a jest; but they always suffered by the experiment, and betrayed themselves to confutation or contempt. The seriousness of Wit was without dignity, and the merriment of Learning without vivacity.

Their contests, by long continuance, grew at last important, and the divinities broke into parties. Wit was taken into protection of the laughter-loving Venus, had a retinue allowed him of Smiles and Jests, and was often permitted to dance among the Graces. Learning still continued the favourite of Minerva, and seldom went out of her palace, without a train of the severer virtues, Chastity, Temperance, Fortitude, and Labour. Wit, cohabiting with Malice, had a son named Satyr, who followed him, carrying a quiver filled with poisoned arrows, which, where they once drew blood, could by no skill ever be extracted. These arrows he frequently shot at Learning, when she was most earnestly or usefully employed, engaged in abstruse inquiries, or giving instructions to her followers. Minerva therefore deputed Criticism to her aid, who generally broke the point of Satyr's arrows, turned them aside, or retorted them on himself.

Jupiter was at last angry that the peace of the heavenly regions should be in perpetual danger of violation, and resolved to dismiss these troublesome antagonists to the lower world. Hither therefore they came, and carried on their ancient quarrel among mortals, nor was either long without zealous votaries. Wit, by his gayety, captivated the young; and Learning, by her authority, influenced the old. Their power quickly appeared by very eminent effects: theatres were built for the reception of Wit; and colleges endowed for the residence of Learning. Each party endeavoured to outvie the other in cost and magnificence, and to propagate an opinion, that it was necessary, from the first entrance into life, to enlist in one of the factions; and that none could hope for the regard of either divinity, who had once entered the temple of the rival power.

There were indeed a class of mortals, by whom Wit and Learning were equally disregarded; these were the devotees of Plutus, the god of riches; among these it seldom happened that the gayety of Wit could raise a smile, or the eloquence of Learning procure attention. In revenge of this contempt they agreed to incite their followers against them; but the forces that were sent on those expeditions frequently betrayed their trust; and, in contempt of the orders which they had received, flattered the rich in public, while they scorned them in their hearts; and when, by this treachery, they had obtained the favour of Plutus, affected to look with an air of superiority on those who still remained in the service of Wit and Learning.

Disgusted with these desertions, the two rivals, at the same time, petitioned Jupiter for readmission to their native habitations. Jupiter thundered on the right hand, and they prepared to obey the happy summons. Wit readily spread his wings and soared aloft, but not being able to see far, was bewildered in the pathless immensity of the etherial spaces. Learning, who knew the way, shook her pinions; but for want of natural vigour, could only take short flights: so, after many efforts, they both sunk again to the ground, and learned from their mutual distress the necessity of union. They therefore joined their hands, and renewed their flight; Learning was borne up by the vigour of Wit, and Wit guided by the perspicacity of Learning. They soon reached the dwellings of Jupiter, and were so endeared to each other, that they lived afterwards in perpetual concord. Wit persuaded Learning to converse with the Graces, and Learning engaged Wit in the service of the Virtues. They were now the favourites of all the powers of heaven, and gladdened every banquet by their presence. They soon after married, at the command of Jupiter, and had a numerous progeny of Arts and Sciences.

No. 23.] TUESDAY, JUNE 5, 1750.

Tres mihi convivæ prope dissentire videntur,
Poscentes vario multum diversa palato. HOR.

Three guests I have, dissenting at my feast,
Requiring each to gratify his taste
With different food. FRANCIS.

THAT every man should regulate his actions by his own conscience, without any regard to the opinions of the rest of the world, is one of the first precepts of moral prudence; justified not only by the suffrage of reason, which declares that none of the gifts of Heaven are to lie useless, but by the voice likewise of experience, which will soon inform us that, if we make the praise or blame of others the rule of our conduct, we shall be distracted by a boundless variety of irreconcileable judgments, be held in perpetual suspense between contrary impulses, and consult for ever without determination.

I know not whether, for the same reason, it is not necessary for an author to place some confidence in his own skill, and to satisfy himself in the knowledge that he has not deviated from the established laws of composition, without submitting his works to frequent examinations before he gives them to the public, or endeavour-

ing to secure success by a solicitous conformity to advice and criticism.

It is, indeed, quickly discoverable, that consultation and compliance can conduce little to the perfection of any literary performance; for whoever is so doubtful of his own abilities as to encourage the remarks of others, will find himself every day embarrassed with new difficulties, and will harass his mind, in vain, with the hopeless labour of uniting heterogeneous ideas, digesting independent hints, and collecting into one point the several rays of borrowed light, emitted often with contrary directions.

Of all authors, those who retail their labours in periodical sheets would be most unhappy, if they were much to regard the censures or the admonitions of their readers: for, as their works are not sent into the world at once, but by small parts in gradual succession, it is always imagined, by those who think themselves qualified to give instructions, that they may yet redeem their former failings by hearkening to better judges, and supply the deficiencies of their plan, by the help of the criticisms which are so liberally afforded.

I have had occasion to observe, sometimes with vexation, and sometimes with merriment, the different temper with which the same man reads a printed and manuscript performance. When a book is once in the hands of the public, it is considered as permanent and unalterable; and the reader, if he be free from personal prejudices, takes it up with no other intention than of pleasing or instructing himself: he accommodates his mind to the author's design; and, having no interest in refusing the amusement that is offered him, never interrupts his own tranquillity by studied cavils, or destroys his satisfaction in that which is already well, by an anxious inquiry how it might be better; but is often contented without pleasure, and pleased without perfection.

But if the same man be called to consider the merit of a production yet unpublished, he brings an imagination heated with objections to passages which he has yet never heard; he invokes all the powers of criticism, and stores his memory with Taste and Grace, Purity and Delicacy, Manners and Unities, sounds which, having been once uttered by those that understood them, have been since re-echoed without meaning, and kept up to the disturbance of the world, by a constant repercussion from one coxcomb to another. He considers himself as obliged to show, by some proof of his abilities, that he is not consulted to no purpose, and therefore watches every opening for objection, and looks round for every opportunity to propose some specious alteration. Such opportunities a very small degree of sagacity will enable him to find; for, in every work of imagination, the disposition of parts, the insertion of incidents, and use of decorations, may b varied a thousand ways with equal propriety and as in things nearly equal, that will alway seem best to every man which he himsel produces; the critic, whose business is only t propose, without the care of execution, ca never want the satisfaction of believing that h has suggested very important improvements nor the power of enforcing his advice by argu ments, which, as they appear convincing t himself, either his kindness or his vanity wil press obstinately and importunately, withou suspicion that he may possibly judge too hastil in favour of his own advice, or inquiry whethe the advantage of the new scheme be proportion ate to the labour.

It is observed by the younger Pliny, that a orator ought not so much to select the stronges arguments which his cause admits, as to em ploy all which his imagination can afford: for in pleading, those reasons are of most value which will most affect the judges; and th judges, says he, will be always most touche with that which they had before conceived Every man who is called to give his opinio of a performance, decides upon the same prin ciple: he first suffers himself to form expecta tions, and then is angry at his disappointment He lets his imagination rove at large, an wonders that another, equally unconfined i the boundless ocean of possibility, takes a dif ferent course.

But, though the rule of Pliny be judiciously laid down, it is not applicable to the writer' cause, because there always lies an appeal fro domestic criticism to a higher judicature, an the public, which is never corrupted, nor ofte deceived, is to pass the last sentence upon literar claims.

Of the great force of preconceived opinions had many proofs, when I first entered upon th weekly labour. My readers having, from th performances of my predecessors, establishe an idea of unconnected essays, to which the believed all future authors under a necessity conforming, were impatient of the least devi tion from their system, and numerous remon trances were accordingly made by each, as found his favourite subject omitted or delaye Some were angry that the Rambler did n like the Spectator, introduce himself to the a quaintance of the public, by an account of own birth and studies, an enumeration of adventures, and a description of his physio nomy. Others soon began to remark that was a solemn, serious, dictatorial writer, wi out sprightliness or gayety, and called out w vehemence for mirth and humour. Anoth admonished him to have a special eye upon various clubs of this great city, and inform him that much of the Spectator's vivacity w laid out upon such assemblies. He has b

censured for not imitating the politeness of his predecessors, having hitherto neglected to take the ladies under his protection, and give them rules for the just opposition of colours, and the proper dimensions of ruffles and pinners. He has been required by one to fix a particular censure upon those matrons who play at cards with spectacles; and another is very much offended whenever he meets with a speculation in which naked precepts are comprised without the illustration of examples and characters.

I make not the least question that all these monitors intend the promotion of my design, and the instruction of my readers; but they do not know, or do not reflect, that an author has a rule of choice peculiar to himself; and selects those subjects which he is best qualified to treat, by the course of his studies, or the accidents of his life; that some topics of amusement have been already treated with too much success to invite competition; and that he who endeavours to gain many readers must try various arts of imitation, essay every avenue of pleasure, and make frequent changes in his methods of approach.

I cannot but consider myself, amidst this tumult of criticism, as a ship in a poetical tempest, impelled at the same time by opposite winds, and dashed by the waves from every quarter, but held upright by the contrariety of the assailants, and secured in some measure by multiplicity of distress. Had the opinion of my censurers been unanimous, it might perhaps have overset my resolution; but since I find them at variance with each other, I can, without scruple, neglect them, and endeavour to gain the favour of the public by following the direction of my own reason, and indulging the sallies of my own imagination.

No. 24.] SATURDAY, JUNE 9, 1750.

Nemo in sese tentat descendere.—PERSIUS.

None, none descends into himself.—DRYDEN.

AMONG the precepts, or aphorisms, admitted by general consent, and inculcated by frequent repetition, there is none more famous among the masters of ancient wisdom, than that compendious lesson, Γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, *Be acquainted with thyself*; ascribed by some to an oracle, and by others to Chilo of Lacedemon.

This is, indeed, a dictate, which, in the whole extent of its meaning, may be said to comprise all the speculation requisite to a moral agent. For what more can be necessary to the regulation of life, than the knowledge of our original, our end, our duties, and our relation to other beings?

It is however very improbable that the first author, whoever he was, intended it to be understood in this unlimited and complicated sense; for of the inquiries, which in so large an acceptation it would seem to recommend, some are too extensive for the powers of man, and some require light from above, which was not yet indulged to the heathen world.

We might have had more satisfaction concerning the original import of this celebrated sentence, if history had informed us, whether it was uttered as a general instruction to mankind, or as a particular caution to some private inquirer; whether it was applied to some single occasion, or laid down as the universal rule of life.

There will occur, upon the slightest consideration, many possible circumstances, in which this monition might very properly be enforced; for every error in human conduct must arise from ignorance in ourselves, either perpetual or temporary; and happen either because we do not know what is best and fittest, or because our knowledge is at the time of action not present to the mind.

When a man employs himself upon remote and unnecessary subjects, and wastes his life upon questions which cannot be resolved, and of which the solution would conduce very little to the advancement of happiness: when he lavishes his hours in calculating the weight of the terraqueous globe, or in adjusting successive systems of worlds beyond the reach of the telescope; he may be very properly recalled from his excursions by this precept, and reminded, that there is a nearer being with which it is his duty to be more acquainted; and from which his attention has hitherto been withheld by studies, to which he has no other motive than vanity or curiosity.

The great praise of Socrates is, that he drew the wits of Greece, by his instruction and example from the vain pursuit of natural philosophy to moral inquiries, and turned their thoughts from stars and tides, and matter and motion, upon the various modes of virtue and relations of life. All his lectures were but commentaries upon this saying; if we suppose the knowledge of ourselves recommended by Chilo, in opposition to other inquiries less suitable to the state of man.

The great fault of men of learning is still, that they offend against this rule, and appear willing to study any thing rather than themselves; for which reason they are often despised by those with whom they imagine themselves above comparison; despised, as useless to common purposes, as unable to conduct the most trivial affairs, and unqualified to perform those offices by which the concatenation of society is preserved, and mutual tenderness excited and maintained.

Gelidus is a man of great penetration and

deep researches. Having a mind naturally formed for the abstruser sciences, he can comprehend intricate combinations without confusion, and being of a temper naturally cool and equal, he is seldom interrupted by his passions in the pursuit of the longest chain of unexpected consequences. He has, therefore, a long time indulged hopes, that the solution of some problems, by which the professors of science have been hitherto baffled, is reserved for his genius and industry. He spends his time in the highest room of his house, into which none of his family are suffered to enter; and when he comes down to his dinner, or his rest, he walks about like a stranger that is there only for a day, without any tokens of regard or tenderness. He has totally divested himself of all human sensations; he has neither eye for beauty, nor ear for complaint; he neither rejoices at the good fortune of his nearest friend, nor mourns for any public or private calamity. Having once received a letter, and given it his servant to read, he was informed, that it was written by his brother, who, being shipwrecked, had swam naked to land, and was destitute of necessaries in a foreign country. Naked and destitute! says Gelidus—reach down the last volume of meteorological observations, extract an exact account of the wind, and note it carefully in the diary of the weather.

The family of Gelidus once broke into his study, to show him that a town at a small distance was on fire, and in a few moments a servant came up to tell him, that the flame had caught so many houses on both sides, that the inhabitants were confounded, and began to think of rather escaping with their lives than saving their dwellings. What you tell me, says Gelidus, is very probable, for fire naturally acts in a circle.

Thus lives this great philosopher, insensible to every spectacle of distress, and unmoved by the loudest call of social nature, for want of considering that men are designed for the succour and comfort of each other; that though there are hours which may be laudably spent upon knowledge not immediately useful, yet the first attention is due to practical virtue: and that he may be justly driven out from the commerce of mankind, who has so far abstracted himself from the species, as to partake neither of the joys nor griefs of others, but neglects the endearments of his wife, and the caresses of his children, to count the drops of rain, note the changes of the wind, and calculate the eclipses of the moons of Jupiter.

I shall reserve to some future paper the religious and important meaning of this epitome of wisdom, and only remark, that it may be applied to the gay and light, as well as to the grave and solemn parts of life; and that not only the philosopher may forfeit his pretences to real learning, but the wit and beauty ma miscarry in their schemes, by the want this universal requisite, the knowledge of them selves.

It is surely for no other reason, that we se such numbers resolutely struggling against na ture, and contending for that which they neve can attain, endeavouring to unite contradiction and determined to excel in characters inconsis tent with each other; that stock-jobbers affec dress, gayety, and elegance, and mathematician labour to be wits; that the soldier teases his ac quaintance with questions in theology, and th academic hopes to divert the ladies by a recita of his gallantries. That absurdity of pride coul proceed only from ignorance of themselves, b which Garth attempted criticism, and Congrev waived his title to dramatic reputation, and de sired to be considered only as a gentleman.

Euphues, with great parts, and extensiv knowledge, has a clouded aspect and ungracious form; yet it has been his ambition, from hi first entrance into life, to distinguish himself b particularities in his dress, to outvie beaus i embroidery, to import new trimmings, and t be foremost in the fashion. Euphues has turne on his exterior appearance that attention whic would always have produced esteem, had it bee fixed upon his mind; and though his virtue and abilities have preserved him from the con tempt which he has so diligently solicited, h has, at least, raised one impediment to his repu tation; since all can judge of his dress, but few of his understanding; and many, who discern that he is a fop, are unwilling to believe that h can be wise.

There is one instance in which the ladies ar particularly unwilling to observe the rule o Chilo. They are desirous to hide from them selves the advances of age, and endeavour to frequently to supply the sprightliness and bloom of youth by artificial beauty and forced vivacity They hope to inflame the heart by glances whic have lost their fire, or melt it by languor whic is no longer delicate; they play over the air which pleased at a time when they were ex pected only to please, and forget that airs ough in time to give place to virtues. They continu to trifle, because they could once trifle agreeably till those who shared their early pleasures ar withdrawn to more serious engagements; an are scarcely awakened from their dream of pe petual youth, but by the scorn of those whom they endeavour to rival.*

* Mrs. Piozzi says, that by *Gelidus*, in this pape the author meant to represent Mr. Coulson, a m thematician, who formerly lived at Rochester. Th is not very probable, if we consider the characte Davies gives of Mr. Coulson (Colson) in his Life o Garrick, which was certainly written under D Johnson's inspection, and, what relates to Colso probably from his information.—C.

No. 25.] Tuesday, June 12, 1750.

Possunt quia posse videntur. VIRGIL.

For they can conquer who believe they can.
DRYDEN.

There are some vices and errors which, though often fatal to those in whom they are found, have yet, by the universal consent of mankind, been considered as entitled to some degree of respect, or have, at least, been exempted from contemptuous infamy, and condemned by the severest moralists with pity rather than detestation.

A constant and invariable example of this general partiality will be found in the different regard which has always been shown to rashness and cowardice; two vices, of which, though they may be conceived equally distant from the middle point, where true fortitude is placed, and may equally injure any public or private interest, yet the one is never mentioned without some kind of veneration, and the other always considered as a topic of unlimited and licentious censure, on which all the virulence of reproach may be lawfully exerted.

The same distinction is made, by the common suffrage, between profusion and avarice, and, perhaps, between many other opposite vices; and as I have found reason to pay great regard to the voice of the people, in cases where knowledge has been forced upon them by experience, without long deductions, or deep researches, I am inclined to believe that this distribution of respect is not without some agreement with the nature of things; and that in the faults, which are thus invested with extraordinary privileges, there are generally some latent principles of merit, some possibilities of future virtue, which may, by degrees, break from obstruction, and by time and opportunity be brought into act.

It may be laid down as an axiom, that it is more easy to take away superfluities than to supply defects; and therefore he that is culpable, because he has passed the middle point of virtue, is always accounted a fairer object of hope, than he who fails by falling short. The one has all that perfection requires, and more, but the excess may be easily retrenched; the other wants the qualities requisite to excellence, and who can tell how he shall obtain them? We are certain that the horse may be taught to keep pace with his fellows, whose fault is it that he leaves them behind? We know that a few strokes of the axe will lop a cedar; but what arts of cultivation can elevate a shrub?

To walk with circumspection and steadiness in the right path, at an equal distance between the extremes of error, ought to be the constant endeavour of every reasonable being; nor can I think those teachers of moral wisdom much to be honoured as benefactors to mankind, who are always enlarging upon the difficulty of our duties, and providing rather excuses for vice, than incentives to virtue.

But, since to most it will happen often, and to all sometimes, that there will be a deviation towards one side or the other, we ought always to employ our vigilance, with most attention, on that enemy from which there is the greatest danger, and to stray, if we must stray, towards those parts from whence we may quickly and easily return.

Among other opposite qualities of the mind, which may become dangerous, though in different degrees, I have often had occasion to consider the contrary effects of presumption and despondency; of heady confidence, which promises victory without contest, and heartless pusillanimity, which shrinks back from the thought of great undertakings, confounds difficulty with impossibility, and considers all advancement towards any new attainment as irreversibly prohibited.

Presumption will be easily corrected. Every experiment will teach caution, and miscarriages will hourly show, that attempts are not always rewarded with success. The most precipitate ardour will, in time, be taught the necessity of methodical gradation and preparatory measures; and the most daring confidence be convinced that neither merit nor abilities can command events.

It is the advantage of vehemence and activity, that they are always hastening to their own reformation; because they incite us to try whether our expectations are well grounded, and therefore detect the deceits which they are apt to occasion. But timidity is a disease of the mind more obstinate and fatal; for a man once persuaded that any impediment is insuperable, has given it, with respect to himself, that strength and weight which it had not before. He can scarcely strive with vigour and perseverance, when he has no hope of gaining the victory; and since he never will try his strength, can never discover the unreasonableness of his fears.

There is often to be found in men devoted to literature, a kind of intellectual cowardice, which whoever converses much among them, may observe frequently to depress the alacrity of enterprise, and by consequence, to retard the improvement of science. They have annexed to every species of knowledge some chimerical character of terror and inhibition, which they transmit, without much reflection, from one to another; they first fright themselves, and then propagate the panic to their scholars and acquaintance. One study is inconsistent with a lively imagination, another with a solid judgment; one is improper in the early parts of life, another requires so much time, that it is not to be attempted at an advanced age; one is dry

and contracts the sentiments, another is diffuse and overburdens the memory; one is insufferable to taste and delicacy, and another wears out life in the study of words, and is useless to a wise man, who desires only the knowledge of things.

But of all the bugbears by which the *infantes barbati*, boys both young and old, have been hitherto frighted from digressing into new tracts of learning, none has been more mischievously efficacious than an opinion that every kind of knowledge requires a peculiar genius, or mental constitution framed for the reception of some ideas, and the exclusion of others: and that to him whose genius is not adapted to the study which he prosecutes, all labour shall be vain and fruitless, vain as an endeavour to mingle oil and water, or in the language of chymistry, to amalgamate bodies of heterogeneous principles.

This opinion we may reasonably suspect to have been propagated, by vanity, beyond the truth. It is natural for those who have raised a reputation by any science, to exalt themselves as endowed by Heaven with peculiar powers, or marked out by an extraordinary designation for their profession; and to fright competitors away by representing the difficulties with which they must contend, and the necessity of qualities which are supposed to be not generally conferred, and which no man can know but by experience whether he enjoys.

To this discouragement it may be possibly answered, that since a genius, whatever it be, is like fire in a flint, only to be produced by collision with a proper subject, it is the business of every man to try whether his faculties may not happily co-operate with his desires; and since they whose proficiency he admires, knew their own force only by the event, he needs but engage in the same undertaking with equal spirit, and may reasonably hope for equal success.

There is another species of false intelligence, given by those who profess to show the way to the summit of knowledge, of equal tendency to depress the mind with false distrust of itself, and weaken it by needless solicitude and dejection. When a scholar whom they desire to animate consults them at his entrance on some new study, it is common to make flattering representations of its pleasantness and facility. Thus they generally attain one of two ends almost equally desirable; they either incite his industry by elevating his hopes, or produce a high opinion of their own abilities, since they are supposed to relate only what they have found, and to have proceeded with no less ease than they promise to their followers.

The student, inflamed by this encouragement, sets forward in the new path, and proceeds a few steps with great alacrity, but he soon finds asperities and intricacies of which he has not been forewarned, and imagining that none ever were so entangled or fatigued before him, sinks suddenly into despair, and desists as from an expedition in which fate opposes him. Thus his terrors are multiplied by his hopes, and he is defeated without resistance, because he had no expectation of an enemy.

Of these treacherous instructors, the one destroys industry, by declaring that industry is vain, the other by representing it as needless; the one cuts away the root of hope, the other raises it only to be blasted; the one confines his pupil to the shore, by telling him that his wreck is certain, the other sends him to sea, without preparing him for tempests.

False hopes and false terrors are equally to be avoided. Every man, who proposes to grow eminent by learning, should carry in his mind at once the difficulty of excellence and the force of industry; and remember, that fame is not conferred but as the recompense of labour, and that labour vigorously continued has not often failed of its reward.

No. 26.] SATURDAY, JUNE 14, 1750.

Ingentes dominos, et claræ nomina famæ,
Illustrique graves nobilitate domos
Devita, et longe cautus fuge; contrahe vela,
Et te littoribus cymba propinqua vehat.

SENECA.

Each mighty lord, big with a pompous name,
And each high house of fortune and of fame,
With caution fly; contract thy ample sails,
And near the shore improve the gentle gales.

ELPHINSTON.

MR. RAMBLER,

IT is usual for men, engaged in the same pursuits, to be inquisitive after the conduct and fortune of each other; and, therefore, I suppose it will not be unpleasing to you, to read an account of the various changes which have happened in part of a life devoted to literature. My narrative will not exhibit any great variety of events or extraordinary revolutions; but may, perhaps, be not less useful, because I shall relate nothing which is not likely to happen to a thousand others.

I was born heir to a very small fortune, and left by my father, whom I cannot remember, to the care of an uncle. He having no children always treated me as his son, and finding in me those qualities which old men easily discover in sprightly children, when they happen to love them, declared that a genius like mine should never be lost for want of cultivation. He therefore placed me, for the usual time, at a great school, and then sent me to the university, with a larger allowance than my own patrimony would have afforded, that I might not keep mean company, but learn to become my dignity when I should be made lord chancellor, which he of-

en lamented, that the increase of his infirmities vns very likely to preclude him from seeing.

This exuberance of money displayed itself in ayety of appearance, and wantonness of expense, nd introduced me to the acquaintance of those vhom the same superfluity of fortune betrayed o the same license and ostentation: young eirs, who pleased themselves with a remark very frequent in their mouths, that though hey were sent by their fathers to the university, hey were not under the necessity of living by heir learning.

Among men of this class I easily obtained he reputation of a great genius, and was per-uaded that with such liveliness of imagination, nd delicacy of sentiment, I should never be ble to submit to the drudgery of the law. I herefore gave myself wholly to the more airy nd elegant parts of learning, and was often o much elated with my superiority to the ouths with whom I conversed, that I began o listen, with great attention, to those that re-ommended to me a wider and more conspicuous heatre; and was particularly touched with an bservation made by one of my friends—That was not by lingering in the university that rior became ambassador, or Addison secretary f state.

This desire was hourly increased by the soli-itation of my companions, who removing one y one to London, as the caprice of their rela-ons allowed them, or the legal dismission from he hands of their guardians put it in their ower, never failed to send an account of the eauty and felicity of the new world, and to emonstrate how much was lost by every hour's ontinuance in a place of retirement and con-raint.

My uncle in the mean time frequently har-ssed me with monitory letters, which I some-mes neglected to open for a week after I eceived them, and generally read in a tavern, ith such comments as might show how much was superior to instruction or advice. I ould not but wonder, how a man confined to he country, and acquainted with the present ystem of things, should imagine himself quali-ed to instruct a rising genius, born to give laws the age, refine its taste, and multiply its easures.

The postman, however, still continued to ring me new remonstrances; for my uncle as very little depressed by the ridicule and proach which he never heard. But men of rts have quick resentments; it was impossi-e to bear his usurpations for ever; and I esolved, once for all, to make him an example those who imagine themselves wise because ey are old, and to teach young men, who are o tame under representation, in what manner ay-bearded insolence ought to be treated. I herefore one evening took my pen in hand, and after having animated myself with a catch, wrote a general answer to all his precepts with such vivacity of turn, such elegance of irony, and such asperity of sarcasm, that I convulsed a large company with universal laughter, disturbed the neighbourhood with vociferations of applause, and five days afterwards was answered, that I must be content to live upon my own estate.

This contraction of my income gave me no disturbance; for a genius like mine was out of the reach of want. I had friends that would be proud to open their purses at my call, and prospects of such advancement as would soon reconcile my uncle, whom, upon mature deliberation, I resolved to receive into favour without insisting on any acknowledgment of his offence, when the splendour of my condition should induce him to wish for my countenance. I therefore went up to London, before I had shown the alteration of my condition, by any abatement of my way of living, and was received by all my academical acquaintance with triumph and congratulation. I was immediately introduced among the wits and men of spirit; and in a short time had divested myself of all my scholar's gravity, and obtained the reputation of a pretty fellow.

You will easily believe that I had no great knowledge of the world; yet I had been hindered, by the general disinclination every man feels to confess poverty, from telling to any one the resolution of my uncle, and for some time subsisted upon the stock of money which I had brought with me, and contributed my share as before to all our entertainments. But my pocket was soon emptied, and I was obliged to ask my friends for a small sum. This was a favour, which we had often reciprocally received from one another; they supposed my wants only accidental, and therefore willingly supplied them. In a short time I found a necessity of asking again, and was again treated with the same civility; but the third time they began to wonder what that old rogue my uncle could mean by sending a gentleman to town without money; and when they gave me what I asked for, advised me to stipulate for more regular remittances.

This somewhat disturbed my dream of constant affluence; but I was three days after completely awaked; for entering the tavern where we met every evening, I found the waiters remitted their complaisance, and, instead of contending to light me up stairs, suffered me to wait for some minutes at the bar. When I came to my company, I found them unusually grave and formal, and one of them took the hint to turn the conversation upon the misconduct of young men, and enlarged upon the folly of frequenting the company of men of fortune, without being able to support the

expense, an observation which the rest contributed either to enforce by repetition, or to illustrate by examples. Only one of them tried to divert the discourse, and endeavoured to direct my attention to remote questions and common topics.

A man guilty of poverty easily believes himself suspected. I went, however, next morning to breakfast with him, who appeared ignorant of the drift of the conversation, and by a series of inquiries, drawing still nearer to the point, prevailed on him, not perhaps much against his will, to inform me, that Mr. Dash, whose father was a wealthy attorney near my native place, had, the morning before, received an account of my uncle's resentment, and communicated his intelligence with the utmost industry of grovelling insolence.

It was now no longer practicable to consort with my former friends, unless I would be content to be used as an inferior guest, who was to pay for his wine by mirth and flattery; a character which, if I could not escape it, I resolved to endure only among those who had never known me in the pride of plenty. I changed my lodgings, and frequented the coffee-houses in a different region of the town; where I was very quickly distinguished by several young gentlemen of high birth and large estates, and began again to amuse my imagination with hopes of preferment, though not quite so confidently as when I had less experience.

The first great conquest which this new scene enabled me to gain over myself was, when I submitted to confess to a party, who invited me to an expensive diversion, that my revenues were not equal to such golden pleasures; they would not suffer me, however, to stay behind, and with great reluctance I yielded to be treated. I took that opportunity of recommending myself to some office or employment, which they unanimously promised to procure me by their joint interest.

I had now entered into a state of dependance, and had hopes, or fears, from almost every man I saw. If it be unhappy to have one patron, what is his misery who has many? I was obliged to comply with a thousand caprices, to concur in a thousand follies, and to countenance a thousand errors. I endured innumerable mortifications, if not from cruelty, at least from negligence, which will creep in upon the kindest and most delicate minds, when they converse without the mutual awe of equal condition. I found the spirit and vigour of liberty every moment sinking in me, and a servile fear of displeasing stealing by degrees upon all my behaviour, till no word, or look, or action, was my own. As the solicitude to please increased, the power of pleasing grew less, and I was always clouded with diffidence where it was most my interest and wish to shine.

My patrons, considering me as belonging the community, and, therefore, not the charg any particular person, made no scruple of neglecting any opportunity of promoting which every one thought more properly business of another. An account of my expec tions and disappointments, and the succeedi vicissitudes of my life, I shall give you in following letter, which will be, I hope, of to show how ill he forms his schemes, who pects happiness without freedom. I am, &c.

No. 27.] TUESDAY, JUNE 19, 1750.

——*Pauperiem metuens potiore metallis*
Libertate caret. HOR.

So he, who poverty with horror views,
Who sells his freedom in exchange for gold,
(Freedom for mines of wealth too cheaply sold,)
Shall make eternal servitude his fate,
And feel a haughty master's galling weight.
FRANC

MR. RAMBLER,

As it is natural for every man to think hims of importance, your knowledge of the wo will incline you to forgive me, if I imag your curiosity so much excited by the form part of my narration, as to make you des that I should proceed without any unnecessa arts of connection. I shall, therefore, not ke you longer in such suspense, as perhaps my p formance may not compensate.

In the gay company with which I was n united, I found those allurements and deligh which the friendship of young men always fords; there was that openness which natura produced confidence, that affability which, some measure, softened dependence, and t ardour of profession which incited hope. Wh our hearts were dilated with merriment, p mises were poured out with unlimited profusi and life and fortune were but a scanty sacrif to friendship; but when the hour came, which any effort was to be made, I had gen ally the vexation to find that my inter weighed nothing against the slightest amu ment, and that every petty avocation was fou a sufficient plea for continuing me in uncertai and want. Their kindness was indeed sincer when they promised, they had no intention deceive; but the same juvenile warmth wh kindled their benevolence, gave force in same proportion to every other passion, an was forgotten as soon as any new pleasu seized on their attention.

Vagario told me one evening, that all my p plexities should be soon at an end, and desi me, from that instant, to throw upon him care of my fortune, for a post of considera value was that day become vacant, and he kn his interest sufficient to procure it in the mo

g. He desired me to call on him early, that e might be dressed soon enough to wait on the inister before any other application should be ade. I came as he appointed, with all the me of gratitude, and was told by his servant, at having found at his lodgings, when he me home, an acquaintance who was going to avel, he had been persuaded to accompany him Dover, and that they had taken post-horses vo hours before day.

I was once very near to preferment, by the indness of Charinus, who, at my request, went beg a place, which he thought me likely to ll with great reputation, and in which I should ve many opportunities of promoting his in-rest in return; and he pleased himself with agining the mutual benefits that we should nfer, and the advances that we should make our united strength. Away therefore he ent, equally warm with friendship and ambi-on, and left me to prepare acknowledgments ainst his return. At length he came back, d told me that he had met in his way a party ing to breakfast in the country, that the ladies portuned him too much to be refused, and at having passed the morning with them, he as come back to dress himself for a ball, to hich he was invited for the evening.

I have suffered several disappointments from ilors and periwig-makers, who, by neglecting perform their work, withheld my patrons om court; and once failed of an establishment r life by the delay of a servant, sent to a neigh-uring shop to replenish a snuff-box.

At last I thought my solicitude at an end, for office fell into the gift of Hippodamus's father, 10, being then in the country, could not very eedily fill it, and whose fondness would not ve suffered him to refuse his son a less reason-e request. Hippodamus therefore set for-ard with great expedition, and I expected ry hour an account of his success. A long e I waited without any intelligence, but at t received a letter from Newmarket, by ich I was informed that the races were be-n, and I knew the vehemence of his passions well to imagine that he could refuse himself favourite amusement.

You will not wonder that I was at last weary the patronage of young men, especially as I nd them not generally to promise much ter fidelity as they advanced in life; for I rved that what they gained in steadiness r lost in benevolence, and grew colder to my rest as they became more diligent to promote r own. I was convinced that their liberal-was only profuseness, that as chance direc-they were equally generous to vice and vir-that they were warm but because they were ghtless, and counted the support of a friend amongst other gratifications of passion.

y resolution was now to ingratiate myself with men whose reputation was established, whose high stations enabled them to prefer me, and whose age exempted them from sudden changes of inclination. I was considered as a man of parts, and therefore easily found admission to the table of Hilarius, the celebrated orator, renowned equally for the extent of his knowledge, the elegance of his diction, and the acuteness of his wit. Hilarius received me with an appearance of great satisfaction, produced to me all his friends, and directed to me that part of his discourse in which he most endeavoured to display his imagination. I had now learned my own interest enough to supply him opportunities for smart remarks and gay sallies, which I never failed to echo and applaud. Thus I was gaining every hour on his affections, till unfortunately, when the assembly was more splendid than usual, his desire of admiration prompted him to turn his raillery upon me. I bore it for some time with great submission, and success encouraged him to redouble his attacks; at last my vanity prevailed over my prudence, I retorted his irony with such spirit, that Hilarius, unaccustomed to resistance, was disconcerted, and soon found means of convincing me, that his purpose was not to encourage a rival, but to foster a parasite.

I was then taken into the familiarity of Argutio, a nobleman eminent for judgment and criticism. He had contributed to my reputation by the praises which he had often bestowed upon my writings, in which he owned that there were proofs of a genius that might rise to high degrees of excellence, when time or information had reduced its exuberance. He therefor required me to consult him before the publication of any new performance, and commonly proposed innumerable alterations, without sufficient attention to the general design, or regard to my form of style and mode of imagination. But these corrections he never failed to press as indispensably necessary, and thought the least delay of compliance an act of rebellion. The pride of an author made this treatment insufferable, and I thought any tyranny easier to be borne than that which took from me the use of my understanding.

My next patron was Eutyches the statesman, who was wholly engaged in public affairs, and seemed to have no ambition but to be powerful and rich. I found his favour more permanent than that of the others; for there was a certain price at which it might be bought; he allowed nothing to humour or to affection, but was always ready to pay liberally for the service that he required. His demands were, indeed, very often such as virtue could not easily consent to gratify; but virtue is not to be consulted when men are to raise their fortunes by the favour of the great. His measures were censured; I wrote in his defence, and was recompensed

with a place, of which the profits were never received by me without the pangs of remembering that they were the reward of wickedness—a reward which nothing but that necessity which the consumption of my little estate in these wild pursuits had brought upon me, hindered me from throwing back in the face of my corruptor.

At this time my uncle died without a will, and I became heir to a small fortune. I had resolution to throw off the splendour which reproached me to myself, and retire to an humbler state, in which I am now endeavouring to recover the dignity of virtue, and hope to make some reparation for my crime and follies, by informing others, who may be led after the same pageants, that they are about to engage in a course of life, in which they are to purchase, by a thousand miseries, the privilege of repentance.

I am, &c.

EUBULUS.

No. 28.] SATURDAY, JUNE 23, 1750.

Illi mors gravis incubat,
Qui, notus nimis omnibus,
Ignotus moritur sibi. SENECA.

To him, alas! to him, I fear,
The face of death will terrible appear,
Who in his life, flatt'ring his senseless pride,
By being known to all the world beside,
Does not himself, when he is dying, know,
Nor what he is, nor whither he's to go.
COWLEY.

I HAVE shown, in a late essay, to what errors men are hourly betrayed by a mistaken opinion of their own powers, and a negligent inspection of their own character. But as I then confined my observations to common occurrences and familiar scenes, I think it proper to inquire, how far a nearer acquaintance with ourselves is necessary to our preservation from crimes as well as follies, and how much the attentive study of our own minds may contribute to secure to us the approbation of that Being, to whom we are accountable for our thoughts and our actions, and whose favour must finally constitute our total happiness.

If it be reasonable to estimate the difficulty of any enterprise by frequent miscarriages, it may justly be concluded that it is not easy for a man to know himself, for wheresoever we turn our view, we shall find almost all, with whom we converse so nearly as to judge of their sentiments, indulging more favourable conceptions of their own virtue than they have been able to impress upon others, and congratulating themselves upon degrees of excellence, which their fondest admirers cannot allow them to have attained.

Those representations of imaginary virtue generally considered as arts of hypocrisy, an snares laid for confidence and praise. Bu believe the suspicion often unjust; those thus propagate their own reputation, only tend the fraud by which they have been th selves deceived; for this failing is inciden numbers, who seem to live without desi competitions, or pursuits; it appears on o sions which promise no accession of honou of profit, and to persons from whom very l is to be hoped or feared. It is, indeed, not to tell how far we may be blinded by the lo ourselves, when we reflect how much a se dary passion can cloud our judgment, and few faults a man, in the first raptures of can discover in the person or conduct of mistress.

To lay open all the sources from which e flows in upon him who contemplates his character, would require more exact knowl of the human heart, than perhaps the acute and laborious observers have acqui And since falsehood may be diversified w out end, it is not unlikely that every admits an imposture, in some respect pec to himself, as his views have been accident directed, or his ideas particularly combined.

Some fallacies, however, there are, more quently insidious, which it may, perhaps, be useless to detect; because, though they gross, they may be fatal, and because not but attention is necessary to defeat them.

One sophism by which men persuade th selves that they have those virtues which really want, is formed by the substitutio single acts for habits. A miser who once lieved a friend from the danger of a pri suffers his imagination to dwell for ever u his own heroic generosity; he yields his h up to indignation at those who are blin merit, or insensible to misery, and who please themselves with the enjoyment of wealth, which they never permit others to take. From any censures of the world, or proaches of his conscience, he has an appea action and to knowledge: and though his w life is a course of rapacity and avarice, he cludes himself to be tender and liberal, bec he has once performed an act of liberality tenderness.

As a glass which magnifies objects by the proach of one end to the eye, lessens then the application of the other, so vices are exte ated by the inversion of that fallacy, by w virtues are augmented. Those faults which cannot conceal from our own notice, are sidered, however frequent, not as habitual ruptions, or settled practices, but as ca failures, and single lapses. A man who from year to year set his country to sale, o for the gratification of his ambition or res

nent, confesses that the heat of party now and hen betrays the severest virtue to measures hat cannot be seriously defended. He that pends his days and nights in riot and debauchry, owns that his passions oftentimes overower his resolutions. But each comforts himelf that his faults are not without precedent, or the best and the wisest men have given way o the violence of sudden temptations.

There are men who always confound the raise of goodness with the practice, and who elieve themselves mild and moderate, charitale and faithful, because they have exerted their loquence in commendation of mildness, fidelity, nd other virtues. This is an error almost niversal among those that converse much with ependants, with such whose fear or interest isposes them to a seeming reverence for any eclamation, however enthusiastic, and submision to any boast, however arrogant. Having one to recall their attention to their lives, they ate themselves by the goodness of their opinons, and forget how much more easily men iay show their virtue in their talk than in heir actions.

The tribe is likewise very numerous of those ho regulate their lives, not by the standard of eligion, but the measure of other men's virtue; ho lull their own remorse with the remembrance of crimes more atrocious than their own, nd seem to believe they are not bad, while anher can be found worse.

For escaping these and a thousand other deits, many expedients have been proposed. ome have recommended the frequent consultaon of a wise friend, admitted to intimacy, and ncouraged to sincerity. But this appears a emedy by no means adapted to general use: r in order to secure the virtue of one, it preupposes more virtue in two than will generly be found. In the first, such a desire of ectitude and amendment, as may incline him hear his own accusation from the mouth of m whom he esteems, and by whom, therefore, will always hope that his faults are not scovered; and in the second, such zeal and onesty, as will make him content for his iend's advantage to lose his kindness.

A long life may be passed without finding a iend in whose understanding and virtue we n equally confide, and whose opinion we can lue at once for its justness and sincerity. A eak man, however honest, is not qualified to lge. A man of the world, however penetrat, is not fit to counsel. Friends are often osen for similitude of manners, and therefore h palliates the other's failings because they his own. Friends are tender, and unwilling give pain, or they are interested, and fearful offend.

These objections have inclined others to adce, that he who would know himself, should consult his enemies, remember the reproaches that are vented to his face, and listen for the censures that are uttered in private. For his great business is to know his faults, and those malignity will discover, and resentment will reveal. But this precept may be often frustrated; for it seldom happens that rivals or opponents are suffered to come near enough to know our conduct with so much exactness as that conscience should allow and reflect the accusation. The charge of an enemy is often totally false, and commonly so mingled with falsehood, that the mind takes advantage from the failure of one part to discredit the rest, and never suffers any disturbance afterward from such partial reports.

Yet it seems that enemies have been always found by experience the most faithful monitors; for adversity has ever been considered as the state in which a man most easily becomes acquainted with himself, and this effect it must produce by withdrawing flatterers, whose business it is to hide our weaknesses from us, or by giving loose to malice, and license to reproach; or at least by cutting off those pleasures which called us away from meditation on our conduct, and repressing that pride which too easily persuades us that we merit whatever we enjoy.

Part of these benefits it is in every man's power to procure himself, by assigning proper portions of his life to the examination of the rest, and by putting himself frequently in such a situation, by retirement and abstraction, as may weaken the influence of external objects. By this practice he may obtain the solitude of adversity without its melancholy, its instructions without its censures, and its sensibility without its perturbations.

The necessity of setting the world at a distance from us, when we are to take a survey of ourselves, has sent many from high stations to the severities of a monastic life; and, indeed, every man deeply engaged in business, if all regard to another state be not extinguished, must have the conviction, though, perhaps, not the resolution of Valdesso, who, when he solicited Charles the Fifth to dismiss him, being asked, whether he retired upon disgust, answered that he laid down his commission, for no other reason but because *there ought to be some time for sober reflection between the life of a soldier and his death.*

There are few conditions which do not entangle us with sublunary hopes and fears, from which it is necessary to be at intervals disencumbered, that we may place ourselves in his presence who views effects in their causes, and actions in their motives; that we may, as Chillingworth expresses it, consider things as if there were no other beings in the world but God and ourselves: or, to use language yet more awful, *may commune with our own hearts and be still.*

Death, says Seneca, falls heavy upon him who

is too much known to others, and too little to himself; and Pontanus, a man celebrated among the early restorers of literature, thought the study of our own hearts of so much importance, that he has recommended it from his tomb. *Sum* Joannes Jovianus Pontanus, *quem amaverunt bonæ Musæ, suspexerunt viri probi, honestaverunt reges domini; jam scis qui sim, vel quî potius fuerim; ego vero te, hospes, noscere in tenebris nequeo, sed teipsum ut noscas rogo.* "I am Pontanus, beloved by the powers of literature, admired by men of worth, and dignified by the monarchs of the world. Thou knowest now who I am, or more properly who I was. For thee, stranger, I who am in darkness cannot know thee, but I entreat thee to know thyself."

I hope every reader of this paper will consider himself as engaged to the observation of a precept, which the wisdom and virtue of all ages have concurred to enforce: a precept dictated by philosophers, inculcated by poets, and ratified by saints.

No. 29.] TUESDAY, JUNE 26, 1750.

Prudens futuri temporis exitum
Caliginosa nocte premit Deus:
Ridetque, si mortalis ultra
Fas trepidet——— HOR.

But God has wisely hid from human sight
The dark decrees of future fate,
And sown their seeds in depth of night;
He laughs at all the giddy turns of state,
When mortals search too soon, and fear too late.
DRYDEN.

THERE is nothing recommended with greater frequency among the gayer poets of antiquity, than the secure possession of the present hour, and the dismission of all the cares which intrude upon our quiet, or hinder, by importunate perturbations, the enjoyment of those delights which our condition happens to set before us.

The ancient poets are, indeed, by no means unexceptionable teachers of morality; their precepts are to be always considered as the sallies of a genius, intent rather upon giving pleasure than instruction, eager to take every advantage of insinuation, and, provided the passions can be engaged on its side, very solicitous about the suffrage of reason.

The darkness and uncertainty through which the heathens were compelled to wander in the pursuit of happiness, may, indeed, be alleged as an excuse for many of their seducing invitations to immediate enjoyment, which the moderns, by whom they have been imitated, have not to plead. It is no wonder that such as had no promise of another state should eagerly turn their thoughts upon the improvement of that which was before them; but surely those who are acquainted with the hopes and fears of eternity, might think it necessary to put some restraint upon their imaginations, and reflect that by echoing the songs of the ancient bacchanals and transmitting the maxims of past debauchery, they not only prove that they want invention, but virtue, and submit to the servile of imitation only to copy that of which the writer, if he was to live now, would often be ashamed.

Yet as the errors and follies of a great genius are seldom without some radiations of understanding, by which meaner minds may be enlightened, the incitements to pleasure are, in those authors, generally mingled with such reflections upon life, as well deserve to be considered distinctly from the purposes for which they are produced, and to be treasured up as the settled conclusions of extensive observation, acute sagacity, and mature experience.

It is not without true judgment, that on those occasions they often warn their readers against inquiries into futurity, and solicitude about events which lie hid in causes yet inactive, and which time has not brought forward into the view of reason. An idle and thoughtless resignation to chance, without any struggle against calamity, or endeavour after advantage, is indeed below the dignity of a reasonable being, whose power Providence has put a great part even of his present happiness; but it shows an equal ignorance of our proper sphere, to harass our thoughts with conjectures about things not yet in being. How can we regulate events, of which we yet know not whether they will ever happen? And why should we think, with painful anxiety, about that on which our thoughts can have no influence?

It is a maxim commonly received, that a wise man is never surprised; and, perhaps, this exemption from astonishment may be imagined to proceed from such a prospect into futurity as gave previous intimation of those evils which often fall unexpected upon others that have no foresight. But the truth is, that things to come, except when they approach very near, are equally hidden from men of all degrees of understanding; and if a wise man is not amazed at sudden occurrences, it is not that he has thought more, but less upon futurity. He never considered things not yet existing as the proper objects of his attention; he never indulged dreams till he was deceived by the phantoms, nor ever realized nonentities to his mind. He is not surprised because he is not disappointed, and he escapes disappointment because he never forms any expectations.

The concern about things to come, that is justly censured, is not the result of those general reflections on the variableness of fortune, the uncertainty of life, and the universal insecurity of all human acquisitions, which should always be suggested by the view of the world

but such a desponding anticipation of misfortune, as fixes the mind upon scenes of gloom and melancholy, and makes fear predominate in every imagination.

Anxiety of this kind is nearly of the same nature with jealousy in love, and suspicion in the general commerce of life; a temper which keeps the man always in alarms; disposes him to judge of every thing in a manner that least favours his own quiet, fills him with perpetual stratagems of counteraction, wears him out in schemes to obviate evils which never threatened him, and at length, perhaps, contributes to the production of those mischiefs, of which it had raised such dreadful apprehensions.

It has been usual in all ages for moralists to repress the swellings of vain hope, by representations of the innumerable casualties to which life is subject, and by instances of the unexpected defeat of the wisest schemes of policy, and sudden subversions of the highest eminences of greatness. It has, perhaps, not been equally observed, that all these examples afford the proper antidote to fear, as well as to hope, and may be applied with no less efficacy as consolations to the timorous, than as restraints to the proud.

Evil is uncertain in the same degree as good, and for the reason that we ought not to hope too securely, we ought not to fear with too much dejection. The state of the world is continually changing, and none can tell the result of the next vicissitude. Whatever is afloat in the stream of time, may, when it is very near us, be driven away by an accidental blast, which shall happen to cross the general course of the current. The sudden accidents by which the powerful are depressed, may fall upon those whose malice we fear; and the greatness by which we expect to be overborne, may become another proof of the false flatteries of fortune. Our enemies may become weak, or we grow strong before our encounter, or we may advance against each other without ever meeting. There are, indeed, natural evils which we can flatter ourselves with no hopes of escaping, and with little of delaying; but of the ills which are apprehended from human malignity, or the opposition of rival interests, we may always alleviate the terror, by considering that our persecutors are weak and ignorant, and mortal as we ourselves.

The misfortunes which arise from the concurrence of unhappy incidents should never be suffered to disturb us before they happen: because, if the breast be once laid open to the dread of mere possibilities of misery, life must be given a prey to dismal solicitude, and quiet is lost for ever.

It is remarked by old Cornaro, that it is absurd to be afraid of the natural dissolution of the body, because it must certainly happen, and can, by no caution or artifice, be avoided. Whether the sentiment be entirely just I shall not examine; but certainly if it be improper to fear events which must happen, it is yet more evidently contrary to right reason to fear those which may never happen, and which, if they should come upon us, we cannot resist.

As we ought not to give way to fear, any more than indulgence to hope, because the objects both of fear and hope are yet uncertain, so we ought not to trust the representations of one more than of the other, because they are both equally fallacious; as hope enlarges happiness, fear aggravates calamity. It is generally allowed, that no man ever found the happiness of possession proportionate to that expectation which incited his desire, and invigorated his pursuit; nor has any man found the evils of life so formidable in reality, as they were described to him by his own imagination; every species of distress brings with it some peculiar supports, some unforeseen means of resisting, or power of enduring. Taylor justly blames some pious persons, who indulge their fancies too much, set themselves, by the force of imagination, in the place of the ancient martyrs and confessors, and question the validity of their own faith, because they shrink at the thoughts of flames and tortures. It is, says he, sufficient that you are able to encounter the temptations which now assault you: when God sends trials, he may send strength.

All fear is in itself painful, and when it conduces not to safety is painful without use. Every consideration, therefore, by which groundless terrors may be removed, adds something to human happiness. It is likewise not unworthy of remark, that in proportion as our cares are employed upon the future they are abstracted from the present, from the only time which we can call our own, and of which if we neglect the apparent duties, to make provision against visionary attacks, we shall certainly counteract our own purpose; for he, doubtless, mistakes his true interest, who thinks that he can increase his safety when he impairs his virtue.

No. 30.] SATURDAY, JUNE 30, 1750.

——Vultus ubi tuus
Affulsit populo, gratior it dies,
Et soles melius nitent. HOR.

Whene'er thy countenance divine
Th' attendant people cheers,
The genial suns more radiant shine,
The day more glad appears.
ELPHINSTON.

MR. RAMBLER,

THERE are few tasks more ungrateful than for persons of modesty to speak their own praises.

In some cases, however, this must be done for the general good, and a generous spirit will on such occasions assert its merit, and vindicate itself with becoming warmth.

My circumstances, Sir, are very hard and peculiar. Could the world be brought to treat me as I deserve, it would be a public benefit. This makes me apply to you, that my case being fairly stated in a paper so generally esteemed, I may suffer no longer from ignorant and childish prejudices.

My elder brother was a Jew; a very respectable person, but somewhat austere in his manner; highly and deservedly valued by his near relations and intimates, but utterly unfit for mixing in a larger society, or gaining a general acquaintance among mankind. In a venerable old age he retired from the world, and I in the bloom of youth came into it, succeeding him in all his dignities, and formed, as I might reasonably flatter myself, to be the object of universal love and esteem. Joy and gladness were born with me; cheerfulness, good humour, and benevolence, always attended and endeared my infancy. That time is long past: so long, that idle imaginations are apt to fancy me wrinkled, old, and disagreeable; but, unless my looking-glass deceives me, I have not yet lost one charm, one beauty of my earliest years. However, thus far is too certain, I am to every body just what they choose to think me, so that to very few I appear in my right shape; and though naturally I am the friend of human kind, to few, very few comparatively, am I useful or agreeable.

This is the more grievous, as it is utterly impossible for me to avoid being in all sorts of places and companies; and I am therefore liable to meet with perpetual affronts and injuries. Though I have as natural an antipathy to cards and dice, as some people have to a cat, many and many an assembly am I forced to endure; and though rest and composure are my peculiar joy, am worn out and harassed to death with journeys by men and women of quality, who never take one but when I can be of the party. Some, on a contrary extreme, will never receive me but in bed, where they spend at least half of the time I have to stay with them; and others are so monstrously ill bred as to take physic on purpose when they have reason to expect me. Those who keep upon terms of more politeness with me are generally so cold and constrained in their behaviour, that I cannot but perceive myself an unwelcome guest; and even among persons deserving of esteem, and who certainly have a value for me, it is too evident that generally whenever I come I throw a dulness over the whole company, that I am entertained with a formal, stiff civility, and that they are glad when I am fairly gone.

How bitter must this kind of reception be to one formed to inspire delight, admiration, love! To one capable of answering and rewa ing the greatest warmth and delicacy of se ments!

I was bred up among a set of excellent peo who affectionately loved me, and treated with the utmost honour and respect. It wo be tedious to relate the variety of my adv tures, and strange vicissitudes of my fort in many different countries. Here in Engl there was a time when I lived according to heart's desire. Whenever I appeared, pu assemblies appointed for my reception w crowded with persons of quality and fashi early dressed as for a court, to pay me their voirs. Cheerful hospitality every where cro ed my board, and I was looked upon in ev country parish as a kind of social bond betw the squire, the parson, and the tenants. laborious poor every where blessed my appe ance: they do so still, and keep their best clot to do me honour; though as much as I deli in the honest country folks, they do now then throw a pot of ale at my head, and so times an unlucky boy will drive his cricket- full in my face.

Even in these my best days there were per who thought me too demure and grave. must forsooth by all means be instructed foreign masters, and taught to dance and p This method of education was so contrary to genius, formed for much nobler entertainm that it did not succeed at all.

I fell next into the hands of a very diffe set. They were so excessively scandalize the gayety of my appearance, as not only t spoil me of the foreign fopperies, the paint the patches that I had been tricked out wit my last misjudging tutors, but they robbed of every innocent ornament I had from m fancy been used to gather in the fields and dens; nay, they blacked my face, and co me all over with a habit of mourning, and too very coarse and awkward. I was obliged to spend my whole life in hearing mons; nor permitted so much as to smile any occasion.

In this melancholy disguise I became a fect bugbear to all children and young Wherever I came there was a general hus immediate stop to all pleasantness of discourse; and not being permitted to talk them in my own language at that time. took such a disgust to me in those tedious of yawning, that having transmitted it t children, I cannot now be heard, though long since I have recovered my natural and pleasing tone of voice. Would the receive my visits kindly, and listen to w could tell them—let me say it without va how charming a companion should I every one could I talk on the subjects m

eresting and most pleasing. With the great nd ambitious, I would discourse of honours nd advancements, of distinctions to which the whole world should be witness, of unenvied dignities and durable preferments. To the rich I would tell of inexhaustible treasures, and the ure method to attain them. I would teach hem to put out their money on the best interest, nd instruct the lovers of pleasure how to secure nd improve it to the highest degree. The eauty should learn of me how to preserve an verlasting bloom. To the afflicted I would administer comfort, and relaxation to the busy.

As I dare promise myself you will attest the ruth of all I have advanced, there is no doubt ut many will be desirous of improving their equaintance with me; and that I may not be hought too difficult, I will tell you, in short, ow I wish to be received.

You must know I equally hate lazy idleness nd hurry. I would every where be welcomed t a tolerably early hour with decent good-umour and gratitude. I must be attended in ie great halls, peculiarly appropriated to me, ith respect; but I do not insist upon finery: ropriety of appearance, and perfect neatness, is ll I require. I must at dinner be treated with temperate, but cheerful social meal; both the eighbours and the poor should be the better for e. Some time I must have *tête-à-tête* with y kind entertainers, and the rest of my visit ould be spent in pleasant walks and airings nong sets of agreeable people, in such discourse I shall naturally dictate, or in reading some w selected out of those numberless books that e dedicated to me, and go by my name. A me that, alas! as the world stands at present, akes them oftener thrown aside than taken). As those conversations and books should both well chosen, to give some advice on at head may possibly furnish you with a ture paper, and any thing you shall offer on y behalf will be of great service to,

Good Mr. Rambler,

Your faithful friend and servant,

SUNDAY.*

o. 31.] TUESDAY, JULY 3, 1750.

Non ego mendosos austim defendere mores,
Falsaque provitiis arma tenere meis.—OVID.

Corrupted manners I shall ne'er defend;
Nor, falsely witty, for my faults contend.

ELPHINSTON.

THOUGH the fallibility of man's reason, and the rrowness of his knowledge, are very liberally confessed, yet the conduct of those who so willingly admit the weakness of human nature, seems to discern that this acknowledgment is not altogether sincere; at least, that most make it with a tacit reserve in favour of themselves, and that with whatever ease they give up the claim of their neighbours, they are desirous of being thought exempt from faults in their own conduct, and from error in their opinions.

The certain and obstinate opposition, which we may observe made to confutation however clear, and to reproof however tender, is an undoubted argument, that some dormant privilege is thought to be attacked; for as no man can lose what he neither possesses, nor imagines himself to possess, or be defrauded of that to which he has no right, it is reasonable to suppose that those who break out into fury at the softest contradiction, or the slightest censure, since they apparently conclude themselves injured, must fancy some ancient immunity violated, or some natural prerogative invaded. To be mistaken, if they thought themselves liable to mistake, could not be considered, as either shameful or wonderful, and they would not receive with so much emotion intelligence which only informed them of what they knew before, nor struggle with such earnestness against an attack that deprived them of nothing to which they held themselves entitled.

It is related of one of the philosophers, that when an account was brought him of his son's death, he received it only with this reflection, *I knew that my son was mortal.* He that is convinced of an error, if he had the same knowledge of his own weakness, would, instead of straining for artifices, and brooding malignity, only regard such oversights as the appendages of humanity, and pacify himself with considering that he had always known man to be a fallible being.

If it be true that most of our passions are excited by the novelty of objects, there is little reason for doubting, that to be considered as subject to fallacies of ratiocination, or imperfection of knowledge, is to a great part of mankind entirely new; for it is impossible to fall into any company where there is not some regular and established subordination, without finding rage and vehemence produced only by difference of sentiments about things in which neither of the disputants have any other interest, than what proceeds from their mutual unwillingness to give way to any opinion that may bring upon them the disgrace of being wrong.

I have heard of one that, having advanced some erroneous doctrines in philosophy, refused to see the experiments by which they were confuted: and the observation of every day will give new proofs with how much industry subterfuges and evasions are sought to decline the pressure of resistless arguments, how often the

* This paper was written by Miss Catherine Talbot, ghter to the Rev. Ed. Talbot, archdeacon of 'ks, and preacher at the Rolls. She died Jan. 9,). See Preface to the Rambler, in "British 'ayists." vol. xix.—C.

state of the question is altered, how often the antagonist is wilfully misrepresented, and in how much perplexity the clearest positions are involved by those whom they happen to oppose.

Of all mortals none seem to have been more infected with this species of vanity, than the race of writers, whose reputation, arising solely from their understanding, gives them a very delicate sensibility of any violence attempted on their literary honour. It is not unpleasing to remark with what solicitude men of acknowledged abilities will endeavour to palliate absurdities and reconcile contradictions, only to obviate criticisms to which all human performances must ever be exposed, and from which they can never suffer, but when they teach the world, by a vain and ridiculous impatience, to think them of importance.

Dryden, whose warmth of fancy, and haste of composition, very frequently hurried him into inaccuracies, heard himself sometimes exposed to ridicule for having said in one of his tragedies,

I follow fate, which does too fast pursue.

That no man could at once follow and be followed, was, it may be thought, too plain to be long disputed; and the truth is, that Dryden was apparently betrayed into the blunder by the double meaning of the word Fate, to which in the former part of the verse he had annexed the idea of Fortune, and in the latter that of Death; so that the sense only was, *Though pursued by Death, I will not resign myself to despair, but will follow Fortune, and do and suffer what is appointed.* This, however, was not completely expressed, and Dryden being determined not to give way to his critics, never confessed that he had been surprised by an ambiguity; but finding luckily in Virgil an account of a man moving in a circle, with this expression, *Et se sequiturque fugitque*, "Here," says he, "is the passage in imitation of which I wrote the line that my critics were pleased to condemn as nonsense; not but I may sometimes write nonsense, though they have not the fortune to find it."

Every one sees the folly of such mean doublings to escape the pursuit of criticism; nor is there a single reader of this poet, who would not have paid him greater veneration, had he shown consciousness enough of his own superiority to set such cavils at defiance, and owned that he sometimes slipped into errors by the tumult of his imagination, and the multitude of his ideas.

It is happy when this temper discovers itself only in little things, which may be right or wrong without any influence on the virtue or happiness of mankind. We may, with very little inquietude, see a man persist in a project which he has found to be impracticable, live in an inconvenient house because it was contrived by himself, or wear a coat of a particular cut, in hopes by perseverance to bring it into fashio These are indeed follies, but they are only f lies, and, however wild and ridiculous, can ve little affect others.

But such pride, once indulged, too frequent operates upon more important objects, and i clines men not only to vindicate their errors, b their vices; to persist in practices which th own hearts condemn, only lest they should see to feel reproaches, or be made wiser by the a vice of others; or to search for sophisms tendi to the confusion of all principles, and the evac ation of all duties, that they may not appear act what they are not able to defend.

Let every man, who finds vanity so far pr dominant, as to betray him to the danger of th last degree of corruption, pause a moment consider what will be the consequences of t plea which he is about to offer for a practice which he knows himself not led at first by re son, but impelled by the violence of desire, su prised by the suddenness of passion, or seduc by the soft approaches of temptation, and by i perceptible gradations of guilt. Let him co sider what he is going to commit, by forcing understanding to patronise those appetites, whi it is its chief business to hinder and reform.

The cause of virtue requires so little art to d fend it, and good and evil, when they have be once shown, are so easily distinguished, th such apologists seldom gain proselytes to th party, nor have their fallacies power to dece any but those whose desires have clouded th discernment. All that the best faculties th employed can perform is, to persuade the he ers that the man is hopeless whom they o thought vicious, that corruption has passed fr his manners to his principles, that all ende ours for his recovery are without prospect success, and that nothing remains but to av him as infectious, or hunt him down as destr tive.

But if it be supposed that he may impose his audience by partial representations of co quences, intricate deductions of remote cau or perplexed combinations of ideas, which, l ing various relations, appear different as vie on different sides; that he may sometimes p zle the weak and well-meaning, and now then seduce, by the admiration of his abiliti young mind still fluctuating in unsettled tions, and neither fortified by instruction enlightened by experience; yet what mus the event of such a triumph! A man can spend all this life in frolic: age, or disease solitude, will bring some hours of serious sideration, and it will then afford no comfo think, that he has extended the dominio vice, that he has loaded himself with the cr of others, and can never know the extent o own wickedness, or make reparation for mischief that he has caused. There is not,

haps, in all the stores of ideal anguish, a thought more painful, than the consciousness of having propagated corruption by vitiating principles, of having not only drawn others from the paths of virtue, but blocked up the way by which they should return, of having blinded them to every beauty but the paint of pleasure, and deafened them to every call but the alluring voice of the syrens of destruction.

There is yet another danger in this practice: men who cannot deceive others, are very often successful in deceiving themselves; they weave their sophistry till their own reason is entangled, and repeat their positions till they are credited by themselves; by often contending, they grow sincere in the cause; and by long wishing for demonstrative arguments, they at last bring themselves to fancy that they have found them: They are then at the uttermost verge of wickedness, and may die without having that light rekindled in their minds, which their own pride and contumacy have extinguished.

The men who can be charged with fewest failings, either with respect to abilities or virtue, are generally most ready to allow them; for, not to dwell on things of solemn and awful consideration, the humility of confessors, the fears of saints, and the dying terrors of persons eminent for piety and innocence, it is well known that Cæsar wrote an account of the errors committed by him in his wars of Gaul, and that Hippocrates, whose name is perhaps in rational estimation greater than Cæsar's, warned posterity against a mistake into which he had fallen. "So much," says Celsus, "does the open and artless confession of an error become a man conscious that he has enough remaining to support his character."

As all error is meanness, it is incumbent on every man who consults his own dignity, to retract it as soon as he discovers it, without waring any censure so much as that of his own mind. As justice requires that all injuries should be repaired, it is the duty of him who has seduced others by bad practices or false notions, to endeavour that such as have adopted his errors should know his retraction, and that those who have learned vice by his example, should by his example be taught amendment.

No. 32.] SATURDAY, JULY 7, 1750.

Ὅσσά τε δαιμονίῃσι τύχαις βροτοὶ ἄλγε' ἔχουσιν,
Ὧν ἂν μοῖραν ἔχῃς, πρᾴως φέρε, μηδ' ἀγανάκτει·
Ἰᾶσθαι δὲ πρέπει κάθοσον δύνῃ. PYTHAG.

Of all the woes that load the mortal state,
Whate'er thy portion, mildly meet thy fate;
But ease it as thou canst.—— ELPHINSTON.

large a part of human life passes in a state contrary to our natural desires, that one of the principal topics of moral instruction is the art of bearing calamities. And such is the certainty of evil, that it is the duty of every man to furnish his mind with those principles that may enable him to act under it with decency and propriety.

The sect of ancient philosophers, that boasted to have carried this necessary science to the highest perfection, were the stoics, or scholars of Zeno, whose wild enthusiastic virtue pretended to an exemption from the sensibilities of unenlightened mortals, and who proclaimed themselves exalted, by the doctrines of their sect, above the reach of those miseries which embitter life to the rest of the world. They therefore removed pain, poverty, loss of friends, exile, and violent death, from the catalogue of evils; and passed, in their haughty style, a kind of irreversible decree, by which they forbade them to be counted any longer among the objects of terror or anxiety, or to give any disturbance to the tranquillity of a wise man.

This edict was, I think, not universally observed: for though one of the more resolute, when he was tortured by a violent disease, cried out, that let pain harass him to its utmost power, it should never force him to consider it as other than indifferent and neutral; yet all had not stubbornness to hold out against their senses; for a weaker pupil of Zeno is recorded to have confessed in the anguish of the gout, that *he now found pain to be an evil.*

It may however be questioned, whether these philosophers can be very properly numbered among the teachers of patience; for if pain be not an evil, there seems no instruction requisite how it may be borne; and, therefore, when they endeavour to arm their followers with arguments against it, they may be thought to have given up their first position. But such inconsistencies are to be expected from the greatest understandings, when they endeavour to grow eminent by singularity, and employ their strength in establishing opinions opposite to nature.

The controversy about the reality of external evils is now at an end. That life has many miseries, and that those miseries are, sometimes at least, equal to all the powers of fortitude, is now universally confessed; and therefore it is useful to consider not only how we may escape them, but by what means those which either the accidents of affairs, or the infirmities of nature, must bring upon us, may be mitigated and lightened, and how we may make those hours less wretched, which the condition of our present existence will not allow to be very happy.

The cure for the greatest part of human miseries is not radical, but palliative. Infelicity is involved in corporeal nature, and interwoven

with our being; all attempts therefore to decline it wholly are useless and vain; the armies of pain send their arrows against us on every side, the choice is only between those which are more or less sharp, or tinged with poison of greater or less malignity; and the strongest armour which reason can supply, will only blunt their points, but cannot repel them.

The great remedy which Heaven has put in our hands is patience, by which, though we cannot lessen the torments of the body, we can in a great measure preserve the peace of the mind, and shall suffer only the natural and genuine force of an evil, without heightening its acrimony, or prolonging its effects.

There is indeed nothing more unsuitable to the nature of man in any calamity than rage and turbulence, which, without examining whether they are not sometimes impious, are at least always offensive, and incline others rather to hate and despise than to pity and assist us. If what we suffer has been brought upon us by ourselves, it is observed by an ancient poet, that patience is eminently our duty, since no one should be angry at feeling that which he has deserved.

Leniter ex merito quicquid patiare ferendum est.

Let pain deserved without complaint be borne.

And surely, if we are conscious that we have not contributed to our own sufferings, if punishment falls upon innocence, or disappointment happens to industry and prudence, patience, whether more necessary or not, is much easier, since our pain is then without aggravation, and we have not the bitterness of remorse to add to the asperity of misfortune.

In those evils which are allotted to us by Providence, such as deformity, privation of any of the senses, or old age, it is always to be remembered, that impatience can have no present effect, but to deprive us of the consolations which our condition admits, by driving away from us those by whose conversation or advice we might be amused or helped; and that with regard to futurity it is yet less to be justified, since, without lessening the pain, it cuts off the hope of that reward which He, by whom it is inflicted, will confer upon them that bear it well.

In all evils which admit a remedy, impatience is to be avoided, because it wastes that time and attention in complaints, that, if properly applied, might remove the cause. Turenne, among the acknowledgments which he used to pay in conversation to the memory of those by whom he had been instructed in the art of war, mentioned one with honour, who taught him not to spend his time in regretting any mistake which he had made, but to set himself immediately and vigorously to repair it.

Patience and submission are very carefully to be distinguished from cowardice and indolence. We are not to repine, but we may la fully struggle; for the calamities of life, the necessities of nature, are calls to labour a exercises of diligence. When we feel a pressure of distress, we are not to conclu that we can only obey the will of Heaven languishing under it, any more than when perceive the pain of thirst, we are to imag that water is prohibited. Of misfortune never can be certainly known whether, as p ceeding from the hand of God, it is an act favour or of punishment: but since all the dinary dispensations of Providence are to interpreted according to the general analogy things, we may conclude that we have a rig to remove one inconvenience as well as anothe that we are only to take care lest we purch ease with guilt; and that our Maker's purpo whether of reward or severity, will be answer by the labours which he lays us under necessity of performing.

This duty is not more difficult in any st than in diseases intensely painful, which m indeed suffer such exacerbations as seem to str the powers of life to their utmost stretch, leave very little of the attention vacant to p cept or reproof. In this state the nature man requires some indulgence, and every travagance but impiety may be easily forgi him. Yet, lest we should think ourselves soon entitled to the mournful privileges of resistible misery, it is proper to reflect, the utmost anguish which human wit can c trive, or human malice can inflict, has b borne with constancy; and that if the pa of disease be, as I believe they are, someti greater than those of artificial torture, they therefore in their own nature shorter: the v frame is quickly broken, or the union betw soul and body is for a time suspended by sensibility, and we soon cease to feel our ladies when they once become too violent t borne. I think there is some reason for q tioning whether the body and mind are no proportioned, that the one can bear all that be inflicted on the other, whether virtue ca stand its ground as long as life, and whe a soul well principled will not be separ sooner than subdued.

In calamities which operate chiefly on passions, such as diminution of fortune, lo friends, or declension of character, the danger of impatience is upon the first at and many expedients have been contrive which the blow may be broken. Of thes most general precept is, not to take pla in any thing, of which it is not in our p to secure the possession to ourselves. counsel, when we consider the enjoymen any terrestrial advantage, as opposite to a stant and habitual solicitude for future city, is undoubtedly just, and delivered by

authority which cannot be disputed; but, in any other sense, is it not like advice, not to walk lest we should stumble, or not to see lest our eyes should light upon deformity? It seems to me reasonable to enjoy blessings with confidence, as well as to resign them with submission, and to hope for the continuance of good which we possess without insolence or voluptuousness, as for the restitution of that which we lose without despondency or murmurs.

The chief security against the fruitless anguish of impatience, must arise from frequent reflection on the wisdom and goodness of the God of nature, in whose hands are riches and poverty, honour and disgrace, pleasure and pain, and life and death. A settled conviction of the tendency of every thing to our good, and of the possibility of turning miseries into happiness, by receiving them rightly, will incline us to *bless the name of the Lord, whether he gives or takes away.*

No. 33.] Tuesday, July 10, 1750.

Quod caret alterna requie durabile non est.

OVID.

Alternate rest and labour long endure.

In the early ages of the world, as is well known to those who are versed in ancient traditions, when innocence was yet untainted, and simplicity unadulterated, mankind was happy in the enjoyment of continual pleasure, and constant plenty, under the protection of Rest; a gentle divinity, who required of her worshippers neither altars nor sacrifices, and whose rites were only performed by prostrations upon turfs of flowers in shades of jasmine and myrtle, or by dances on the banks of rivers flowing with milk and nectar.

Under this easy government the first generations breathed the fragrance of perpetual spring, ate the fruits, which, without culture, fell ripe into their hands, and slept under bowers arched by nature, with the birds singing over their heads, and the beasts sporting about them. But by degrees they began to lose their original integrity; each, though there was more than enough for all, was desirous of appropriating part to himself. Then entered violence and fraud, and theft and rapine. Soon after pride and envy broke into the world, and brought with them a new standard of wealth; for men, who till then thought themselves rich when they wanted nothing, now rated their demands, not by the calls of nature, but by the plenty of others; and began to consider themselves as poor, when they beheld their own possessions exceeded by those of their neighbours. Now only one could be happy, because only one could have most, and that one was always in danger, lest the same arts by which he had supplanted others should be practised upon himself.

Amidst the prevalence of this corruption, the state of the earth was changed; the year was divided into seasons: part of the ground became barren, and the rest yielded only berries, acorns, and herbs. The summer and autumn indeed furnished a coarse and inelegant sufficiency, but winter was without any relief; Famine, with a thousand diseases which the inclemency of the air invited into the upper regions, made havoc among men, and there appeared to be danger lest they should be destroyed before they were reformed.

To oppose the devastations of Famine, who scattered the ground every where with carcasses, Labour came down upon earth. Labour was the son of Necessity, the nurseling of Hope, and the pupil of Art; he had the strength of his mother, the spirit of his nurse, and the dexterity of his governess. His face was wrinkled with the wind, and swarthy with the sun: he had the implements of husbandry in one hand, with which he turned up the earth; in the other he had the tools of architecture, and raised walls and towers at his pleasure. He called out with a rough voice, "Mortals! see here the power to whom you are consigned, and from whom you are to hope for all your pleasures, and all your safety. You have long languished under the dominion of Rest, an impotent and deceitful goddess, who can neither protect nor relieve you, but resigns you to the first attacks of either Famine or Disease, and suffers her shades to be invaded by every enemy, and destroyed by every accident.

"Awake therefore to the call of Labour. I will teach you to remedy the sterility of the earth, and the severity of the sky; I will compel summer to find provisions for the winter; I will force the waters to give you their fish, the air its fowls, and the forest its beasts; I will teach you to pierce the bowels of the earth, and bring out from the caverns of the mountains metals which shall give strength to your hands, and security to your bodies, by which you may be covered from the assaults of the fiercest beasts, and with which you shall fell the oak, and divide rocks, and subject all nature to your use and pleasure."

Encouraged by this magnificent invitation, the inhabitants of the globe considered Labour as their only friend, and hasted to his command. He led them out to the fields and mountains, and showed them how to open mines, to level hills, to drain marshes, and change the course of rivers. The face of things was immediately transformed; the land was covered with towns and villages, encompassed with fields of corn, and plantations of fruit-trees: and nothing was seen but heaps of grain, and baskets of fruit, full tables, and crowded storehouses.

Thus Labour and his followers added every hour new acquisitions to their conquests, and

saw Famine gradually dispossessed of his dominions; till at last, amidst their jollity and triumphs, they were depressed and amazed by the approach of Lassitude, who was known by her sunk eyes and dejected countenance. She came forward trembling and groaning; at every groan the hearts of all those that beheld her lost their courage, their nerves slackened, their hands shook, and the instruments of labour fell from their grasp.

Shocked with this horrid phantom, they reflected with regret on their easy compliance with the solicitations of Labour, and began to wish again for the golden hours which they remembered to have passed under the reign of Rest, whom they resolved again to visit, and to whom they intended to dedicate the remaining part of their lives. Rest had not left the world; they quickly found her, and, to atone for their former desertion, invited her to the enjoyment of those acquisitions which Labour had procured them.

Rest therefore took leave of the groves and valleys, which she had hitherto inhabited, and entered into palaces, reposed herself in alcoves, and slumbered away the winter upon beds of down, and the summer in artificial grottoes with cascades playing before her. There was indeed always something wanting to complete her felicity, and she could never lull her returning fugitives to that serenity which they knew before their engagements with Labour: nor was her dominion entirely without control, for she was obliged to share it with Luxury, though she always looked upon her as a false friend, by whom her influence was in reality destroyed, while it seemed to be promoted.

The two soft associates, however, reigned for some time without visible disagreement, till at last Luxury betrayed her charge, and let in Disease to seize upon her worshippers. Rest then flew away, and left the place to the usurpers; who employed all their arts to fortify themselves in their possession, and to strengthen the interest of each other.

Rest had not always the same enemy; in some places she escaped the incursions of Disease; but had her residence invaded by a more slow and subtle intruder, for very frequently, when every thing was composed and quiet, when there was neither pain within, nor danger without, when every flower was in bloom, and every gale freighted with perfumes, Satiety would enter with a languishing and repining look, and throw herself upon the couch placed and adorned for the accommodation of Rest. No sooner was she seated than a general gloom spread itself on every side, the groves immediately lost their verdure, and their inhabitants desisted from their melody, the breeze sunk in sighs, and the flowers contracted their leaves, and shut up their odours. Nothing was seen on every side but multitudes wanderi about they knew not whither, in quest th knew not of what; no voice was heard but complaints that mentioned no pain, and mu murs that could tell of no misfortune.

Rest had now lost her authority. Her f lowers again began to treat her with contemp some of them united themselves more clos to Luxury, who promised by her arts to dri Satiety away; and others, that were more wi or had more fortitude, went back again to L bour, by whom they were indeed protected fr Satiety, but delivered up in time to Lassitu and forced by her to the bowers of Rest.

Thus Rest and Labour equally percéiv their reign of short duration and uncerta tenure, and their empire liable to inroads fr those who were alike enemies to both. Th each found their subjects unfaithful, and rea to desert them upon every opportunity. Labo saw the riches which he had given always ca ried away as an offering to Rest, and Rest fou her votaries in every exigence flying from her beg help of Labour. They, therefore, at l determined upon an interview, in which th agreed to divide the world between them, a govern it alternately, allotting the dominion the day to one, and that of the night to other, and promised to guard the frontiers each other, so that, whenever hostilities w attempted, Satiety should be intercepted Labour, and Lassitude expelled by Rest. Th the ancient quarrel was appeased, and as hatr is often succeeded by its contrary, Rest aft wards became pregnant by Labour, and w delivered of Health, a benevolent goddess, w consolidated the union of her parents, and c tributed to the regular vicissitudes of their rel by dispensing her gifts to those only who sha their lives in just proportions between Rest a Labour.

No. 34.] SATURDAY, JULY 14, 1750.

——Non sine vano
Aurarum et silvæ metu.—— HOR.

Alarmed with every rising gale,
In every wood, in every vale.—ELPHINST

I HAVE been censured for having hitherto d cated so few of my speculations to the ladi and indeed the moralist, whose instructions accommodated only to one half of the hur species, must be confessed not sufficiently to h extended his views. Yet it is to be conside that masculine duties afford more room for co sels and observations, as they are less unifo and connected with things more subject to v situde and accident; we therefore find tha philosophical discourses which teach by pre or historical narratives that instruct by ex an the peculiar virtues or faults of women fill

mall part; perhaps, generally, too small, for so much of our domestic happiness is in their hands, nd their influence is so great upon our earliest ears, that the universal interest of the world equires them to be well instructed in their province: nor can it be thought proper that the ualities by which so much pain or pleasure may e given, should be left to the direction of hance.

I have, therefore, willingly given a place in ny paper to a letter, which, perhaps, may not e wholly useless to them whose chief ambition to please, as it shows how certainly the end is issed by absurd and injudicious endeavours at istinction.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

AM a young gentleman at my own disposal, ith a considerable estate; and having passed rough the common forms of education, spent me time in foreign countries, and made myself stinguished since my return in the politest mpany, I am now arrived at that part of life which every man is expected to settle, and ovide for the continuation of his lineage. I ithstood for some time the solicitations and monstrances of my aunts and uncles, but at st was persuaded to visit Anthea, an heiress, hose land lies contiguous to mine, and whose th and beauty are without objection. Our ends declared that we were born for each her; all those on both sides who had no inter in hindering our union, contributed to prote it, and were conspiring to hurry us into trimony, before we had any opportunity of owing one another. I was, however, too old be given away without my own consent; and ving happened to pick up an opinion, which many of my relations seemed extremely odd, at a man might be unhappy with a large este, determined to obtain a nearer knowledge the person with whom I was to pass the reainder of my time. To protract the courtship as by no means difficult, for Anthea had a nderful facility of evading questions which I dom repeated, and of barring approaches ich I had no great eagerness to press.

Thus the time passed away in visits and civies without any ardent professions of love, or mal offers of settlements. I often attended to public places, in which, as is well known, behaviour is so much regulated by custom, t very little insight can be gained into the vate character, and therefore I was not yet e to inform myself of her humour and inclitions.

At last I ventured to propose to her to make of a small party, and spend a day in viewing at and gardens a few miles distant; and havupon her compliance, collected the rest of the mpany, I brought, at the hour, a coach which I had borrowed from an acquaintance, having delayed to buy one myself till I should have an opportunity of taking the lady's opinion, for whose use it was intended. Anthea came down, but as she was going to step into the coach, started back with great appearance of terror, and told us that she durst not enter, for the shocking colour of the lining had so much the air of the mourning-coach in which she followed her aunt's funeral three years before, that she should never have her poor dear aunt out of her head.

I knew that it was not for lovers to argue with their mistresses; I therefore sent back the coach, and got another more gay. Into this we all entered, the coachman began to drive, and we were amusing ourselves with the expectation of what we should see, when, upon a small inclination of the carriage, Anthea screamed out that we were overthrown. We were obliged to fix all our attention upon her, which she took care to keep up by renewing her outcries, at every corner where we had occassion to turn; at intervals she entertained us with fretful complaints of the uneasiness of the coach, and obliged me to call several times on the coachman to take care and drive without jolting. The poor fellow endeavoured to please us, and therefore moved very slowly, till Anthea found out that this pace would only keep us longer on the stones, and desired that I would order him to make more speed. He whipped his horses, the coach jolted again, and Anthea very complaisantly told us how much she repented that she made one of our company.

At last we got into the smooth road, and began to think our difficulties at an end, when, on a sudden, Anthea saw a brook before us, which she could not venture to pass. We were, therefore, obliged to alight, that we might walk over the bridge; but when we came to it, we found it so narrow, that Anthea durst not set her foot upon it, and was content, after long consultation, to call the coach back, and with innumerable precautions, terrors and lamentations, crossed the brook.

It was necessary after this delay to mend our pace, and directions were accordingly given to the coachman, when Anthea informed us, that it was common for the axle to catch fire with a quick motion, and begged of me to look out every minute, lest we should all be consumed. I was forced to obey, and give her from time to time the most solemn declarations that all was safe, and that I hoped we should reach the place without losing our lives either by fire or water.

Thus we passed on, over ways soft and hard, with more or with less speed, but always with new vicissitudes of anxiety. If the ground was hard, we were jolted; if soft, we were sinking. If we went fast we should be overturned; if slowly, we should never reach the place. At length she saw something which she called a

cloud, and began to consider that at that time of the year it frequently thundered. This seemed to be the capital terror, for after that the coach was suffered to move on; and no danger was thought too dreadful to be encountered, provided she could get into a house before the thunder.

Thus our whole conversation passed in dangers, and cares, and fears, and consolations, and stories of ladies dragged in the mire, forced to spend all the night on a heath, drowned in rivers, or burnt with lightning; and no sooner had a hairbreadth escape set us free from one calamity, but we were threatened with another.

At length we reached the house where we intended to regale ourselves, and I proposed to Anthea the choice of a great number of dishes, which the place, being well provided for entertainment, happened to afford. She made some objection to every thing that was offered; one thing she hated at that time of the year, another she could not bear since she had seen it spoiled at Lady Feedwell's table, another she was sure they could not dress at this house, and another she could not touch without French sauce. At last, she fixed her mind upon salmon, but there was no salmon in the house. It was however procured with great expedition, and when it came to the table, she found that her fright had taken away her stomach, which indeed she thought no great loss, for she could never believe that any thing at an inn could be cleanly got.

Dinner was now over, and the company proposed, for I was now past the condition of making overtures, that we should pursue our original design of visiting the gardens. Anthea declared that she could not imagine what pleasure we expected from the sight of a few green trees and a little gravel, and two or three pits of clear water; that for her part she hated walking till the cool of the evening, and thought it very likely to rain; and again wished that she had stayed at home. We then reconciled ourselves to our disappointment, and began to talk on common subjects, when Anthea told us that since we came to see gardens, she would not hinder our satisfaction. We all arose, and walked through the inclosures for some time, with no other trouble than the necessity of watching lest a frog should hop across the way, which Anthea told us would certainly kill her, if she should happen to see him.

Frogs, as it fell out, there were none; but when we were within a furlong of the gardens, Anthea saw some sheep, and heard the wether clink his bell, which she was certain was not hung upon him for nothing, and therefore no assurances nor entreaties should prevail upon her to go a step further; she was sorry to disappoint the company, but her life was dearer to her than ceremony.

We came back to the inn, and Anthea discovered that there was no time to be lost returning, for the night would come upon and a thousand misfortunes might happen the dark. The horses were immediately harnessed, and Anthea, having wondered we could seduce her to stay so long, was eager set out. But we had now a new scene of ror, every man we saw was a robber, and were ordered sometimes to drive hard, les traveller whom we saw behind should overt us; and sometimes to stop, lest we should co up to him who was passing before us. alarmed many an honest man, by begging to spare her life as he passed by the coach, drew me into fifteen quarrels with pers who increased her fright, by kindly stopp to inquire whether they could assist us. last we came home, and she told her comp next day what a pleasant ride she had b taking.

I suppose, Sir, I need not inquire of you w deductions may be made from this narrat nor what happiness can arise from the soci of that woman who mistakes cowardice for gance, and imagines all delicacy to consist refusing to be pleased.

I am, &c.

No. 35.] TUESDAY, JULY 17, 1750.

——Non pronuba Juno,
Non Hymenæus adest, non illi gratia lecto.
OVID.

Without connubial Juno's aid they wed;
Nor Hymen nor the Graces bless the bed.
ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As you have hitherto delayed the performa of the promise, by which you gave us reason hope for another paper upon matrimony, I im gine you desirous of collecting more mater than your own experience or observation supply; and I shall therefore lay candi before you an account of my own entrance i the conjugal state.

I was about eight and twenty years old, w having tried the diversions of the town til began to be weary, and being awakened i attention to more serious business, by the fail of an attorney, to whom I had implicitly tru ed the conduct of my fortune, I resolved to t my estate into my own care, and methodise whole life according to the strictest rules of e nomical prudence.

In pursuance of this scheme I took leave my acquaintance, who dismissed me with nu berless jests upon my new system; having fi endeavoured to divert me from a design so li

orthy of a man of wit, by ridiculous accounts the ignorance and rusticity into which many d sunk in their retirement, after having stinguished themselves in taverns and play-uses, and given hopes of rising to uncommon inence among the gay part of mankind.

When I came first into the country, which, a neglect not uncommon among young heirs, had never seen since the death of my father, I und every thing in such confusion, that being terly without practice in business, I had great fficulties to encounter in disentangling the rplexities of my circumstances; they how-er gave way to diligent application; and I ceived that the advantage of keeping my own counts would very much overbalance the time hich they could require.

I had now visited my tenants, surveyed my d, and repaired the old house, which, for ne years, had been running to decay. These oofs of pecuniary wisdom began to recom-nd me as a sober, judicious, thriving gentle-n, to all my graver neighbours of the coun-, who never failed to celebrate my manage-nt in opposition to Thriftless and Latterwit, o smart fellows, who had estates in the same t of the kingdom, which they visited now l then in a frolic, to take up their rents be-hand, debauch a milk-maid, make a feast for village, and tell stories of their own in-gues, and then rode post back to town to nd their money.

t was doubtful, however, for some time, ether I should be able to hold my resolution; a short perseverance removed all suspicions. ose every day in reputation, by the decency my conversation, and the regularity of my duct, and was mentioned with a great regard he assizes, as a man very fit to be put in mission for the peace.

During the confusion of my affairs, and the y necessity of visiting farms, adjusting con-ts, letting leases, and superintending repairs, und very little vacuity in my life, and there-had not many thoughts of marriage; but, little while the tumult of business subsided, the exact method which I had established led me to despatch my accounts with great lity. I had, therefore, now upon my hands, task of finding means to spend my time, hout falling back into the poor amusements h I had hitherto indulged, or changing for the sports of the field, which I saw sued with so much eagerness by the gentle-of the country, that they were indeed the pleasures in which I could promise myself partaker.

he inconvenience of this situation naturally osed me to wish for a companion, and the vn value of my estate, with my reputation rugality and prudence, easily gained me ad-ion into every family; for I soon found that no inquiry was made after any other virtue, nor any testimonial necessary, but of my freedom from incumbrances, and my care of what they termed the *main chance*. I saw, not without indignation, the eagerness with which the daughters, wherever I came, were set out to show; nor could I consider them in a state much different from prostitution, when I found them ordered to play their airs before me, and to exhibit, by some seeming chance, specimens of their music, their work, or their housewifery. No sooner was I placed at table, than the young lady was called upon to pay me some civility or other; nor could I find means of escaping, from either father or mother, some account of their daughter's excellences, with a declaration that they were now leaving the world, and had no business on this side the grave, but to see their children happily disposed of; that she whom I had been pleased to compliment at table was indeed the chief pleasure of their age, so good, so dutiful, so great a relief to her mamma in the care of the house, and so much her papa's favourite for her cheerfulness and wit, that it would be with the last reluctance that they should part; but to a worthy gentleman in the neighbourhood, whom they might often visit, they would not so far consult their own gratification, as to refuse her; and their tenderness should be shown in her fortune, whenever a suitable settlement was proposed.

As I knew these overtures not to proceed from any preference of me before another equally rich, I could not but look with pity on young persons condemned to be set to auction, and made cheap by injudicious commendations; for how could they know themselves offered and rejected a hundred times, without some loss of that soft elevation, and maiden dignity, so necessary to the completion of female excellence?

I shall not trouble you with a history of the stratagems practised upon my judgment, or the allurements tried upon my heart, which, if you have, in any part of your life, been acquainted with rural politics, you will easily conceive. Their arts have no great variety, they think nothing worth their care but money, and supposing its influence the same upon all the world, seldom endeavour to deceive by any other means than false computations.

I will not deny that, by hearing myself loudly commended for my discretion, I began to set some value upon my character, and was unwilling to lose my credit by marrying for love. I therefore resolved to know the fortune of the lady whom I should address, before I inquired after her wit, delicacy, or beauty.

This determination led me to Mitissa, the daughter of Chrysophilus, whose person was at least without deformity, and whose manners were free from reproach, as she had been bred up at a distance from all common temptations.

To Mitissa therefore I obtained leave from her parents to pay my court, and was referred by her again to her father, whose direction she was resolved to follow. The question then was, only, what should be settled? The old gentleman made an enormous demand, with which I refused to comply. Mitissa was ordered to exert her power; she told me, that if I could refuse her papa I had no love for her; that she was an unhappy creature, and that I was a perfidious man; then she burst into tears, and fell into fits. All this, as I was no passionate lover, had little effect. She next refused to see me, and because I thought myself obliged to write in terms of distress, they had once hopes of starving me into measures; but, finding me inflexible, the father complied with my proposal, and told me he liked me the more for being so good at a bargain.

I was now married to Mitissa, and was to experience the happiness of a match made without passion. Mitissa soon discovered that she was equally prudent with myself, and had taken a husband only to be at her own command, and have a chariot at her own call. She brought with her an old maid recommended by her mother, who taught her all the arts of domestic management, and was, on every occasion, her chief agent and directress. They soon invented one reason or other to quarrel with all my servants, and either prevailed on me to turn them away, or treated them so ill that they left me of themselves, and always supplied their places with some brought from my wife's relations. Thus they established a family, over which I had no authority, and which was in a perpetual conspiracy against me; for Mitissa considered herself as having a separate interest, and thought nothing her own, but what she laid up without my knowledge. For this reason she brought me false accounts of the expenses of the house, joined with my tenants in complaints of hard times, and by means of a steward of her own, took rewards for soliciting abatements of the rent. Her great hope is to outlive me, that she may enjoy what she has thus accumulated, and therefore she is always contriving some improvements of her jointure land, and once tried to procure an injunction to hinder me from felling timber upon it for repairs. Her father and mother assist her in her projects, and are frequently hinting that she is ill used, and reproaching me with the presents that other ladies receive from their husbands.

Such, Sir, was my situation for seven years, till at last my patience was exhausted, and having one day invited her father to my house, I laid the state of my affairs before him, detected my wife in several of her frauds, turned out her steward, charged a constable with her maid, took my business in my own hands, reduced her to a settled allowance, and now write account to warn others against marrying t whom they have no reason to esteem.

I am, &c.

No. 36.] SATURDAY, JULY 21, 1750.

"Αμ' ἕποντο νομῆες
Τερπόμενοι σύριγξι· δόλον δ' οὔτι προνόησαν.
HOMER

——Piping on their reeds the shepherds go,
Nor fear an ambush nor suspect a foe. POPE

THERE is scarcely any species of poetry that allured more readers, or excited more writ than the pastoral. It is generally pleasing, cause it entertains the mind with representati of scenes familiar to almost every imaginat and of which all can equally judge whether t are well described. It exhibits a life, to wh we have been always accustomed to assoc peace, and leisure, and innocence: and th fore we readily set open the heart for the mission of its images, which contribute to d away cares and perturbations, and suffer selves, without resistance, to be transporte elysian regions, where we are to meet nothing but joy, and plenty, and contentm where every gale whispers pleasure, and ev shade promises repose.

It has been maintained by some, who lov talk of what they do not know, that pastor the most ancient poetry; and, indeed, since probable that poetry is nearly of the same a quity with rational nature, and since the lif the first men was certainly rural, we may sonably conjecture, that, as their ideas w necessarily be borrowed from those objects which they are acquainted, their compos being filled chiefly with such thoughts on visible creation as must occur to the first servers, were pastoral hymns, like those w Milton introduces the original pair sing in the day of innocence, to the praise of t Maker.

For the same reason that pastoral poetry the first employment of the human ima tion, it is generally the first literary an ment of our minds. We have seen fields, meadows, and groves, from the time our eyes opened upon life; and are pleased birds, and brooks, and breezes, much e than we engage among the actions and pas of mankind. We are therefore delighted rural pictures, because we know the origin an age when our curiosity can be very awakened by descriptions of courts whic never beheld, or representations of pas which we never felt.

The satisfaction received from this ki writing not only begins early, but lasts

we do not, as we advance into the intellectual world, throw it away among other childish amusements and pastimes, but willingly return to it in any hour of indolence and relaxation. The images of true pastoral have always the power of exciting delight, because the works of nature, from which they are drawn, have always the same order and beauty, and continue to force themselves upon our thoughts, being at once obvious to the most careless regard, and more than adequate to the strongest reason, and severest contemplation. Our inclination to stillness and tranquillity is seldom much lessened by long knowledge of the busy and tumultuary part of the world. In childhood we turn our thoughts to the country, as to the region of pleasure; we recur to it in old age as a port of rest, and perhaps with that secondary and adventitious gladness, which every man feels in reviewing those places, or recollecting those occurrences, that contributed to his youthful enjoyments, and bring him back to the prime of life, when the world was gay with the bloom of novelty, when mirth wantoned at his side, and hope sparkled before him.

The sense of this universal pleasure has incited *numbers without number* to try their skill in pastoral performances in which they have generally succeeded after the manner of other imitators, transmitting the same images in the same combination from one to another, till he that reads the title of a poem, may guess at the whole series of the composition; nor will a man, after the perusal of thousands of these performances, find his knowledge enlarged with a single view of nature not produced before, or his imagination amused with any new application of those views to moral purposes.

The range of pastoral is indeed narrow: for though nature itself, philosophically considered, is inexhaustible, yet its general effects on the eye and on the ear are uniform, and incapable of much variety of description. Poetry cannot dwell upon the minuter distinctions, by which one species differs from another, without deserting from that simplicity of grandeur which fills the imagination; nor dissect the latent qualities of things, without losing its general power of gratifying every mind by recalling its conceptions. However, as each age makes some discoveries, and those discoveries are by degrees generally known, as new plants or modes of culture are introduced, and by little and little become common, pastoral might receive, from time to time, small augmentations, and exhibit to us in a century a scene somewhat varied.

But pastoral subjects have been often, like flowers, taken into the hands of those that were ill qualified to adorn them, men to whom the face of nature was so little known, that they either drawn it only after their own imagination, and changed or distorted her features, that their portraits might appear something more than servile copies from their predecessors.

Not only the images of rural life, but the occasions on which they can be properly produced, are few and general. The state of a man confined to the employments and pleasures of the country, is so little diversified, and exposed to so few of those accidents which produce perplexities, terrors, and surprises, in more complicated transactions, that he can be shown but seldom in such circumstances as attract curiosity. His ambition is without policy, and his love without intrigue. He has no complaints to make of his rival, but that he is richer than himself; nor any disasters to lament, but a cruel mistress, or a bad harvest.

The conviction of the necessity of some new source of pleasure induced Sannazarius to remove the scene from the fields to the sea, to substitute fishermen for shepherds, and derive his sentiments from the piscatory life; for which he has been censured by succeeding critics, because the sea is an object of terror, and by no means proper to amuse the mind, and lay the passions asleep. Against this objection he might be defended by the established maxim, that the poet has a right to select his images, and is no more obliged to show the sea in a storm, than the land under an inundation; but may display all the pleasures, and conceal the dangers, of the water, as he may lay his shepherd under a shady beech, without giving him an ague, or letting a wild beast loose upon him.

There are, however, two defects in the piscatory eclogue, which perhaps cannot be supplied. The sea, though in hot countries it is considered by those who live, like Sannazarius, upon the coast, as a place of pleasure and diversion, has notwithstanding, much less variety than the land, and therefore will be sooner exhausted by a descriptive writer. When he has once shown the sun rising or setting upon it, curled its waters with the vernal breeze, rolled the waves in gentle succession to the shore, and enumerated the fish sporting in the shallows, he has nothing remaining but what is common to all other poetry, the complaint of a nymph for a drowned lover, or the indignation of a fisher that his oysters are refused, and Mycon's accepted.

Another obstacle to the general reception of this kind of poetry, is the ignorance of maritime pleasures, in which the greater part of mankind must always live. To all the inland inhabitants of every region, the sea is only known as an immense diffusion of waters, over which men pass from one country to another, and in which life is frequently lost. They have therefore no opportunity of tracing in their own thoughts the descriptions of winding shores and calm bays, nor can look on the poem in which

they are mentioned, with other sensations than on a sea chart, or the metrical geography of Dionysius.

This defect Sannazarius was hindered from perceiving, by writing in a learned language to readers generally acquainted with the works of nature; but if he had made his attempt in any vulgar tongue, he would soon have discovered how vainly he had endeavoured to make that loved, which was not understood.

I am afraid it will not be found easy to improve the pastorals of antiquity, by any great additions or diversifications. Our descriptions may indeed differ from those of Virgil, as an English from an Italian summer, and, in some respects, as modern from ancient life; but as nature is in both countries nearly the same, and as poetry has to do rather with the passions of men, which are uniform, than their customs, which are changeable, the varieties, which time or place can furnish, will be inconsiderable; and I shall endeavour to show, in the next paper, how little the latter ages have contributed to the improvement of the rustic muse.

No. 37.] TUESDAY, JULY 24, 1750.

Canto quæ solitus, si quando armenta vocabat, Amphion Dircæus. VIRG.

Such strains I sing as once Amphion play'd
When list'ning flocks the powerful call obey'd.
ELPHINSTON.

IN writing or judging of pastoral poetry, neither the authors nor critics of latter times seem to have paid sufficient regard to the originals left us by antiquity, but have entangled themselves with unnecessary difficulties, by advancing principles, which having no foundation in the nature of things, are wholly to be rejected from a species of composition, in which, above all others, mere nature is to be regarded.

It is therefore necessary to inquire after some more distinct and exact idea of this kind of writing. This may, I think, be easily found in the pastorals of Virgil, from whose opinion it will not appear very safe to depart, if we consider that every advantage of nature and of fortune, concurred to complete his productions; that he was born with great accuracy and severity of judgment, enlightened with all the learning of one of the brightest ages, and embellished with the elegance of the Roman court; that he employed his powers rather in improving, than inventing, and therefore must have endeavoured to recompense the want of novelty by exactness; that taking Theocritus for his original, he found pastoral far advanced towards perfection, and that having so great a rival, he must have proceeded with uncommon caution.

If we search the writings of Virgil, for the true definition of a pastoral, it will be found *a poem in which any action or passion is represented by its effects upon a country life.* Whatsoeve therefore may, according to the common cours of things, happen in the country, may afford subject for a pastoral poet.

In this definition, it will immediately occu to those who are versed in the writings of th modern critics, that there is no mention of th golden age. I cannot indeed easily discover wh it is thought necessary to refer descriptions of rural state to remote times, nor can I perceiv that any writer has consistently preserved th Arcadian manners and sentiments. The onl reason, that I have read, on which this rule ha been founded, is, that, according to the custom modern life, it is improbable that shepherds shoul be capable of harmonious numbers, or delicate sen timents; and therefore the reader must exalt h ideas of the pastoral character, by carrying h thoughts back to the age in which the care herds and flocks was the employment of th wisest and greatest men.

These reasoners seem to have been led in their hypothesis, by considering pastoral, not general, as a representation of rural nature, a consequently as exhibiting the ideas and sen ments of those, whoever they are, to whom t country affords pleasure or employment, b simply as a dialogue, or narrative of men actua ly tending sheep, and busied in the lowest a most laborious offices; from whence they ve readily concluded, since characters must nece sarily be preserved, that either the sentimen must sink to the level of the speakers, or t speakers must be raised to the height of the se timents.

In consequence of these original errors, thousand precepts have been given, which ha only contributed to perplex and confound. So have thought it necessary that the imagina manners of the golden age should be univers preserved, and have therefore believed, that thing more could be admitted in pastoral, t lilies and roses, and rocks and streams, amo which are heard the gentle whispers of ch fondness, or the soft complaints of amorous patience. In pastoral, as in other writings, ch tity of sentiment ought doubtless to be observ and purity of manners to be represented; because the poet is confined to the images of golden age, but because, having the subject in own choice, he ought always to consult the terest of virtue.

These advocates for the golden age lay d other principles, not very consistent with t general plan; for they tell us, that, to sup the character of the shepherd, it is proper all refinement should be avoided, and that s slight instances of ignorance should be in spersed. Thus the shepherd in Virgil is posed to have forgot the name of Anaximan and in Pope the term Zodiac is too hard f rustic apprehension. But if we place our

herds in their primitive condition, we may give them learning among their other qualifications; and if we suffer them to allude at all to things of later existence, which, perhaps, cannot with any great propriety be allowed, there can be no danger of making them speak with too much accuracy, since they conversed with divinities, and transmitted to succeeding ages the arts of life.

Other writers, having the mean and despicable condition of a shepherd always before them, conceive it necessary to degrade the language of pastoral by obsolete terms and rustic words, which they very learnedly call Doric, without reflecting that they thus became authors of a mangled dialect, which no human being ever could have spoken, that they may as well refine the speech as the sentiments of their personages, and that none of the inconsistencies which they endeavour to avoid, is greater than that of joining elegance of thought with coarseness of diction. Spenser begins one of his pastorals with studied barbarity;

> Diggon Davie, I bid her good day;
> Or, Diggon her is, or I missay.
> *Dig.* Her was her while it was day-light,
> But now her is a most wretched wight.

What will the reader imagine to be the subject on which speakers like these exercise their eloquence? Will he not be somewhat disappointed, when he finds them met together to condemn the corruptions of the church of Rome? Surely, at the same time that a shepherd learns theology, he may gain some acquaintance with his native language.

Pastoral admits of all ranks of persons, because persons of all ranks inhabit the country. It excludes not, therefore, on account of the characters necessary to be introduced, any elevation or delicacy of sentiment; those ideas only are improper, which, not owing their original to rural objects, are not pastoral. Such is the exclamation in Virgil,

Nunc scio quid sit Amor, duris in cautibus illum
Ismarus, aut Rhodope, aut extremi Garamantes,
Nec generis nostri puerum, nec sanguinis, edunt.

> I know thee, Love, in deserts thou wert bred,
> And at the dugs of savage tigers fed;
> Alien of birth, usurper of the plains.—DRYDEN.

Which Pope endeavouring to copy, was carried to still greater impropriety:

> I know thee, Love, wild as the raging main
> More fierce than tigers on the Libyan plain
> Thou wert from Etna's burning entrails torn;
> Begot in tempests, and in thunders born!

Sentiments like these, as they have no ground in nature, are indeed of little value in any poem; but in pastoral they are particularly liable to censure, because it wants that exaltation above common life, which in tragic or heroic writings often reconciles us to bold flights and daring figures.

Pastoral being the *representation of an action or passion, by its effects upon a country life*, has nothing peculiar but its confinement to rural imagery, without which it ceases to be pastoral. This is its true characteristic, and this it cannot lose by any dignity of sentiment, or beauty of diction. The Pollio of Virgil, with all its elevation, is a composition truly bucolic, though rejected by the critics; for all the images are either taken from the country, or from the religion of the age common to all parts of the empire.

The Silenus is indeed of a more disputable kind, because though the scene lies in the country, the song, being religious and historical, had been no less adapted to any other audience or place. Neither can it well be defended as a fiction; for the introduction of a god seems to imply the golden age, and yet he alludes to many subsequent transactions, and mentions Gallus, the poet's contemporary.

It seems necessary to the perfection of this poem that the occasion which is supposed to produce it be at least not inconsistent with a country life, or less likely to interest those who have retired into places of solitude and quiet, than the more busy part of mankind. It is therefore improper to give the title of a pastoral to verses, in which the speakers, after the slight mention of their flocks, fall to complaints of errors in the church, and corruptions in the government, or to lamentations of the death of some illustrious person, whom, when once the poet has called a shepherd, he has no longer any labour upon his hands, but can make the clouds weep, and lilies wither, and the sheep hang their heads, without art or learning, genius or study.

It is part of Claudian's character of his rustic, that he computes his time not by the succession of consuls, but of harvests. Those who pass their days in retreats distant from the theatres of business, are always least likely to hurry their imagination with public affairs.

The facility of treating actions or events in the pastoral style, has incited many writers, from whom more judgment might have been expected, to put the sorrow or the joy which the occasion required into the mouth of Daphne or of Thyrsis; and as one absurdity must naturally be expected to make way to another, they have written with an utter disregard both of life and nature, and filled their productions with mythological allusions, with incredible fictions and with sentiments which neither passion nor reason could have dictated, since the change which religion has made in the whole system of the world.

No. 38.] Saturday July 28, 1750.

Aurcam quisqu's me llocritatem
Diligit, tutus caret obsoleti
Sordibus tecti, caret invidenda
Sobrius aula. HOR.

The man within the golden mean,
Who can his boldest wish contain,
Securely views the ruin'd cell,
Where sordid want and sorrow dwell;
And in himself serenely great,
Declines an envied room of state. FRANCIS.

Among many parallels which men of imagination have drawn between the natural and moral state of the world, it has been observed that happiness, as well as virtue, consists in mediocrity; that to avoid every extreme is necessary, even to him who has no other care than to pass through the present state with ease and safety; and that the middle path is the road of security, on either side of which are not only the pitfalls of vice, but the precipices of ruin.

Thus the maxim of Cleobulus the Lindian, *μέτρον ἄριστον*, *mediocrity is best*, has been long considered as a universal principle, extended through the whole compass of life and nature. The experience of every age seems to have given it new confirmation, and to show that nothing, however specious or alluring, is pursued with propriety, or enjoyed with safety, beyond certain limits.

Even the gifts of nature, which may truly be considered as the most solid and durable of all terrestrial advantages, are found, when they exceed the middle point, to draw the possessor into many calamities, easily avoided by others that have been less bountifully enriched or adorned. We see every day women perish with infamy, by having been too willing to set their beauty to show; and others, though not with equal guilt or misery, yet with very sharp remorse, languishing in decay, neglect, and obscurity, for having rated their youthful charms at too high a price. And, indeed, if the opinion of Bacon be thought to deserve much regard, very few sighs would be vented for eminent and superlative elegance of form; "for beautiful women," says he, "are seldom of any great accomplishments, because they, for the most part, study behaviour rather than virtue."

Health and vigour, and a happy constitution of the corporeal frame, are of absolute necessity to the enjoyment of the comforts, and to the performance of the duties of life, and requisite in yet a greater measure to the accomplishment of any thing illustrious or distinguished; yet even these, if we can judge by their apparent consequences, are sometimes not very beneficial to those on whom they are most liberally bestowed. They that frequent the chambers of the sick will generally find the sharpest pains, and most stubborn maladies, among them whom confidence of the force of nature formerly betrayed negligence and irregularity; and that superfluous of strength, which was at once their boast a their snare, has often, in the latter part of li no other effect than that it continues them lo in impotence and anguish.

These gifts of nature are, however, alwa blessings in themselves, and to be acknowledg with gratitude to him that gives them; sin they are, in their regular and legitimate effec productive of happiness, and prove pernicio only by voluntary corruption or idle negligen And as there is little danger of pursuing the with too much ardour or anxiety, because skill or diligence can hope to procure them, t uncertainty of their influence upon our lives mentioned, not to depreciate their real val but to repress the discontent and envy to whi the want of them often gives occasion in the who do not enough suspect their own frail nor consider how much less is the calamity not possessing great powers, than of not usi them aright.

Of all those things that make us superior others there is none so much within the rea of our endeavours as riches, nor any thing m eagerly or constantly desired. Poverty is an e always in our view, an evil complicated with many circumstances of uneasiness and vexatio that every man is studious to avoid it. So degree of riches is therefore required, that may be exempt from the gripe of necessit when this purpose is once attained, we natura wish for more, that the evil which is regard with so much horror, may be yet at a grea distance from us; as he that has once felt dreaded the paw of a savage, will not be at r till they are parted by some barrier, which n take away all possibility of a second attack.

To this point, if fear be not unreasonably dulged, Cleobulus would, perhaps, not refuse extend his mediocrity. But it almost alwa happens, that the man who grows rich, chan his notions of poverty, states his wants by so new measure, and from flying the enemy t pursued him, bends his endeavours to overt those whom he sees before him. The powe gratifying his appetites increases their deman a thousand wishes crowd in upon him, imp tunate to be satisfied, and vanity and ambit open prospects to desire, which still grow wi as they are more contemplated.

Thus in time want is enlarged with bounds: an eagerness for increase of possessi deluges the soul, and we sink into the gulf insatiability; only because we do not sufficien consider, that all real need is very soon suppl and all real danger of its invasion easily preci ed; that the claims of vanity, being withou mits, must be denied at last: and that the p of repressing them is less pungent before t have been long accustomed to compliance.

Whosoever shall look heedfully upon those who are eminent for their riches, will not think their condition such as that he should hazard his quiet, and much less his virtue, to obtain it. For all that great wealth generally gives above a moderate fortune, is more room for the freaks of caprice, and more privilege for ignorance and vice, a quicker succession of flatteries, and a larger circle of voluptuousness.

There is one reason seldom remarked, which makes riches less desirable. Too much wealth is very frequently the occasion of poverty. He whom the wantonness of abundance has once softened, easily sinks into neglect of his affairs; and he that thinks he can afford to be negligent, is not far from being poor. He will soon be involved in perplexities, which his inexperience will render unsurmountable; he will fly for help to those whose interest it is that he should be more distressed, and will be at last torn to pieces by the vultures that always hover over fortunes in decay.

When the plains of India were burnt up by a long continuance of drought, Hamet and Rashid, two neighbouring shepherds, faint with thirst, stood at the common boundary of their grounds, with their flocks and herds panting around them, and in extremity of distress prayed for water. On a sudden the air was becalmed, the birds ceased to chirp, and the flocks to bleat. They turned their eyes every way, and saw a form of mighty stature advancing through the valley, whom they knew upon his nearer approach to be the Genius of Distribution. In one hand he held the sheaves of plenty, and in the other the sabre of destruction. The shepherds stood trembling, and would have retired before him; but he called to them with a voice gentle as the breeze that plays in the evening among the spices of Sabæa; "Fly not from your benefactor, children of the dust! I am come to offer you gifts, which only your own folly can make vain. You here pray for water, and water I will bestow; let me know with how much you will be satisfied: speak not foolishly; consider, that of whatever can be enjoyed by the body, excess is no less dangerous than scarcity. When you remember the pain of thirst, do not forget the danger of suffocation. Now, Hamet, tell me your request."

"O Being, kind and beneficent," says Hamet, "let thine eye pardon my confusion. I intreat a little brook, which in summer shall never be dry, and in winter never overflow."—"It is granted," replies the Genius; and immediately he opened the ground with his sabre, and a fountain bubbling up under their feet, scattered its rills over the meadows; the flowers renewed their fragrance, the trees spread a greener foliage, and the flocks and herds quenched their thirst.

Then turning to Raschid, the Genius invited him likewise to offer his petition. "I request," says Raschid, "that thou wilt turn the Ganges through my grounds, with all his waters, and all their inhabitants." Hamet was struck with the greatness of his neighbour's sentiments, and secretly repined in his heart, that he had not made the same petition before him; when the Genius spoke, "Rash man, be not so insatiable! remember, to thee that is nothing which thou canst not use; and how are thy wants greater than the wants of Hamet?" Raschid repeated his desire, and pleased himself with the mean appearance that Hamet would make in the presence of the proprietor of the Ganges. The Genius then retired towards the river, and the two shepherds stood waiting the event. As Raschid was looking with contempt upon his neighbour, on a sudden was heard the roar of torrents, and they found by the mighty stream that the mounds of the Ganges were broken. The flood rolled forward into the lands of Raschid, his plantations were torn up, his flocks overwhelmed, he was swept away before it, and a crocodile devoured him.

No. 89.] TUESDAY, JULY 31, 1750.

Infelix —nulli bene nupta marito.—AUSONIUS.

Unbless'd, still doom'd to wed with misery.

THE condition of the female sex has been frequently the subject of compassion to medical writers, because their constitution of body is such, that every state of life brings its peculiar diseases; they are placed, according to the proverb, between Scylla and Charybdis, with no other choice than of dangers equally formidable; and whether they embrace marriage, or determine upon a single life, are exposed, in consequence of their choice, to sickness, misery, and death.

It were to be wished that so great a degree of natural infelicity might not be increased by adventitious and artificial miseries; and that beings, whose beauty we cannot behold without admiration, and whose delicacy we cannot contemplate without tenderness, might be suffered to enjoy every alleviation of their sorrows. But, however it has happened, the custom of the world seems to have been formed in a kind of conspiracy against them, though it does not appear but they had themselves an equal share in its establishment; and prescriptions which, by whomsoever they were begun, are now of long continuance, and by consequence of great authority, seem to have almost excluded them from content, in whatsoever condition they shall pass their lives.

If they refuse the society of men, and continue in that state which is reasonably supposed to place happiness most in their own power,

they seldom give those that frequent their conversation any exalted notions of the blessing of liberty; for whether it be that they are angry to see with what inconsiderate eagerness other heedless females rush into slavery, or with what absurd vanity the married ladies boast the change of their condition, and condemn the heroines, who endeavour to assert the natural dignity of their sex; whether they are conscious that like barren countries they are free, only because they were never thought to deserve the trouble of a conquest, or imagine that their sincerity is not always unsuspected, when they declare their contempt of men; it is certain, that they generally appear to have some great and incessant cause of uneasiness, and that many of them have at last been persuaded by powerful rhetoricians, to try the life which they had so long contemned, and put on the bridal ornaments at a time when they least became them.

What are the real causes of the impatience which the ladies discover in a virgin state, I shall perhaps take some other occasion to examine. That it is not to be envied for its happiness, appears from the solicitude with which it is avoided; from the opinion universally prevalent among the sex, that no woman continues long in it but because she is not invited to forsake it; from the disposition always shown to treat old maids as the refuse of the world; and from the willingness with which it is often quitted at last, by those whose experience has enabled them to judge at leisure, and decide with authority.

Yet such is life, that whatever is proposed, it is much easier to find reasons for rejecting than embracing. Marriage, though a certain security from the reproach and solitude of antiquated virginity, has yet, as it is usually conducted, many disadvantages, that take away much from the pleasure which society promises, and might afford, if pleasures and pains were honestly shared, and mutual confidence inviolably preserved.

The miseries, indeed, which many ladies suffer under conjugal vexations, are to be considered with great pity, because their husbands are often not taken by them as objects of affection, but forced upon them by authority and violence, or by persuasion and importunity, equally resistless when urged by those whom they have been always accustomed to reverence and obey; and it very seldom appears that those who are thus despotic in the disposal of their children, pay any regard to their domestic and personal felicity, or think it so much to be inquired whether they will be happy, as whether they will be rich.

It may be urged, in extenuation of this crime, which parents, not in any other respect to be numbered with robbers and assassins, frequently commit, that in their estimation, riches and happiness are equivalent terms. They have passed their lives with no other wish than adding acre to acre, and filling one bag after another, and imagine the advantage of a daughter sufficiently considered, when they have secured her a large jointure, and given her reasonable expectations of living in the midst of those pleasures with which she had seen her father and mother solacing their age.

There is an economical oracle received among the prudential part of the world, which advises fathers *to marry their daughters, lest they should marry themselves;* by which I suppose it is implied, that women left to their own conduct generally unite themselves with such partners as can contribute very little to their felicity. Who was the author of this maxim, or with what intention it was originally uttered, I have not yet discovered; but imagine, that however solemnly it may be transmitted, or however implicitly received, it can confer no authority which nature has denied; it cannot license Titius to be unjust, lest Caia should be imprudent; nor give right to imprison for life, lest liberty should be ill employed.

That the ladies have sometimes incurred imputations which might naturally produce edium not much in their favour, must be confessed by their warmest advocates; and I have indeed seldom observed that when the tenderness or virtue of their parents has preserved them from forced marriage, and left them at large to choose their own path in the labyrinth of life, they have made any great advantage of their liberty; they commonly take the opportunity of independence to trifle away youth and lose the bloom in a hurry of diversions, recurring in succession too quick to leave room for any settled reflection; they see the world without gaining experience, and at last regulate their choice by motives trifling as those of a girl, or mercenary as those of a miser.

Melanthia came to town upon the death of her father, with a very large fortune, and with the reputation of a much larger; she was therefore followed and caressed by many men of rank, and by some of understanding; but having an insatiable desire of pleasure, she was not at leisure, from the park, the gardens, the theatres, visits, assemblies, and masquerades, to attend seriously to any proposal, but was still impatient for a new flatterer, and neglected marriage to always in her power; till in time her admirers fell away, wearied with expense, disgusted by her folly, or offended by her inconstancy; she heard of concerts to which she was not invited, and was more than once forced to sit still at an assembly for want of a partner. In this distress, chance threw in her way Philotryphus, a man vain, glittering, and thoughtless as hers, who had spent a small fortune in equipage and dress, and was shining in the last suit for which his tailor would give him credit. He had the

g endeavouring to retrieve his extravagance marriage, and therefore soon paid his court Melanthia, who, after some weeks of insen- ility saw him at a ball, and was wholly over- ne by his performance in a minuet. They rried; but a man cannot always dance, and ilotryphus had no other method of pleasing: wever, as neither was in any great degree ious, they live together with no other unhap- ess than vacuity of mind, and that tasteless- s of life, which proceeds from a satiety of enile pleasures, and an utter inability to fill ir place by nobler employments. As they ve known the fashionable world at the same ne, they agree in their notions of all those jects on which they ever speak; and, being le to add nothing to the ideas of each other, not much inclined to conversation, but very en join in one wish, "That they could sleep re and think less."

Argyris, after having refused a thousand of- s, at last consented to marry Cotylus, the unger brother of a duke, a man without ele- nce of mien, beauty of person, or force of un- rstanding; who, while he courted her, could t always forbear allusions to her birth, and nts how cheaply she would purchase an alli- ce to so illustrious a family. His conduct m the hour of his marriage has been insuffer- y tyrannical, nor has he any other regard her than what arises from his desire that her pearance may not disgrace him. Upon this nciple, however, he always orders that she uld be gayly dressed, and splendidly attend- ; and she has, among all her mortifications, e happiness to take place of her elder sister.

o. 40.] SATURDAY, AUGUST 4, 1750.

——Nec dicet, cur ego amicum
Offendam in nugis? Hæ nugæ seria ducent
In mala derisum semel. HOR.

Nor say, for trifles why should I displease
The man I love? For trifles such as these
To serious mischiefs lead the man I love,
If once the flatterer's ridicule he prove.
FRANCIS.

hns been remarked, that authors are *genus abile, a generation very easily put out of tem-* and that they seldom fail of giving proofs heir irascibility upon the slightest attack of icism, or the most gentle or modest offer of ice and information.

Vriters being best acquainted with one an- r, have represented this character as pre- ing among men of literature, which a more nsive view of the world would have shown n to be diffused through all human nature, ingle itself with every species of ambition and desire of praise, and to discover its effects with greater or less restraint, and under disguises more or less artful, in all places and all conditions.

The quarrels of writers, indeed, are more observed, because they necessarily appeal to the decision of the public. Their enmities are incited by applauses from their parties, and prolonged by treacherous encouragement for general diversion; and when the contest happens to rise high between men of genius and learning, its memory is continued for the same reason as its vehemence was at first promoted, because it gratifies the malevolence or curiosity of readers, and relieves the vacancies of life with amusement and laughter. The personal disputes, therefore, of rivals in wit are sometimes transmitted to posterity, when the grudges and heart-burnings of men less conspicuous, though carried on with equal bitterness, and productive of greater evils, are exposed to the knowledge of those only whom they nearly affect, and suffered to pass off and be forgotten among common and casual transactions.

The resentment which the discovery of a fault or folly produces, must bear a certain proportion to our pride, and will regularly be more acrimonious as pride is more immediately the principle of action. In whatever therefore we wish or imagine ourselves to excel, we shall always be displeased to have our claims to reputation disputed; and more displeased, if the accomplishment be such as can expect reputation only for its reward. For this reason it is common to find men break out into rage at any insinuations to the disadvantage of their wit, who have borne with great patience reflections on their morals; and of women it has been always known, that no censures wound so deeply, or rankles so long, as that which charges them with want of beauty.

As men frequently fill their imaginations with trifling pursuits, and please themselves most with things of small importance, I have often known very severe and lasting malevolence excited by unlucky censures, which would have fallen without any effect, had they not happened to wound a part remarkably tender. Gustulus, who valued himself upon the nicety of his palate, disinherited his eldest son, for telling him that the wine, which he was then commending, was the same which he had sent away the day before not fit to be drunk. Proculus withdrew his kindness from a nephew, whom he had always considered as the most promising genius of the age, for happening to praise in his presence the graceful horsemanship of Marius. And Fortunio, when he was privy-counsellor, procured a clerk to be dismissed from one of the public offices, in which he was eminent for his skill and assiduity, because he had been heard to say that there was another man in the king-

dom on whose skill at billiard's he would lay his money against Fortunio's.

Felicia and Floretta had been bred up in one house, and shared all the pleasures and endearments of infancy together. They entered upon life at the same time, and continued their confidence and friendship; consulted each other in every change of their dress, and every admission of a new lover; thought every diversion more entertaining whenever it happened that both were present, and when separated justified the conduct, and celebrated the excellences, of one another. Such was their intimacy, and such their fidelity, till a birth-night approached, when Floretta took one morning an opportunity, as they were consulting upon new clothes, to advise her friend not to dance at the ball, and informed her that her performance the year before had not answered the expectation which her other accomplishments had raised. Felicia commended her sincerity, and thanked her for the caution; but told her that she danced to please herself, and was in very little concern what the men might take the liberty of saying, but that if her appearance gave her dear Floretta any uneasiness, she would stay away. Floretta had now nothing left but to make new protestations of sincerity and affection, with which Felicia was so well satisfied, that they parted with more than usual fondness. They still continued to visit, with this only difference, that Felicia was more punctual than before, and often declared how high a value she put upon sincerity, how much she thought that goodness to be esteemed which would venture to admonish a friend of an error, and with what gratitude advice was to be received, even when it might happen to proceed from mistake.

In a few months, Felicia, with great seriousness, told Floretta, that though her beauty was such as gave charms to whatever she did, and her qualifications so extensive, that she could not fail of excellence in any attempt, yet she thought herself obliged by the duties of friendship to inform her, that if ever she betrayed want of judgment, it was by too frequent compliance with solicitations to sing, for that her manner was somewhat ungraceful, and her voice had no great compass. It is true, says Floretta, when I sung three nights ago at Lady Sprightly's I was hoarse with a cold; but I sing for my own satisfaction, and am not in the least pain whether I am liked. However, my dear Felicia's kindness is not the less, and I shall always think myself happy in so true a friend.

From this time they never saw each other without mutual professions of esteem, and declarations of confidence, but went soon after into the country to visit their relations. When they came back, they were prevailed on, by the importunity of new acquaintance, to take lodgings in different parts of the town, and h frequent occasion, when they met, to bewail t distance at which they were placed, and t uncertainty which each experienced of findi the other at home.

Thus are the fondest and firmest friendshi dissolved, by such openness and sincerity as i terrupt our enjoyment of our own approbatio or recall us to the remembrance of those failin which we are more willing to indulge than correct.

It is by no means necessary to imagine, th he who is offended at advice, was ignorant the fault, and resents the admonition as a fal charge; for perhaps it is most natural to be e raged, when there is the strongest conviction our own guilt. While we can easily defend o character, we are no more disturbed at an a cusation, than we are alarmed by an enem whom we are sure to conquer; and whose a tack, therefore, will bring us honour witho danger. But when a man feels the reprehe sion of a friend seconded by his own heart, is easily heated into resentment and reveng either because he hoped that the fault of whi he was conscious had escaped the notice others; or that his friend had looked upon with tenderness and extenuation, and excus it for the sake of his other virtues; or had co sidered him as too wise to need advice, or t delicate to be shocked with reproach: or, b cause we cannot feel without pain those refle tions roused which we have been endeavouri to lay asleep; and when pain has produc anger, who would not willingly believe, that ought to be discharged on others, rather tha on himself?

The resentment produced by sincerity, wha ever be its immediate cause, is so certain, a generally so keen, that very few have magnan mity sufficient for the practice of a duty, whic above most others, exposes its votaries to har ships and persecution; yet friendship witho it is of very little value, since the great use of close an intimacy is, that our virtues may guarded and encouraged, and our vices repress in their first appearance by timely detection a salutary remonstrances.

It is decreed by Providence, that nothing tru valuable shall be obtained in our present sta but with difficulty and danger. He that hop for that advantage which is to be gained fr unrestrained communication, must sometim hazard, by unpleasing truths, that friends which he aspires to merit. The chief rule to observed in the exercise of this dangerous offi is to preserve it pure from all mixture of int eat or vanity; to forbear admonition or repr when our consciences tell us that they are cited, not by the hopes of reforming faults, the desire of showing our discernment, or gr fying our own pride by the mortification of

other. It is not indeed certain, that the most refined caution will find a proper time for bringing a man to the knowledge of his own failings, or the most zealous benevolence reconcile him to that judgment, by which they are detected; but he who endeavours only the happiness of him whom he reproves, will always have either the satisfaction of obtaining or deserving kindness; if he succeeds, he benefits his friend; and if he fails, he has at least the consciousness that he suffers for only doing well.

No. 41.] TUESDAY, AUGUST 7, 1750.

Nulla recordanti lux est ingrata gravisque,
Nulla fuit cujus non meminisse velit.
Amplius ætatis spatium sibi vir bonus, hoc est
Vivere bis, vita posse priore frui. MART.

No day's remembrance shall the good regret,
Nor wish one bitter moment to forget;
They stretch the limits of this narrow span,
And, by enjoying, live past life again.—F. LEWIS.

So few of the hours of life are filled up with objects adequate to the mind of man, and so frequently are we in want of present pleasure or employment, that we are forced to have recourse every moment to the past and future for supplemental satisfactions, and relieve the vacuities of our being, by recollection of former passages, or anticipation of events to come.

I cannot but consider this necessity of searching on every side for matter on which the attention may be employed, as a strong proof of the superior and celestial nature of the soul of man. We have no reason to believe that other creatures have higher faculties, or more extensive capacities, than the preservation of themselves, or their species, requires; they seem always to be fully employed, or to be completely at ease without employment, to feel few intellectual miseries or pleasures, and to have no exuberance of understanding to lay out upon curiosity or caprice, but to have their minds exactly adapted to their bodies, with few other ideas than such as corporeal pain or pleasure impress upon them.

Of memory, which makes so large a part of the excellence of the human soul, and which has so much influence upon all its other powers, but a small portion has been allotted to the animal world. We do not find the grief with which the dams lament the loss of their young, proportionate to the tenderness with which they caress, the assiduity with which they feed, or the vehemence with which they defend them. Their regard for their offspring, when it is before their eyes, is not, in appearance, less than that of a human parent; but when it is taken away, it is very soon forgotten, and, after a short absence, brought again, wholly disregarded.

That they have very little remembrance of any thing once out of the reach of their senses, and scarce any power of comparing the present with the past, and regulating their conclusions from experience, may be gathered from this, that their intellects are produced in their full perfection. The sparrow that was hatched last spring makes her first nest the ensuing season, of the same materials, and with the same art, as in any following year; and the hen conducts and shelters her first brood of chickens with all the prudence that she ever attains.

It has been asked by men who love to perplex any thing that is plain to common understandings, how reason differs from instinct: and Prior has with no great propriety made Solomon himself declare, that to distinguish them is *the fool's ignorance, and the pedant's pride.* To give an accurate answer to a question, of which the terms are not completely understood, is impossible; we do not know in what either reason or instinct consist, and therefore cannot tell with exactness how they differ; but surely he that contemplates a ship and a bird's nest, will not be long without finding out, that the idea of the one was impressed at once, and continued through all the progressive descents of the species, without variation or improvement; and that the other is the result of experiments compared with experiments; has grown, by accumulated observation, from less to greater excellence; and exhibits the collective knowledge of different ages and various professions.

Memory is the purveyor of reason, the power which places those images before the mind upon which the judgment is to be exercised, and which treasures up the determinations that are once passed, as the rules of future action, or grounds of subsequent conclusions.

It is, indeed, the faculty of remembrance, which may be said to place us in the class of moral agents. If we were to act only in consequence of some immediate impulse, and receive no direction from internal motives of choice, we should be pushed forward by an invincible fatality, without power or reason for the most part to prefer one thing to another, because we could make no comparison but of objects which might both happen to be present.

We owe to memory not only the increase of our knowledge, and our progress in rational inquiries, but many other intellectual pleasures. Indeed, almost all that we can be said to enjoy is past or future; the present is in perpetual motion, leaves us as soon as it arrives, ceases to be present before its presence is well perceived, and is only known to have existed by the effects which it leaves behind. The greatest part of our ideas arises, therefore, from the view before or behind us, and we are happy or miserable, according as we are affected by the survey of our life, or our prospect of future existence.

With regard to futurity, when events are at such a distance from us that we cannot take the

whole concatenation into our view, we have generally power enough over our imagination to turn it upon pleasing scenes, and can promise ourselves riches, honours, and delights, without intermingling those vexations and anxieties with which all human enjoyments are polluted. If fear breaks in on one side, and alarms us with dangers and disappointments, we can call in hope on the other, to solace us with rewards, and escapes, and victories; so that we are seldom without means of palliating remote evils, and can generally soothe ourselves to tranquillity, whenever any troublesome presage happens to attack us.

It is therefore, I believe, much more common for the solitary and thoughtful to amuse themselves with schemes of the future, than reviews of the past. For the future is pliant and ductile, and will be easily moulded by a strong fancy into any form: but the images which memory presents are of a stubborn and untractable nature, the objects of remembrance have already existed, and left their signature behind them impressed upon the mind, so as to defy all attempts of razure or of change.

As the satisfactions, therefore, arising from memory are less arbitrary, they are more solid, and are, indeed, the only joys which we can call our own. Whatever we have once reposited, as Dryden expresses it, *in the sacred treasure of the past*, is out of the reach of accident, or violence, nor can be lost either by our own weakness, or another's malice:

——*Non tamen irritum*
Quodcunque retro est efficiet, neque
Diffinget, infectumque reddet,
Quod fugiens semel hora vixit.

Be fair or foul, or rain or shine,
The joys I have possess'd, in spite of fate are mine.
Not Heaven itself upon the past has power,
But what has been, has been, and I have had my hour.
DRYDEN.

There is certainly no greater happiness than to be able to look back on a life usefully and virtuously employed, to trace our own progress in existence, by such tokens as excite neither shame nor sorrow. Life, in which nothing has been done or suffered, to distinguish one day from another, is to him that has passed it as if it had never been, except that he is conscious how ill he has husbanded the great deposit of his Creator. Life, made memorable by crimes, and diversified through its several periods by wickedness, is indeed easily reviewed, but reviewed only with horror and remorse.

The great consideration which ought to influence us in the use of the present moment, is to arise from the effect, which, as well or ill applied, it must have upon the time to come; for though its actual existence be inconceivably short, yet its effects are unlimited; and there is not the smallest point of time but may extend its consequences, either to our hurt or our advantage, through all eternity, and give us reason to remember it for ever, with anguish or exultation.

The time of life, in which memory seems particularly to claim predominance over the other faculties of the mind, is our declining age. It has been remarked by former writers, that old men are generally narrative, and fall easily into recitals of past transactions, and accounts of persons known to them in their youth. When we approach the verge of the grave it is more eminently true:

Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam.
Life's span forbids thee to extend thy cares,
And stretch thy hopes beyond thy years.
CREECH.

We have no longer any possibility of great vicissitudes in our favour: the changes which are to happen in the world will come too late for our accommodation; and those who have no hope before them, and to whom their present state is painful and irksome, must of necessity turn their thoughts back to try what retrospect will afford. It ought, therefore, to be the care of those who wish to pass the last hours with comfort, to lay up such a treasure of pleasing ideas, as shall support the expenses of that time which is to depend wholly upon the fund already acquired.

——*Petite hinc, juvenesque senesque,*
Finem animo certum, miserisque viatica canis.
Seek here, ye young, the anchor of your mind;
Here, suffering age, a bless'd provision find.
ELPHINSTON.

In youth, however unhappy, we solace ourselves with the hope of better fortune, and however vicious, appease our consciences with intentions of repentance; but the time comes at last, in which life has no more to promise, in which happiness can be drawn only from recollection, and virtue will be all that we can recollect with pleasure.

No. 42.] SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 1750.

Mihi tarda fluunt ingrataque tempora.
HOR.
How heavily my time revolves along!
ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

MR. RAMBLER,

I AM no great admirer of grave writings, and therefore very frequently lay your papers aside before I have read them through; yet I cannot but confess that, by slow degrees, you have raised my opinion of your understanding; and though I believe it will be long before I can

prevailed upon to regard you with much kindness, you have, however, more of my esteem than those whom I sometimes make happy with opportunities to fill my tea-pot, or pick up my fan. I shall therefore choose you for the confident of my distresses, and ask your counsel with regard to the means of conquering or escaping them, though I never expect from you any of that softness and pliancy, which constitutes the perfection of a companion for the ladies: as, in the place where I now am, I have recourse to the mastiff for protection, though I have no intention of making him a lap-dog.

My mamma is a very fine lady, who has more numerous and more frequent assemblies at her house than any other person in the same quarter of the town. I was bred from my earliest infancy in a perpetual tumult of pleasure, and remember to have heard of little else than messages, visits, play-houses, and balls; of the awkwardness of one woman, and the coquetry of another; the charming convenience of some rising fashion, the difficulty of playing a new game, the incidents of a masquerade, and the dresses of a court-night. I knew before I was ten years old all the rules of paying and receiving visits, and to how much civility every one of my acquaintance was entitled; and was able to return, with the proper degree of reserve or of vivacity, the stated and established answer to every compliment; so that I was very soon celebrated as a wit and a beauty, and had heard before I was thirteen all that is ever said to a young lady. My mother was generous to so uncommon a degree as to be pleased with my advances into life, and allowed me, without envy or reproof, to enjoy the same happiness with herself; though most women about her own age were very angry to see young girls so forward, and many fine gentlemen told her how cruel it was to throw new chains upon mankind, and to tyrannize over them at the same time with her own charms and those of her daughter.

I have now lived two and twenty years, and have passed of each year nine months in town, and three at Richmond; so that my time has been spent uniformly in the same company, and the same amusements, except as fashion has introduced new diversions, or the revolutions of the gay world have afforded new successions of wits and beaus. However, my mother is so good an economist of pleasure, that I have no care hours upon my hands; for every morning brings some new appointment, and every night is hurried away by the necessity of making her appearance at different places, and of being with one lady at the opera, and with another at the card-table.

When the time came of settling our scheme of felicity for the summer, it was determined that I should pay a visit to a rich aunt in a remote county. As you know the chief conversation of all tea-tables, in the spring, arises from a communication of the manner in which time is to be passed till winter, it was a great relief to the barrenness of our topics, to relate the pleasures that were in store for me, to describe my uncle's seat, with the park and gardens, the charming walks and beautiful waterfalls; and every one told me how much she envied me, and what satisfaction she had once enjoyed in a situation of the same kind.

As we are all credulous in our own favour, and willing to imagine some latent satisfaction in any thing which we have not experienced, I will confess to you without restraint, that I had suffered my head to be filled with expectations of some nameless pleasure in a rural life, and that I hoped for the happy hour that should set me free from noise, and flutter, and ceremony, dismiss me to the peaceful shade, and lull me in content and tranquillity. To solace myself under the misery of delay, I sometimes heard a studious lady of my acquaintance read pastorals; I was delighted with scarce any talk but of leaving the town, and never went to bed without dreaming of groves, and meadows, and frisking lambs.

At length I had all my clothes in a trunk, and saw the coach at the door; I sprung in with ecstacy, quarrelled with my maid for being too long in taking leave of the other servants, and rejoiced as the ground grew less which lay between me and the completion of my wishes. A few days brought me to a large old house, encompassed on three sides with woody hills, and looking from the front on a gentle river, the sight of which renewed all my expectations of pleasure, and gave me some regret for having lived so long without the enjoyment which these delightful scenes were now to afford me. My aunt came out to receive me, but in a dress so far removed from the present fashion, that I could scarcely look upon her without laughter, which would have been no kind requital for the trouble which she had taken to make herself fine against my arrival. The night and the next morning were driven along with inquiries about our family; my aunt then explained our pedigree, and told me stories of my great grandfather's bravery in the civil wars; nor was it less than three days before I could persuade her to leave me to myself.

At last economy prevailed; she went in the usual manner about her own affairs, and I was at liberty to range in the wilderness, and sit by the cascade. The novelty of the objects about me pleased me for a while, but after a few days they were new no longer, and I soon began to perceive that the country was not my element, that shades, and flowers, and lawns, and waters, had very soon exhausted all their power of pleasing, and that I had not in myself any fund

of satisfaction, with which I could supply the loss of my customary amusements.

I unhappily told my aunt, in the first warmth of our embraces, that I had leave to stay with her ten weeks. Six only are yet gone, and how shall I live through the remaining four? I go out, and return; I pluck a flower, and throw it away; I catch an insect, and when I have examined its colours, set it at liberty; I fling a pebble into the water, and see one circle spread after another. When it chances to rain, I walk in the great hall, and watch the minute-hand upon the dial, or play with a litter of kittens, which the cat happens to have brought in a lucky time.

My aunt is afraid I shall grow melancholy, and therefore encourages the neighbouring gentry to visit us. They came at first with great eagerness to see the fine lady from London; but when we met, we had no common topic on which we could converse; they had no curiosity after plays, operas, or music: and I find as little satisfaction from their accounts of the quarrels or alliances of families, whose names, when once I can escape, I shall never hear. The women have now seen me, know how my gown is made and are satisfied; the men are generally afraid of me, and say little, because they think themselves not at liberty to talk rudely.

Thus I am condemned to solitude; the day moves slowly forward, and I see the dawn with uneasiness, because I consider that night is at a great distance. I have tried to sleep by a brook, but find its murmurs ineffectual; so that I am forced to be awake at least twelve hours, without visits, without cards, without laughter, and without flattery. I walk because I am disgusted with sitting still, and sit down because I am weary with walking. I have no motive to action, nor any object of love, or hate, or fear, or inclination. I cannot dress with spirit, for I have neither rival nor admirer; I cannot dance without a partner; nor be kind or cruel, without a lover.

Such is the life of Euphelia, and such it is likely to continue for a month to come. I have not yet declared against existence, nor called upon the Destinies to cut my thread; but I have sincerely resolved not to condemn myself to such another summer, nor too hastily to flatter myself with happiness. Yet I have heard, Mr. Rambler, of those who never thought themselves so much at ease as in solitude, and cannot but suspect it to be some way or other my own fault, that, without great pain, either of mind or body, I am thus weary of myself: that the current of youth stagnates, and that I am languishing in a dead calm, for want of some external impulse, I shall therefore think you a benefactor to our sex, if you will teach me the art of living alone; for I am confident that a thousand and a thousand and a thousand ladies, who affect to talk with ecstacies of the pleasures of the country are in reality, like me, longing for the winter and wishing to be delivered from themselves by company and diversion.

I am, Sir, yours,

EUPHELIA.

No. 43.] TUESDAY, AUGUST 14, 1750.

Flumine perpetuo torrens solet acrius ire,
Sed tamen hæc brevis est, illa perennis aqua.

OVID.

In course impetuous soon the torrent dries,
The brook a constant peaceful stream supplies.

F. LEWIS.

IT is observed by those who have written on the constitution of the human body, and the original of those diseases by which it is afflicted, that every man comes into the world morbid, that there is no temperature so exactly regulated but that some humour is fatally predominant, and that we are generally impregnated, in our first entrance upon life, with the seeds of that malady, which, in time, shall bring us to the grave.

This remark has been extended by others to the intellectual faculties. Some that imagine themselves to have looked with more than common penetration into human nature, have endeavoured to persuade us that each man is born with a mind formed peculiarly for certain purposes, and with desires unalterably determined to particular objects, from which the attention cannot be long diverted, and which alone, as they are well or ill pursued, must produce the praise or blame, the happiness or misery of his future life.

This position has not, indeed, been hitherto proved with strength proportionate to the assurance with which it has been advanced, and perhaps will never gain much prevalence by a close examination.

If the doctrine of innate ideas be itself disputable, there seems to be little hope of establishing an opinion, which supposes that even complications of ideas have been given us at our birth, and that we are made by nature ambitious, or covetous, before we know the meaning of either power or money.

Yet as every step in the progression of existence changes our position with respect to the things about us, so as to lay us open to new assaults and particular dangers, and subjects us to inconveniences from which any other situation is exempt; as a public or a private life, youth and age, wealth and poverty, have all some evils closely adherent, which cannot wholly be escaped but by quitting the state to which it is annexed, and submitting to the incumbrances of some other condition; so it cannot be denied that every difference in the structure of the mind has its advantages and its wants; and that

failures and defects being inseparable from humanity, however the powers of understanding be extended or contracted, there will on one side or the other always be an avenue to error and miscarriage.

There seem to be some souls suited to great, and others to little employments: some formed to soar aloft, and take in wide views, and others to grovel on the ground, and confine their regard to a narrow sphere. Of these the one is always in danger of becoming useless by a darling negligence, the other by a scrupulous solicitude; the one collects many ideas, but confused and indistinct; the other is busied in minute accuracy, but without compass and without dignity.

The general error of those who possess powerful and elevated understandings, is, that they form schemes of too great extent, and flatter themselves too hastily with success; they feel their own force to be great, and by the complacency with which every man surveys himself, imagine it still greater: they therefore look out for undertakings worthy of their abilities, and engage in them with very little precaution, for they imagine that without premeditated measures, they shall be able to find expedients in all difficulties. They are naturally apt to consider all prudential maxims as below their regard, to treat with contempt those securities and resources which others know themselves obliged to provide, and disdain to accomplish their purposes by established means, and common gradations.

Precipitation, thus incited by the pride of intellectual superiority, is very fatal to great designs. The resolution of the combat is seldom equal to the vehemence of the charge. He that meets with an opposition which he did not expect, loses his courage. The violence of his first onset is succeeded by a lasting and unconquerable languor; miscarriage makes him fearful of giving way to new hopes; and the contemplation of an attempt in which he has fallen below his own expectations is painful and vexatious; he therefore naturally turns his attention to more pleasing objects, and habituates his imagination to other entertainments, till, by slow degrees, he quits his first pursuit, and suffers some other project to take possession of his thoughts, in which the same ardour of mind promises him again certain success, and which disappointments of the same kind compel him to abandon.

Thus too much vigour in the beginning of an undertaking often intercepts and prevents the steadiness and perseverance always necessary in the conduct of a complicated scheme, where many interests are to be connected, many movements to be adjusted, and the joint effort of distinct and independent powers to be directed to a single point. In all important events which have been suddenly brought to pass, chance has been the agent rather than reason; and therefore, however those who seemed to preside in the transaction, may have been celebrated by such as loved or feared them, succeeding times have commonly considered them as fortunate rather than prudent. Every design in which the connection is regularly traced from the first motion to the last, must be formed and executed by calm intrepidity, and requires not only courage which danger cannot turn aside, but constancy which fatigues cannot weary, and contrivance which impediments cannot exhaust.

All the performances of human art, at which we look with praise or wonder, are instances of the resistless force of perseverance; it is by this that the quarry becomes a pyramid, and that distant countries are united with canals. If a man was to compare the effect of a single stroke of the pick-axe, or of one impression of the spade, with the general design and last result, he would be overwhelmed by the sense of their disproportion; yet those petty operations, incessantly continued, in time surmount the greatest difficulties, and mountains are levelled, and oceans bounded, by the slender force of human beings.

It is therefore of the utmost importance that those who have any intention of deviating from the beaten roads of life, and acquiring a reputation superior to names hourly swept away by time among the refuse of fame, should add to their reason, and their spirit, the power of persisting in their purposes; acquire the art of sapping what they cannot batter, and the habit of vanquishing obstinate resistance by obstinate attacks.

The student who would build his knowledge on solid foundations, and proceed by just degrees to the pinnacles of truth, is directed by the great philosopher of France to begin by doubting of his own existence. In like manner, whoever would complete any arduous and intricate enterprise, should, as soon as his imagination can cool after the first blaze of hope, place before his own eyes every possible embarrassment that may retard or defeat him. He should first question the probability of success, and then endeavour to remove the objections that he has raised. It is proper, says old Markham,* to exercise your horse on the more inconvenient side of the course, that if he should, in the race, be forced upon it, he may not be discouraged; and Horace advises his poetical friend to consider every day as the last which he shall enjoy, because that will always give pleasure which we receive beyond our hopes. If we alarm ourselves beforehand with more

* Gervase Markman, in his book entitled "Perfect Horsemanship," 12mo. 1671. He was a dramatic poet, and a voluminous writer, on various subjects.

difficulties than we really find, we shall be animated by unexpected facility with double spirit; and if we find our cautions and fears justified by the consequence, there will however happen nothing against which provision has not been made, no sudden shock will be received, nor will the main scheme be disconcerted.

There is, indeed, some danger lest he that too scrupulously balances probabilities, and too perspicaciously foresees obstacles, should remain always in a state of inaction, without venturing upon attempts on which he may perhaps spend his labour without advantage. But previous despondence is not the fault of those for whom this essay is designed; they who require to be warned against precipitation, will not suffer more fear to intrude into their contemplations than is necessary to allay the effervescence of an agitated fancy. As Des Cartes has kindly shown how a man may prove to himself his own existence, if once he can be prevailed upon to question it, so the ardent and adventurous will not be long without finding some plausible extenuation of the greatest difficulties. Such, indeed, is the uncertainty of all human affairs, that security and despair are equal follies; and as it is presumption and arrogance to anticipate triumphs, it is weakness and cowardice to prognosticate miscarriages. The numbers that have been stopped in their career of happiness are sufficient to show the uncertainty of human foresight; but there are not wanting contrary instances of such success obtained against all appearances, as may warrant the boldest flights of genius, if they are supported by unshaken perseverance.

No. 44.] Saturday, August 18, 1750.

Ὄναρ ἐκ Διός ἐστιν. HOMER.

——Dreams descend from Jove. POPE.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

I had lately a very remarkable dream, which made so strong an impression on me, that I remember it every word; and if you are not better employed, you may read the relation of it as follows:

Methought I was in the midst of a very entertaining set of company, and extremely delighted in attending to a lively conversation, when on a sudden I perceived one of the most shocking figures imagination can frame, advancing towards me. She was dressed in black, her skin was contracted into a thousand wrinkles, her eyes deep sunk in her head, and her complexion pale and livid as the countenance of death. Her looks were filled with terror and unrelenting severity, and her hands armed with whips and scorpions. As soon as she came near, with a horrid frown, and a voice that chilled my very blood, she bid me follow her. I obeyed, and she led me through rugged paths, beset with briars and thorns, into a deep solitary valley. Wherever she passed, the fading verdure withered beneath her steps; her pestilential breath infected the air with malignant vapours, obscured the lustre of the sun, and involved the fair face of heaven in universal gloom. Dismal howlings resounded through the forest, from every baleful tree the night raven uttered his dreadful note, and the prospect was filled with desolation and horror. In the midst of this tremendous scene my execrable guide addressed me in the following manner:

"Retire with me, O rash unthinking mortal, from the vain allurements of a deceitful world, and learn that pleasure was not designed the portion of human life. Man was born to mourn and to be wretched; this is the condition of all below the stars, and whoever endeavours to oppose it, acts in contradiction to the will of Heaven. Fly then from the fatal enchantments of youth and social delight, and here consecrate the solitary hours to lamentation and woe. Misery is the duty of all sublunary beings, and every enjoyment is an offence to the Deity, who is to be worshipped only by the mortification of every sense of pleasure, and the everlasting exercise of sighs and tears."

This melancholy picture of life quite sunk my spirits, and seemed to annihilate every principle of joy within me. I threw myself beneath a blasted yew, where the winds blew cold and dismal round my head, and dreadful apprehensions chilled my heart. Here I resolved to lie till the hand of death, which I impatiently invoked, should put an end to the miseries of a life so deplorably wretched. In this sad situation I espied on one hand of me a deep muddy river, whose heavy waves rolled on in slow sullen murmurs. Here I determined to plunge, and was just upon the brink, when I found myself suddenly drawn back. I turned about, and was surprised by the sight of the loveliest object I had ever beheld. The most engaging charms of youth and beauty appeared in all her form: effulgent glories sparkled in her eyes, and their awful splendours were softened by the gentlest looks of compassion and peace. At her approach the frightful spectre, who had before tormented me, vanished away, and with her all the horrors she had caused. The gloomy clouds brightened into cheerful sunshine, the groves recovered their verdure, and the whole region looked gay and blooming as the garden of Eden. I was quite transported at this unexpected change, and reviving pleasure began to glad my thoughts, when, with a look of inexpressible sweetness, my beauteous deliverer thus uttered her divine instructions:

"My name is Religion. I am the offspring of Truth and Love, and the parent of Benevolence, Hope, and Joy. That monster from whose power I have freed you is called Superstition, she is the child of Discontent, and her followers are Fear and Sorrow. Thus different as we are, she has often the insolence to assume my name and character, and seduces unhappy mortals to think us the same, till she at length drives them to the borders of Despair, that dreadful abyss into which you were just going to sink.

"Look round and survey the various beauties of the globe, which Heaven has destined for the seat of the human race, and consider whether a world thus exquisitely framed could be meant for the abode of misery and pain. For what end has the lavish hand of Providence diffused such innumerable objects of delight, but that all might rejoice in the privilege of existence, and be filled with gratitude to the beneficent Author of it? Thus to enjoy the blessings he has sent, is virtue and obedience; and to reject them, merely as means of pleasure, is pitiable ignorance or absurd perverseness. Infinite goodness is the source of created existence; the proper tendency of every rational being, from the highest order of raptured seraphs, to the meanest rank of men, is to rise incessantly from lower degrees of happiness to higher. They have each faculties assigned them for various orders of delights."

"What," cried I, "is this the language of Religion? Does she lead her votaries through flowery paths, and bid them pass an unlaborious life? Where are the painful toils of virtue, the mortifications of penitence, the self-denying exercises of saints and heroes."

"The true enjoyments of a reasonable being," answered she mildly, "do not consist in unbounded indulgence, or luxurious ease, in the tumult of passions, the languor of indolence, or the flutter of light amusements. Yielding to immoral pleasure corrupts the mind, living to animal and trifling ones debases it: both in their degree disqualify it for its genuine good, and unsign it over to wretchedness. Whoever would be really happy, must make the diligent and regular exercise of his superior powers his chief attention, adoring the perfections of his Maker, expressing good-will to his fellow-creatures, cultivating inward rectitude. To his lower faculties he must allow such gratifications as will, by refreshing him, invigorate his nobler pursuits. In the regions inhabited by angelic natures, unmingled felicity for ever blooms, joy flows there with a perpetual and abundant stream, nor feeds there any mound to check its course. Beings conscious of a frame of mind originally disposed, as all the human race has cause to be, must use the regimen of a stricter self-government. Whoever has been guilty of voluntary excesses must patiently submit both to the painful workings of nature, and needful severities of medicine, in order to his cure. Still he is entitled to a moderate share of whatever alleviating accommodations this fair mansion of his merciful Parent affords, consistent with his recovery. And in proportion as this recovery advances, the liveliest joy will spring from his secret sense of an amended and improving heart. So far from the horrors of despair is the condition even of the guilty. Shudder, poor mortal, at the thought of the gulf into which thou wast but now going to plunge.

"While the most faulty have ever encouragement to amend, the more innocent soul will be supported with still sweeter consolations under all its experience of human infirmities; supported by the gladdening assurances that every sincere endeavour to outgrow them shall be assisted, accepted, and rewarded. To such a one the lowliest self-abasement is but a deep-laid foundation for the most elevated hopes; since they who faithfully examine and acknowledge what they are, shall be enabled under my conduct to become what they desire. The Christian and the hero are inseparable; and to aspirings of unassuming trust, and filial confidence, are set no bounds. To him who is animated with a view of obtaining approbation from the Sovereign of the universe, no difficulty is insurmountable. Secure in this pursuit of every needful aid, his conflict with the severest pains and trials, is little more than the vigorous exercises of a mind in health. His patient dependence on that Providence which looks through all eternity, his silent resignation, his ready accommodation of his thoughts and behaviour to its inscrutable ways, is at once the most excellent sort of self-denial, and a source of the most exalted transports. Society is the true sphere of human virtue. In social, active life, difficulties will perpetually be met with; restraints of many kinds will be necessary; and studying to behave right in respect of these is a discipline of the human heart, useful to others, and improving to itself. Suffering is no duty, but where it is necessary to avoid guilt, or to do good; nor pleasure a crime, but where it strengthens the influence of bad inclinations, or lessens the generous activity of virtue. The happiness allotted to man in his present state, is indeed faint and low, compared with his immortal prospects and noble capacities; but yet whatever portion of it the distributing hand of Heaven offers to each individual, is a needful support and refreshment for the present moment, so far as it may not hinder the attaining of his final destination.

"Return then with me from continual misery to moderate enjoyment and grateful alacrity. Return from the contracted views of solitude to the proper duties of a relative and dependent being. Religion is not confined to cells and closets, nor restrained to sullen retirement,

These are the gloomy doctrines of Superstition, by which she endeavours to break those chains of benevolence and social affection, that link the welfare of every particular with that of the whole. Remember that the greatest honour you can pay to the Author of your being is by such a cheerful behaviour, as discovers a mind satisfied with his dispensations."

Here my preceptress paused, and I was going to express my acknowledgments for her discourse, when a ring of bells from the neighbouring village, and a new-rising sun darting his beams through my windows, awaked me.*

I am yours, &c.

No. 45.] Tuesday, August 21, 1750.

Ἥτερ μεγίστη γίγνεται σωτηρία,
Ὅταν γύνη πρὸς ἄνδρα μὴ διχοστατῇ,
Νῦν δ' ἐχθρὰ πάντα.——— EURIP.

This is the chief felicity of life,
That concord smile on the connubial bed;
But now 'tis hatred all.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

Though, in the dissertations which you have given us on marriage, very just cautions are laid down against the common causes of infelicity and the necessity of having, in that important choice, the first regard to virtue, is carefully inculcated; yet I cannot think the subject so much exhausted, but that a little reflection would present to the mind many questions, in the discussion of which great numbers are interested, and many precepts which deserve to be more particularly and forcibly impressed.

You seem, like most of the writers that have gone before you, to have allowed as an uncontested principle, that *marriage is generally unhappy:* but I know not whether a man, who professes to think for himself, and concludes from his own observations, does not depart from his character when he follows the crowd thus implicitly, and receives maxims without recalling them to a new examination, especially when they comprise so wide a circuit of life, and include such variety of circumstances. As I have an equal right with others to give my opinion of the objects about me, and a better title to determine concerning that state which I have tried, than many who talk of it without experience, I am unwilling to be restrained by mere authority from advancing what, I believe, an accurate view of the world will confirm, that marriage is not commonly unhappy, otherwise than as life is unhappy; and that most of those who complain of connubial miseries, have a much satisfaction as their nature would hav admitted, or their conduct procured, in an other condition.

It is, indeed, common to hear both sexes re pine at their change, relate the happiness o their earlier years, blame the folly and rashnes of their own choice, and warn those whom the see coming into the world against the same pre cipitance and infatuation. But it is to be re membered, that the days which they so muc wish to call back, are the days not only of celi bacy but of youth, the days of novelty and im provement, of ardour and of hope, of health an vigour of body, of gayety and lightness of heart It is not easy to surround life with any circum stances in which youth will not be delightful and I am afraid that whether married or un married, we shall find the vesture of terrestria existence more heavy and cumbrous, the longe it is worn.

That they censure themselves for the indis cretion of their choice, is not a sufficient proo that they have chosen ill, since we see the sam discontent at every other part of life which w cannot change. Converse with almost an man, grown old in a profession, and you wil find him regretting that he did not enter int some different course, to which he too late find his genuis better adapted, or in which he discov ers that wealth and honour are more easily at tained. "The merchant," says Horace, "envie the soldier, and the soldier recounts the felicit of the merchant; the lawyer, when his client harass him, calls out for the quiet of the coun tryman; and the countryman, when busines calls him to town, proclaims that there is no hap piness but amidst opulence and crowds." Ever man recounts the inconveniences of his ow station, and thinks those of any other less, be cause he has not felt them. Thus the marrie praise the ease and freedom of a single state, an the single fly to marriage from the weariness o solitude. From all our observations we ma collect with certainty, that misery is the lot o man, but cannot discover in what particula condition it will find most alleviations; o whether all external appendages are not, as w use them, the causes either of good or ill.

Whoever feels great pain, naturally hopes fo ease from change of posture; he changes it, an finds himself equally tormented: and of th same kind are the expedients by which we er deavour to obviate or elude those uneasinesses, t which mortality will always be subject. It i not likely that the married state is eminentl miserable, since we see such numbers, who the death of their partners has set free from i entering it again.

Wives and husbands are, indeed, incessantl complaining of each other; and there would l reason for imagining that almost every hou

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* This paper, and No. 100, were written by the late Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, of Deal in Kent who died Feb. 19, 1806.—C.

as infested with perverseness or oppression yond human sufferance, did we not know on how small occasions some minds burst t into lamentations and reproaches, and how turally every animal revenges his pain upon ose who happen to be near, without any nice amination of its cause. We are always will- g to fancy ourselves within a little of happi- ss, and when, with repeated efforts, we can- t reach it, persuade ourselves that it is inter- pted by an ill-paired mate, since, if we could d any other obstacle, it would be our own lt that it was not removed.

Anatomists have often remarked that though r diseases are sufficiently numerous and ere, yet when we inquire into the structure the body, the tenderness of some parts, the nuteness of others, and the immense multi- city of animal functions that must concur the healthful and vigorous exercise of all our wers, there appears reason to wonder rather at we are preserved so long, than that we rish so soon, and that our frame subsists for a gle day, or hour, without disorder, rather an that it should be broken or obstructed by lence of accidents or length of time.

The same reflection arises in my mind, upon ervation of the manner in which marriage is quently contracted. When I see the avari- us and crafty taking companions to their les and their beds without any inquiry, but er farms and money; or the giddy and ughtless uniting themselves for life to those om they have only seen by the light of tapers a ball; when parents make articles for their ldren, without inquiring after their consent; en some marry for heirs to disappoint their thers, and others throw themselves into the is of those whom they do not love, because y have found themselves rejected where they re more solicitous to please; when some rry because their servants cheat them, some use they squander their own money, some use their houses are pestered with company, e because they will live like other people, some only because they are sick of them- es, I am not so much inclined to wonder t marriage is sometimes unhappy, as that it ears so little loaded with calamity; and can- but conclude that society has something in lf eminently agreeable to human nature, n I find its pleasures so great, that even the hoice of a companion can hardly overbalance n.

y the ancient custom of the Muscovites, the and women never saw each other till they e joined beyond the power of parting. It be suspected that by this method many itable matches were produced, and many pers associated that were not qualified to pleasure to each other. Yet perhaps, ng a people so little delicate, where the paucity of gratifications, and the uniformity of life, gave no opportunity for imagination to interpose its objections, there was not much danger of capricious dislike; and while they felt neither cold nor hunger, they might live quietly together, without any thought of the defects of one another.

Amongst us, whom knowledge has made nice, and affluence wanton, there are, indeed, more cautions requisite to secure tranquillity; and yet if we observe the manner in which those converse, who have singled out each other for marriage, we shall, perhaps, not think that the Russians lost much by their restraint. For the whole endeavour of both parties, during the times of courtship, is to hinder themselves from being known, and to disguise their natural temper, and real desires, in hypocritical imitation, studied compliance, and continual affectation. From the time that their love is avowed, neither sees the other but in a mask, and the cheat is managed often on both sides with so much art, and discovered afterward with so much abruptness, that each has reason to suspect that some transformation has happened on the wedding night, and that, by a strange imposture, one has been courted, and another married.

I desire you, therefore, Mr. Rambler, to question all who shall hereafter come to you with matrimonial complaints, concerning their behaviour in the time of courtship, and inform them that they are neither to wonder nor repine, when a contract begun with fraud has ended in disappointment. I am, &c.

No. 46.] Saturday, August 25, 1750.

——Genus, et proavos, et quæ non fecimus ipsi,
Vix ea nostra voco. OVID

Nought from my birth or ancestors I claim;
All is my own, my honour and my shame.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

Since I find that you have paid so much regard to my complaints as to publish them, I am inclined by vanity, or gratitude, to continue our correspondence; and, indeed, without either of these motives, am glad of an opportunity to write, for I am not accustomed to keep in any thing that swells my heart, and have here none with whom I can freely converse. While I am thus employed, some tedious hours will slip away, and when I return to watch the clock, I shall find that I have disburdened myself of part of the day.

You perceive that I do not pretend to write with much consideration of any thing but my own convenience; and, not to conceal from you my real sentiments, the little time which I have spent, against my will, in solitary meditation, has not much contributed to my veneration for

authors, I have now sufficient reason to suspect, that, with all your splendid professions of wisdom, and seeming regard for truth, you have very little sincerity; that you either write what you do not think, and willingly impose upon mankind, or that you take no care to think right, but while you set up yourselves as guides, mislead your followers by credulity or negligence; that you produce to the public whatever notions you can speciously maintain, or elegantly express, without inquiring whether they are just, and transcribe hereditary falsehoods from old authors perhaps as ignorant and careless as yourselves.

You may perhaps wonder that I express myself with so much acrimony on a question in which women are supposed to have very little interest; and you are likely enough, for I have seen many instances of the sauciness of scholars, to tell me, that I am more properly employed in playing with my kittens, than in giving myself airs of criticism, and censuring the learned. But you are mistaken, if you imagine that I am to be intimidated by your contempt, or silenced by your reproofs. As I read, I have a right to judge; as I am injured, I have a right to complain; and these privileges, which I have purchased at so dear a rate, I shall not easily be persuaded to resign.

To read has, indeed, never been my business, but as there are hours of leisure in the most active life, I have passed the superfluities of time, which the diversions of the town left upon my hands, in turning over a large collection of tragedies and romances, where, amongst other sentiments, common to all authors of this class, I have found almost every page filled with the charms and happiness of a country life: that life to which every statesman in the highest elevation of his prosperity is contriving to retire; that life to which every tragic heroine in some scene or other wishes to have been born, and which is represented as a certain refuge from folly, from anxiety, from passion, and from guilt.

It was impossible to read so many passionate exclamations, and soothing descriptions, without feeling some desire to enjoy the state in which all this felicity was to be enjoyed; and therefore I received with raptures the invitation of my good aunt, and expected that by some unknown influence I should find all hopes and fears, jealousies and competitions, vanish from my heart upon my first arrival at the seats of innocence and tranquillity; that I should sleep in halcyon bowers, and wander in elysian gardens, where I should meet with nothing but softness of benevolence, the candour of simplicity, and the cheerfulness of content; where I should see reason exerting her sovereiguty over life, without any interruption from envy, avarice, or ambition, and every day passing in such a manner as the severest wisdom shou approve.

This, Mr. Rambler, I tell you I expected, a this I had by a hundred authors been taught expect. By this expectation I was led hith and here I live in perpetual uneasiness, witho any other comfort than that of hoping to retu to London.

Having, since I wrote my former letter, be driven, by the mere necessity of escaping fro absolute inactivity, to make myself more a quainted with the affairs and inhabitants of th place, I am now no longer an absolute strang to rural conversation and employments, but a far from discovering in them more innocence wisdom, that in the sentiments or conduct those with whom I have passed more cheerf and more fashionable hours.

It is common to reproach the tea-table, a the park, with giving opportunities and encou agement to scandal. I cannot wholly clear the from the charge; but must, however, obser in favour of the modish prattlers, that, if not principle, we are at least by accident less guil of defamation than the country ladies. For ha ing greater numbers to observe and censure, are commonly content to charge them only wi their own faults or follies, and seldom give w to malevolence, but such as arises from so injury or affront, real or imaginary, offered ourselves. But in these distant provinces, whe the same families inhabit the same houses fro age to age, they transmit and recount the fau of a whole succession. I have been inform how every estate in the neighbourhood w originally got, and find, if I may credit the a counts given me, that there is not a single ac in the hands of the right owner. I have be told of intrigues between beaux, and toasts th have been now three centuries in their qui graves, and am often entertained with tradition scandal on persons of whose names there wou have been no remembrance, had they not co mitted somewhat that might disgrace their d scendants.

In one of my visits I happened to comme the air and dignity of a you g lady, who h just left the company; upon which two gra matrons looked with great slyness at each oth and the elder asked me whether I had ever se the picture of Henry the Eighth. You may i agine that I did not immediately perceive t propriety of the question: but after havi waited a while for information, I was told th the lady's grandmother had a great-great-gran mother that was an attendant on Anna Bull and supposed to have been too much a favour of the king.

If once there happens a quarrel between t principal persons of two families, the malign is continued without end, and it is common old maids to fall out about some election,

hich their grandfathers were competitors; the art-burnings of the civil war are not yet extinguished; there are two families in the neighbourhood who have destroyed each other's game om the time of Philip and Mary; and when account came of an inundation, which had jured the plantations of a worthy gentleman, e of the hearers remarked, with exultation, at he might now have some notion, of the vages committed by his ancestors in their reat ftom Bosworth.

Thus malice and hatred descend here with an heritance, and it is necessary to be well versed history, that the various factions of this untry may be understood. You cannot exct to be on good terms with families who are solved to love nothing in common; and, in lecting your intimates, you are perhaps to conder which party you most favour in the barons' ars. I have often lost the good opinion of my nt's visitants by confounding the interests of rk and Lancaster, and was once censured for ting silent when William Rufus was called a rant. I have, however, now thrown aside all etences to circumspection, for I find it impose in less than seven years to learn all the reisite cautions. At London, if you know your mpany, and their parents, you are safe; but u are here suspected of alluding to the slips of eat-grandmothers, and of reviving contests ich were decided in armour by the redoubted ights of ancient times. I hope therefore that u will not condemn my impatience, if I am ary of attending where nothing can be learn and of quarrelling where there is nothing to ntest, and that you will contribute to divert while I stay here by some facetious performce.

I am, Sir,

EUPHELIA.

o. 47.] TUESDAY, AUGUST 28, 1750.

nquam his solatiis acquiescam, debilitor et fran- or eadem illa humanitate quæ me, ut hoc ipsum ermitterem, induxit. Non ideo tamen elim urior fieri: nec ignoro alios hujusmodi casus ihil amplius vocare quam damnum; eoque sibi agnos homines et sapientes videri. Qui an magni pientesque sint, nescio: homines non sunt. Hoinis est enim affici dolore, sentire: resistere taen, et solatia admittere; non solatiis non egere.

PLIN.

se proceedings have afforded me some comfort my distress; notwithstanding which, I am still spirited and unhinged by the same motives of manity that induced me to grant such indulgen. However, I by no means wish to become less sceptible of tenderness. I know these kind of sfortunes would be estimated by other persons ly as common losses, and from such sensations they would conceive themselves great and wise men. I shall not determine either their greatness or their wisdom; but I am certain they have no humanity. It is the part of a man to be affected with grief, to feel sorrow, at the same time that he is to resist it, and to admit of comfort.—*Earl of Orrery.*

Of the passions with which the mind of man is agitated, it may be observed, that they naturally hasten towards their own extinction, by inciting and quickening the attainment of their objects. Thus fear urges our flight, and desire animates our progress; and if there are some which perhaps may be indulged till they outgrow the good appropriated to their satisfaction, as it is frequently observed of avarice and ambition, yet their immediate tendency is to some means of happiness really existing, and generally within the prospect. The miser always imagines that there is a certain sum that will fill his heart to the brim; and every ambitious man, like King Pyrrhus, has an acquisition in his thoughts that is to terminate his labours, after which he shall pass the rest of his life in ease or gayety, in repose or devotion.

Sorrow is perhaps the only affection of the breast that can be excepted from this general remark, and it therefore deserves the particular attention of those who have assumed the arduous province of preserving the balance of the mental constitution. The other passions are diseases indeed, but they necessarily direct us to their proper cure. A man at once feels the pain and knows the medicine, to which he is carried with greater haste as the evil which requires it is more excruciating, and cures himself by unerring instinct, as the wounded stags of Crete are related by Ælian to have recourse to vulnerary herbs. But for sorrow there is no remedy provided by nature; it is often occasioned by accidents irreparable, and dwells upon objects that have lost or changed their existence; it requires what it cannot hope, that the laws of the universe should be repealed; that the dead should return, or the past should be recalled.

Sorrow is not that regret for negligence or error which may animate us to future care or activity, or that repentance of crimes for which, however irrevocable, our Creator has promised to accept it as an atonement; the pain which arises from these causes has very salutary effects, and is every hour extenuating itself by the reparation of those miscarriages that produce it. Sorrow is properly that state of the mind in which our desires are fixed upon the past, without looking forward to the future, an incessant wish that something were otherwise than it has been, a tormenting and harassing want of some enjoyment or possession which we have lost, and which no endeavours can possibly regain. Into such anguish many have sunk upon some sudden diminution of their fortune, an unexpected

blast of their reputation, or the loss of children or of friends. They have suffered all sensibility of pleasure to be destroyed by a single blow, have given up for ever the hopes of substituting any other object in the room of that which they lament, resigned their lives to gloom and despondency, and worn themselves out in unavailing misery.

Yet so much is this passion the natural consequence of tenderness and endearment, that however painful and however useless, it is justly reproachful not to feel it on some occasions; and so widely and constantly has it always prevailed, that the laws of some nations, and the customs of others, have limited a time for the external appearances of grief caused by the dissolution of close alliances, and the breach of domestic union.

It seems determined by the general suffrage of mankind, that sorrow is to a certain point laudable, as the offspring of love, or at least pardonable, as the effect of weakness; but that it ought not to be suffered to increase by indulgence, but must give way, after a stated time, to social duties, and the common avocations of life. It is at first unavoidable, and therefore must be allowed, whether with or without our choice; it may afterwards be admitted as a decent and affectionate testimony of kindness and esteem; something will be extorted by nature, and something may be given to the world. But all beyond the bursts of passion, or the forms of solemnity, is not only useless, but culpable; for we have no right to sacrifice, to the vain longings of affection, that time which Providence allows us for the task of our station.

Yet it too often happens that sorrow, thus lawfully entering, gains such a firm possession of the mind, that it is not afterward to be ejected; the mournful ideas, first violently impressed and afterwards willingly received, so much engross the attention, as to predominate in every thought, to darken gayety, and perplex ratiocination. An habitual sadness seizes upon the soul, and the faculties are chained to a single object, which can never be contemplated but with hopeless uneasiness.

From this state of dejection it is very difficult to rise to cheerfulness and alacrity; and therefore many, who have laid down rules of intellectual health, think preservatives easier than remedies, and teach us not to trust ourselves with favourite enjoyments, not to indulge the luxury of fondness, but to keep our minds always suspended in such indifference, that we may change the objects about us without emotion.

An exact compliance with this rule might, perhaps, contribute to tranquillity, but surely it would never produce happiness. He that regards none so much as to be afraid of losing them, must live for ever without the gentle pleasures of sympathy and confidence; he must feel no melting fondness, no warmth of bene lence, nor any of those honest joys which nat annexes to the power of pleasing. And as man can justly claim more tenderness than pays, he must forfeit his share in that offici and watchful kindness which love only dictate, and those lenient endearments by wh love only can soften life. He may justly overlooked and neglected by such as have m warmth in their heart; for who would be friend of him, whom, with whatever assidu he may be courted, and with whatever servi obliged, his principles will not suffer to m equal returns, and who, when you have exhau ed all the instances of good-will, can only prevailed on not to be an enemy?

An attempt to preserve life in a state of n trality and indifference, is unreasonable vain. If by excluding joy we could shut grief, the scheme would deserve very serious tention; but since, however we may debar o selves from happiness, misery will find its w at many inlets, and the assaults of pain force our regard, though we may withhold from the invitations of pleasure, we may sur endeavour to raise life above the middle point apathy at one time, since it will necessarily s below it at another.

But though it cannot be reasonable not gain happiness for fear of losing it, yet it m be confessed, that in proportion to the pleas of possession, will be for some time our sorr for the loss; it is therefore the province of moralist to inquire whether such pains may quickly give way to mitigation. Some h thought that the most certain way to clear heart from its embarrassment is to drag it force into scenes of merriment. Others imagi that such a transition is too violent, and reco mended rather to soothe it into tranquillity, making it acquainted with miseries more dre ful and afflictive, and diverting to the calami of others the regard which we are inclined fix too closely upon our own misfortunes.

It may be doubted whether either of those medies will be sufficiently powerful. The cacy of mirth it is not always easy to try, the indulgence of melancholy may be suspec to be one of those medicines, which will destr if it happens not to cure.

The safe and general antidote against sorr is employment. It is commonly observed, among soldiers and seamen, though there much kindness, there is little grief; they their friend fall without any of that lamentat which is indulged in security and idleness, cause they have no leisure to spare from care of themselves; and whoever shall keep thoughts equally busy, will find himself equ unaffected with irretrievable losses.

Time is observed generally to wear out sow, and its effects might doubtless be accelera

by quickening the succession, and enlarging the variety of objects.

——Si tempore longo
Leniri poterit luctus, tu sperne morari,
Qui sapiet sibi tempus erit.—— GROTIUS.

'Tis long ere time can mitigate your grief;
To wisdom fly, she quickly brings relief.
F. LEWIS.

Sorrow is a kind of rust of the soul, which every new idea contributes in its passage to scour away. It is the putrefaction of stagnant life, and is remedied by exercise and motion.

No. 48.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 1, 1750.

Non est vivere, sed valere, vita. MART.

For life is not to live, but to be well.
ELPHINSTON.

AMONG the innumerable follies, by which we lay up in our youth repentance and remorse for the succeeding part of our lives, there is scarce any against which warnings are of less efficacy than the neglect of health. When the springs of motion are yet elastic, when the heart bounds with vigour, and the eye sparkles with spirit, it is with difficulty that we are taught to conceive the imbecility that every hour is bringing upon us, or to imagine that the nerves which are now braced with so much strength, and the limbs which play with so much activity, will lose all their power under the gripe of time, relax with numbness, and totter with debility.

To the arguments which have been used against complaints under the miseries of life, the philosophers have, I think, forgot to add the incredulity of those to whom we recount our sufferings. But if the purpose of lamentation be to excite pity, it is surely superfluous for age and weakness to tell their plaintive stories; for pity presupposes sympathy, and a little attention will show them, that those who do not feel pain, seldom think that it is felt; and a short recollection will inform almost every man, that he is only repaid the insult which he has given, since he may remember how often he has mocked infirmity, laughed at its cautions, and censured its impatience.

The valetudinarian race have made the care of health ridiculous by suffering it to prevail over all other considerations, as the miser has brought frugality into contempt, by permitting the love of money not to share, but to engross, his mind: they both err alike, by confounding the means with the end; they grasp at health only to be well, as at money only to be rich; and forget that every terrestrial advantage is chiefly valuable as it furnishes abilities for the exercise of virtue.

Health is indeed so necessary to all the duties, as well as pleasures, of life, that the crime of squandering it is equal to the folly; and he that for a short gratification brings weakness and diseases upon himself, and for the pleasure of a few years passed in the tumults of diversion and clamours of merriment, condemns the maturer and more experienced part of his life to the chamber and the couch, may be justly reproached, not only as a spendthrift of his own happiness, but as a robber of the public; as a wretch that has voluntarily disqualified himself for the business of his station, and refused that part which Providence assigns him in the general task of human nature.

There are perhaps very few conditions more to be pitied than that of an active and elevated mind, labouring under the weight of a distempered body. The time of such a man is always spent in forming schemes, which a change of wind hinders him from executing, his powers fume away in projects and in hope, and the day of action never arrives. He lies down delighted with the thoughts of to-morrow, pleases his ambition with the fame he shall acquire, or his benevolence with the good he shall confer. But in the night the skies are overcast, the temper of the air is changed, he wakes in languor, impatience and distraction, and has no longer any wish but for ease, nor any attention but to misery. It may be said that disease generally begins that equality which death completes; the distinctions which set one man so much above another are very little perceived in the gloom of a sick chamber, where it will be vain to expect entertainment from the gay, or instruction from the wise; where all human glory is obliterated, the wit is clouded, the reasoner perplexed, and the hero subdued; where the highest and brightest of mortal beings finds nothing left him but the consciousness of innocence.

There is among the fragments of the Greek poets a short hymn to Health, in which her power of exalting the happiness of life, of heightening the gifts of fortune, and adding enjoyment to possession, is inculcated with so much force and beauty, that no one, who has ever languished under the discomforts and infirmities of a lingering disease, can read it without feeling the images dance in his heart, and adding from his own experience new vigour to the wish, and from his own imagination new colours to the picture. The particular occasion of this little composition is not known, but it is probable that the author had been sick, and in the first raptures of returning vigour addressed Health in the following manner:

Ὑγίεια πρεσβίστα Μακάρων,
Μετὰ σοῦ ναίοιμι
Τὸ λειπόμενον βιοτᾶς·
Σὺ δέ μοι πρόφρων σύνοικος εἴης.
Ει γάρ τις ἢ πλοῦτου χάρις ἢ τεκέων,
Τᾶς εὐδαίμονός τ' ἀνθρώποις

Βασιληΐδος ἀρχᾶς, ἢ πόθων,
Οὓς κρυφίοις Ἀφροδίτης ἄρκυσιν θηρεύομεν,
Ἢ εἴ τις ἄλλα θεόθεν ἀνθρώποις τέρψις,
Ἢ πόνων ἀμπνοὰ πέφανται·
Μετὰ σεῖο, μάκαιρα Ὑγίεια,
Τέθηλε πάντα, καὶ λάμπει χαρίτων ἔαρ·
Σέθεν δὲ χωρὶς, οὐδεὶς, εὐδαίμων πέλει·

"Health, most venerable of the powers of heaven! with thee may the remaining part of my life be passed, nor do thou refuse to bless me with thy residence. For whatever there is of beauty or of pleasure in wealth, in descendants, or in sovereign command, the highest summit of human enjoyment, or in those objects of human desire which we endeavour to chase into the toils of love; whatever delight, or whatever solace is granted by the celestials, to soften our fatigues, in thy presence, thou parent of happiness, all those joys spread out and flourish; in thy presence blooms the spring of pleasure, and without thee no man is happy."

Such is the power of health, that without its co-operation every other comfort is torpid and lifeless, as the powers of vegetation without the sun. And yet this bliss is commonly thrown away in thoughtless negligence, or in foolish experiments on our own strength; we let it perish without remembering its value, or waste it to show how much we have to spare; it is sometimes given up to the management of levity and chance, and sometimes sold for the applause of jollity and debauchery.

Health is equally neglected, and with equal impropriety, by the votaries of business and the followers of pleasure. Some men ruin the fabric of their bodies by incessant revels, and others by intemperate studies; some batter it by excess, and others sap it by inactivity. To the noisy rout of bacchanalian rioters, it will be to little purpose that advice is offered, though it requires no great abilities to prove, that he loses pleasure who loses health; their clamours are too loud for the whispers of caution, and they run the course of life with too much precipitance to stop at the call of wisdom. Nor perhaps will they that are busied in adding thousands to thousands, pay much regard to him that shall direct them to hasten more slowly to their wishes. Yet since lovers of money are generally cool, deliberate and thoughtful, they might surely consider, that the greater good ought not to be sacrificed to the less. Health is certainly more valuable than money, because it is by health that money is procured; but thousands and millions are of small avail to alleviate the protracted tortures of the gout, to repair the broken organs of sense, or resuscitate the powers of digestion. Poverty is, indeed, an evil from which we naturally fly; but let us not run from one enemy to another, nor take shelter in the arms of sickness.

Projecere animam! quam vellent æthere in alto
Nunc et pauperiem, et duros perferre labores!
VIRG.

For healthful indigence in vain they pray,
In quest of wealth who throw their lives away.

Those who lose their health in an irregular and impetuous pursuit of literary accomplishments are yet less to be excused; for they ought to know that the body is not forced beyond its strength, but with the loss of more vigour than is proportionate to the effect produced. Whoever takes up life beforehand, by depriving himself of rest and refreshment, must not only pay back the hours, but pay them back with usury: and for the gain of a few months but half enjoyed, must give up years to the listlessness of languor, and the implacability of pain. They whose endeavour is mental excellence, will learn, perhaps too late, how much it is endangered by diseases of the body, and find that knowledge may easily be lost in the starts of melancholy, the flights of impatience, and the peevishness of decrepitude.

No. 49. Tuesday, Sept. 4, 1750.

Non omnis moriar, multaque pars mei
Vitabit Libitinam, usque ego postera
Crescam laude recens. HOR.

Whole Horace shall not die; his songs shall save
The greatest portion from the greedy grave.
CREECH.

The first motives of human actions are those appetites which Providence has given to man in common with the rest of the inhabitants of the earth. Immediately after our birth, thirst and hunger incline us to the breast, which we draw by instinct, like other young creatures, and when we are satisfied, we express our uneasiness by importunate and incessant cries, till we have obtained a place or posture proper for repose.

The next call that rouses us from a state of inactivity, is that of our passions; we quickly begin to be sensible of hope and fear, love and hatred, desire and aversion; these arising from the power of comparison and reflection, extend their range wider, as our reason strengthens, and our knowledge enlarges. At first we have no thought of pain, but when we actually feel it; we afterwards begin to fear it, yet not before it approaches us very nearly; but by degrees we discover it at a greater distance, and find it lurking in remote consequences. Our terror in time improves into caution, and we learn to look round with vigilance and solicitude, to stop all the avenues at which misery can enter, and to perform or endure many things in themselves toilsome and unpleasing, because we know by reason or by experience, that our labour will be over-balanced by the reward, that it will either procure some positive good, or avert some evil greater than itself.

But as the soul advances to a fuller exercise of its powers, the animal appetites and the passions immediately arising from them, are not sufficient to find it employment; the wants of nature are soon supplied, the fear of their return is easily precluded, and something more is necessary to relieve the long intervals of inactivity, and to give those faculties, which cannot lie wholly quiescent, some particular direction. For this reason, new desires and artificial passions are by degrees produced; and, from having wishes only in consequence of our wants, we begin to feel wants in consequence of our wishes; we persuade ourselves to set a value upon things which are of no use, but because we have agreed to value them; things which can neither satisfy hunger nor mitigate pain, nor secure us from any real calamity, and which therefore, we find of no esteem among those nations, whose artless and barbarous manners keep them always anxious for the necessaries of life.

This is the original of avarice, vanity, ambition, and generally of all those desires which arise from the comparison of our condition with that of others. He that thinks himself poor because his neighbour is richer; he that, like Cæsar, would rather be the first man of a village, than the second in the capital of the world, has apparently kindled in himself desires which are never received from nature, and acts upon principles established only by the authority of custom.

Of those adscititious passions, some, as avarice and envy, are universally condemned: some, as friendship and curiosity, generally praised; but there are others about which the suffrages of the wise are divided, and of which it is doubted, whether they tend most to promote the happiness or increase the miseries of mankind.

Of this ambiguous and disputable kind is the love of fame, a desire of filling the minds of others with admiration, and of being celebrated by generations to come with praises which we shall not hear. This ardour has been considered by some, as nothing better than splendid madness, as a flame kindled by pride, and fanned by folly; for what, say they, can be more remote from wisdom, than to direct all our actions by the hope of that which is not to exist when we ourselves are in the grave? To pant after that which can never be possessed, and of which the value thus widely put upon it, arises from this particular condition, that, during life, it is not to be obtained? To gain the favour, or hear the applauses of our contemporaries, is indeed equally desirable with any other prerogative of superiority, because fame may be of use to smooth the paths of life, to terrify opposition, and fortify tranquillity; but to what end shall we be the darlings of mankind, when we can no longer receive any benefits from their favour? It is more reasonable to wish for reputation, while it may yet be enjoyed, as Anacreon calls upon his companions to give him for present use the wine and garlands which they purpose to bestow upon his tomb.

The advocates for the love of fame allege in its vindication, that it is a passion natural and universal; a flame lighted by Heaven, and always burning with greatest vigour in the most enlarged and elevated minds. That the desire of being praised by posterity implies a resolution to deserve their praises, and that the folly charged upon it, is only a noble and disinterested generosity, which is not felt, and therefore not understood, by those who have been always accustomed to refer every thing to themselves, and whose selfishness has contracted their understandings. That the soul of man, formed for eternal life, naturally springs forward beyond the limits of corporeal existence, and rejoices to consider herself as co-operating with future ages, and as co-extended with endless duration. That the reproach urged with so much petulance, the reproach of labouring for what cannot be enjoyed, is founded on an opinion which may with great probability be doubted; for since we suppose the powers of the soul to be enlarged by its separation, why should we conclude that its knowledge of sublunary transactions is contracted or extinguished.

Upon an attentive and impartial review of the argument, it will appear that the love of fame is to be regulated rather than extinguished; and that men should be taught not to be wholly careless about their memory, but to endeavour that they may be remembered chiefly for their virtues, since no other reputation will be able to transmit any pleasure beyond the grave.

It is evident that fame, considered merely as the immortality of a name, is not less likely to be the reward of bad actions than of good; he therefore has no certain principle for the regulation of his conduct, whose single aim is not to be forgotten. And history will inform us, that this blind and undistinguishing appetite of renown has always been uncertain in its effects, and directed by accident or opportunity, indifferently to the benefit or devastation of the world. When Themistocles complained that the trophies of Miltiades hindered him from sleep, he was animated by them to perform the same services in the same cause. But Cæsar, when he wept at the sight of Alexander's picture, having no honest opportunities of action, let his ambition break out to the ruin of his country.

If, therefore, the love of fame is so far indulged by the mind as to become independent and predominant, it is dangerous and irregular; but it may be usefully employed as an inferior

and secondary motive, and will serve sometimes to revive our activity, when we begin to languish and lose sight of that more certain, more valuable, and more durable reward, which ought always to be our first hope and our last. But it must be strongly impressed upon our minds that virtue is not to be pursued as one of the means to fame, but fame to be accepted as the only recompense which mortals can bestow on virtue; to be accepted with complacence, but not sought with eagerness. Simply to be remembered is no advantage; it is a privilege which satire as well as panegyric can confer, and is not more enjoyed by Titus or Constantine, than by Timocreon of Rhodes, of whom we only know from his epitaph, *that he had eaten many a meal, drank many a flaggon, and uttered many a reproach.*

Πολλὰ φαγὼν, καὶ πολλὰ πιὼν, καὶ πολλὰ κακ' εἰπὼν
Ἀνθρώπους, κεῖμαι Τιμοκρέων Ῥόδιος.

The true satisfaction which is to be drawn from the consciousness that we shall share the attention of future times, must arise from the hope, that with our name, our virtues will be propagated; and that those whom we cannot benefit in our lives, may receive instruction from our examples, and incitement from our renown.

No. 50.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 8, 1750.

Credebant hoc grande nefas, et morte piandum,
Si juvenis vetulo non assurrexerat; et si
Barbuto cuicunque puer, licet ipse videret
Plura domi fraga, et majores glandis acervos.

JUV.

And had not men the hoary head revered,
And boys paid reverence when a man appear'd,
Both must have died, though richer skins they wore,
And saw more heaps of acorns in their store.

CREECH.

I HAVE always thought it the business of those who turn their speculations upon the living world, to commend the virtues as well as to expose the faults of their contemporaries, and to confute a false as well as to support a just accusation; not only because it is peculiarly the business of a monitor to keep his own reputation untainted, lest those who can once charge him with partiality, should indulge themselves afterwards in disbelieving him at pleasure; but because he may find real crimes sufficient to give full employment to caution or repentance, without distracting the mind by needless scruples and vain solicitudes.

There are certain fixed and stated reproaches that one part of mankind has in all ages thrown upon another, which are regularly transmitted through continued successions, and which he that has once suffered them is certain to use with the same undistinguishing vehemence, when he has changed his station, and gained the prescriptive right of inflicting on others what he had formerly endured himself.

To these hereditary imputations, of which no man sees the justice, till it becomes his interest to see it, very little regard is to be shown; since it does not appear that they are produced by ratiocination or inquiry, but received implicitly, or caught by a kind of instantaneous contagion and supported rather by willingness to credit, than ability to prove them.

It has been always the practice of those who are desirous to believe themselves made venerable by length of time, to censure the new comers into life, for want of respect to gray hairs and sage experience, for heady confidence in their own understandings, for hasty conclusions upon partial views, for disregard of counsels, which their fathers and grandsires are ready to afford them, and a rebellious impatience of that subordination to which youth is condemned by nature, as necessary to its security from evils into which it would be otherwise precipitated, by the rashness of passion, and the blindness of ignorance.

Every old man complains of the growing depravity of the world, of the petulance and insolence of the rising generation. He recounts the decency and regularity of former times, and celebrates the discipline and sobriety of the age in which his youth was passed; a happy age, which is now no more to be expected, since confusion has broken in upon the world and thrown down all the boundaries of civility and reverence.

It is not sufficiently considered how much he assumes who dares to claim the privilege of complaining; for as every man has, in his own opinion, a full share of the miseries of life, he is inclined to consider all clamorous uneasiness as a proof of impatience rather than of affliction, and to ask, What merit has this man to show by which he has acquired a right to repine at the distributions of nature? Or, why does he imagine that exemptions should be granted him from the general condition of man? We find ourselves excited rather to captiousness than pity, and instead of being in haste to soothe his complaints by sympathy and tenderness, we inquire, whether the pain be proportionate to the lamentation; and whether, supposing the affliction real, it is not the effect of vice and folly rather than calamity.

The querulousness and indignation which is observed so often to disfigure the last scene of life, naturally leads us to inquiries like these. For surely it will be thought, at the first view of things, that if age be thus contemned and ridiculed, insulted and neglected, the crime must at least be equal on either part. They who have had opportunities of establishing their authority over minds ductile and unresisting,

they who have been the protectors of helplessness, and the instructors of ignorance, and who yet retain in their own hands the power of wealth, and the dignity of command, must defeat their influence by their own misconduct, and make use of all these advantages with very little skill, if they cannot secure to themselves an appearance of respect, and ward off open mockery, and declared contempt.

The general story of mankind will evince, that lawful and settled authority is very seldom resisted when it is well employed. Gross corruption, or evident imbecility, is necessary to the suppression of that reverence with which the majority of mankind look upon their governors; on those whom they see surrounded by splendour, and fortified by power. For though men are drawn by their passions into forgetfulness of invisible rewards and punishments, yet they are easily kept obedient to those who have temporal dominion in their hands, till their generation is dissipated by such wickedness and folly as can neither be defended nor concealed.

It may, therefore, very reasonably be suspected that the old draw upon themselves the greatest part of those insults which they so much lament, and that age is rarely despised but when it is contemptible. If men imagine that excess and debauchery can be made reverend by time, that knowledge is the consequence of long life, however idly and thoughtlessly employed, that superiority of birth will supply the want of steadiness or honesty, can it raise much wonder that their hopes are disappointed, and that they see their posterity rather willing to trust their own guides in their progress into life, than enlist themselves under guides who have lost their way?

There are, indeed, many truths which time necessarily and certainly teaches, and which might, by those who have learned them from experience, be communicated to their successors at a cheaper rate: but dictates, though liberally and though bestowed, are generally without effect, and a teacher gains few proselytes by instruction which his own behaviour contradicts; and young men miss the benefit of counsel, because they are not very ready to believe that those who fall below them in practice, can much excel them in theory. Thus the progress of knowledge is retarded, the world is kept long in the same state, and every new race is to gain the evidence of their predecessors by committing and redressing the same miscarriages.

To secure to the old that influence which they are willing to claim, and which might so much contribute to the improvement of the arts of life, it is absolutely necessary that they give themselves up to the duties of declining years; and contentedly resign to youth its levity, its pleasures, its frolics, and its fopperies. It is a useless endeavour to unite the contrarieties of spring and winter; it is unjust to claim the privileges of age, and retain the playthings of childhood. The young always form magnificent ideas of the wisdom and gravity of men, whom they consider as placed at a distance from them in the ranks of existence, and naturally look on those whom they find trifling with long beards with contempt and indignation, like that which women feel at the effeminacy of men. If dotards will contend with boys in those performances in which boys must always excel them; if they will dress crippled limbs in embroidery, endeavour at gayety with faltering voices, and darken assemblies of pleasure with the ghastliness of disease, they may well expect those who find their diversions obstructed will hoot them away; and that if they descend to competition, with youth, they must bear the insolence of successful rivals.

Lusisti satis, edisti satis, atque bibisti:
Tempus abire tibi est.

You've had your share of mirth, of meat and drink;
'Tis time to quit the scene—'tis time to think.

ELPHINSTON.

Another vice of age, by which the rising generation may be alienated from it, is severity and censoriousness, that gives no allowance to the failings of early life, that expects artfulness from childhood and constancy from youth, that is peremptory in every command, and inexorable to every failure. There are many who live merely to hinder happiness, and whose descendants can only tell of long life, that it produces suspicion, malignity, peevishness, and persecution: and yet even these tyrants can talk of the ingratitude of the age, curse their heirs for impatience, and wonder that young men cannot take pleasure in their father's company.

He that would pass the latter part of life with honour and decency, must, when he is young, consider that he shall one day be old; and remember, when he is old, that he has once been young. In youth he must lay up knowledge for his support, when his powers of acting shall forsake him; and in age forbear to animadvert with rigour on faults which experience only can correct.

No. 51.] TUESDAY, SEPT. 11, 1750.

Stultus labor est ineptiarum.— MART.

How foolish is the toil of trifling cares!

ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As you have allowed a place in your paper to Euphelia's letters from the country, and appear to think no form of human life unworthy of your attention, I have resolved, after many struggles with idleness and diffidence, to give

you some account of my entertainment in this sober season of universal retreat, and to describe to you the employments of those who look with contempt on the pleasures and diversions of polite life, and employ all their powers of censure and invective upon the uselessness, vanity, and folly, of dress, visits, and conversation.

When a tiresome and vexatious journey of four days had brought me to the house, where invitation, regularly sent for seven years together, had at last induced me to pass the summer, I was surprised, after the civilities of my first reception, to find, instead of the leisure and tranquillity which a rural life always promises, and, if well conducted, might always afford, a confused wildness of care, and a tumultuous hurry of diligence, by which every face was clouded, and every motion agitated. The old lady, who was my father's relation, was, indeed, very full of the happiness which she received from my visit, and according to the forms of obsolete breeding, insisted that I should recompense the long delay of my company with a promise not to leave her till winter. But, amidst all her kindness and caresses, she very frequently turned her head aside, and whispered, with anxious earnestness, some order to her daughters, which never failed to send them out with unpolite precipitation. Sometimes her impatience would not suffer her to stay behind; she begged my pardon, she must leave me for a moment; she went, and returned and sat down again, but was again disturbed by some new care, dismissed her daughters with the same trepidation, and followed them with the same countenance of business and solicitude.

However I was alarmed at this show of eagerness and disturbance, and however my curiosity was excited by such busy preparations as naturally promised some great event, I was yet too much a stranger to gratify myself with inquiries; but finding none of the family in mourning, I pleased myself with imagining that I should rather see a wedding than a funeral.

At last we sat down to supper, when I was informed that one of the yonng ladies, after whom I thought myself obliged to inquire, was under a necessity of attending some affair that could not be neglected: soon afterward my relation began to talk of the regularity of her family, and the inconvenience of London hours; and at last let me know that they had purposed that night to go to bed sooner than was usual, because they were to rise early in the morning to make cheesecakes. This hint sent me to my chamber, to which I was accompanied by all the ladies, who begged me to excuse some large sieves of leaves and flowers that covered two-thirds of the floor, for they intended to distil them when they were dry, and they had no other room that so conveniently received the rising sun.

The scent of the plants hindered me from rest, and therefore I rose early in the morning with a resolution to explore my new habitation. I stole unperceived by my busy cousins into the garden, where I found nothing either more great or elegant, than in the same number of acres cultivated for the market. Of the gardener I soon learned that his lady was the greatest manager in that part of the country, and that I was come hither at the time in which I might learn to make more pickles and conserves, than could be seen at any other house a hundred miles round.

It was not long before her ladyship gave me sufficient opportunities of knowing her character, for she was too much pleased with her own accomplishments to conceal them, and took occasion, from some sweetmeats which she set next day upon the table, to discourse for two long hours upon robs and gellies; laid down the best methods of conserving, reserving, and preserving all sorts of fruit; told us with great contempt of the London lady in the neighbourhood, by whom these terms were very often confounded; and hinted how much she should be ashamed to set before company, at her own house, sweetmeats of so dark a colour as she had often seen at Mistress Sprightly's.

It is, indeed, the great business of her life, to watch the skillet on the fire, to see it simmer with the due degree of heat, and to snatch it off at the moment of projection; and the employments to which she has bred her daughters, are to turn rose-leaves in the shade, to pick out the seeds of currants with a quill, to gather fruit without bruising it, and to extract bean-flower water for the skin. Such are the tasks with which every day, since I came hither, has begun and ended, to which the early hours of life are sacrificed, and in which that time is passing away which never shall return.

But to reason or expostulate are hopeless attempts. The lady has settled her opinions, and maintains the dignity of her own performance with all the firmness of stupidity accustomed to be flattered. Her daughters having never seen any house but their own, believe their mother's excellence on her own word. Her husband is a mere sportsman, who is pleased to see his table well furnished, and thinks the day sufficiently successful, in which he brings home a leash of hares to be potted by his wife.

After a few days I pretended to want books, but my lady soon told me that none of her books would suit my taste; for her part she never loved to see young women give their minds to such follies, by which they would only learn to use hard words; she bred up her daughters to understand a house, and whoever should marry them, if they knew any thing of good cookery, would never repent it.

There are, however, some things in the culinary science too sublime for youthful intellec

mysteries into which they must not be initiated till the years of serious maturity, and which are referred to the day of marriage, as the supreme qualification for connubial life. She makes an orange pudding, which is the envy of all the neighbourhood, and which she has hitherto found means of mixing and baking with such secrecy, that the ingredient to which it owes its flavour has never been discovered. She indeed, conducts this great affair with all the caution that human policy can suggest. It is never known beforehand when this pudding will be produced; she takes the ingredients privately into her own closet, employs her maids and daughters in different parts of the house, orders the oven to be heated for a pie, and places the pudding in it with her own hands, the mouth of the oven is then stopped, and all inquiries are vain.

The composition of the pudding she has however, promised Clarinda, that if she pleases her in marriage, she shall be told without reserve. But the art of making English capers she has not yet persuaded herself to discover, but seems resolved that secret shall perish with her, as some alchymists have obstinately suppressed the art of transmuting metals.

I once ventured to lay my fingers on her book of receipts, which she left upon the table, having intelligence that a vessel of gooseberry wine had burst the hoops. But though the importance of the event sufficiently engrossed her care, to prevent any recollection of the danger to which her secrets were exposed, I was not able to make use of the golden moments; for this treasure of hereditary knowledge was so well concealed by the manner of spelling used by her grandmother, her mother, and herself, that I was totally unable to understand it, and lost the opportunity of consulting the oracle, for want of knowing the language in which its answers were returned.

It is, indeed, necessary, if I have any regard to her ladyship's esteem, that I should apply myself to some of these economical accomplishments; for I overheard her, two days ago, warning her daughters, by my mournful example, against negligence of pastry, and ignorance of carving: for you saw, said she, that, with all her pretensions to knowledge, she turned the partridge the wrong way when she attempted to cut it, and, I believe, scarcely knows the difference between paste raised, and paste in a dish.

The reason, Mr. Rambler, why I have laid Lady Bustle's character before you, is a desire to be informed whether, in your opinion, it is worthy of imitation, and whether I shall throw away the books which I have hitherto thought my duty to read, for *the lady's closet opened*, *complete servant maid*, and *the court cook*, and resign all curiosity after right and wrong, for the art of scalding damascenes, without bursting them, and preserving the whiteness of pickled mushrooms.

Lady Bustle has, indeed, by this incessant application to fruits and flowers, contracted her cares into a narrow space, and set herself free from many perplexities with which other minds are disturbed. She has no curiosity after the events of a war, or the fate of heroes in distress; she can hear, without the least emotion, the ravage of a fire, or devastations of a storm; her neighbours grow rich or poor, come into the world or go out of it, without regard, while she is pressing the jelly-bag, or airing the store-room; but I cannot perceive that she is more free from disquiets than those whose understandings take a wider range. Her marigolds, when they are almost cured, are often scattered by the wind, and the rain sometimes falls upon fruit when it ought to be gathered dry. While her artificial wines are fermenting, her whole life is restlessness and anxiety. Her sweetmeats are not always bright, and the maid sometimes forgets the just proportions of salt and pepper, when venison is to be baked. Her conserves mould, her wines sour, and pickles mother; and, like all the rest of mankind, she is every day mortified with the defeat of her schemes, and the disappointment of her hopes.

With regard to vice and virtue she seems a kind of neutral being. She has no crime but luxury, nor any virtue but chastity; she has no desire to be praised but for her cookery; nor wishes any ill to the rest of mankind, but that whenever they aspire to a feast, their custards may be wheyish, and their pie-crusts tough.

I am now very impatient to know whether I am to look on these ladies as the great patterns of our sex, and to consider conserves and pickles as the business of my life; whether the censures which I now suffer be just, and whether the brewers of wines, and the distillers of washes, have a right to look with insolence on the weakness of

CORNELIA.

No. 52.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 15, 1750.

——Quoties flenti Theseius heros
Siste modum, dixit neque enim fortuna querenda
Sola tua est, similes aliorum respice casus,
Mitius ista feres. OVID.

How oft in vain the son of Theseus said,
The stormy sorrows be with patience laid;
Nor are thy fortunes to be wept alone;
Weigh other's woes, and learn to bear thy own.
CATCOTT.

AMONG the various methods of consolation, to which the miseries inseparable from our present state have given occasion, it has been, as I have already remarked, recommended by some

writers to put the sufferer in mind of heavier pressures, and more excruciating calamities, than those of which he has himself reason to complain.

This has, in all ages, been directed and practised: and, in conformity to this custom, Lipsius, the great modern master of the Stoic philosophy, has, in his celebrated treatise on *steadiness of mind*, endeavoured to fortify the breast against too much sensibility of misfortune, by enumerating the evils which have in former ages fallen upon the world, the devastation of wide-extended regions, the sack of cities, and massacre of nations. And the common voice of the multitude uninstructed by precept, and unprejudiced by authority, which, in questions that relate to the heart of man, is, in my opinion, more decisive than the learning of Lipsius, seems to justify the efficacy of this procedure; for one of the first comforts which one neighbour administers to another, is a relation of the like infelicity, combined with circumstances of greater bitterness.

But this medicine of the mind is like many remedies applied to the body, of which, though we see the effects, we are unacquainted with the manner of operation, and of which, therefore, some, who are unwilling to suppose any thing out of the reach of their own sagacity, have been inclined to doubt whether they have really those virtues for which they are celebrated, and whether their reputation is not the mere gift of fancy, prejudice, and credulity.

Consolation, or comfort, are words which, in their proper acceptation, signify some alleviation of that pain to which it is not in our power to afford the proper and adequate remedy; they imply rather an augmentation of the power of bearing than a diminution of the burden. A prisoner is relieved by him that sets him at liberty, but receives comfort from such as suggest considerations by which he is made patient under the inconvenience of confinement. To that grief which arises from a great loss, he only brings the true remedy who makes his friend's condition the same as before; but he may be properly termed a comforter, who by persuasion extenuates the pain of poverty, and shows in the style of *Hesiod*, that *half is more than the whole*.

It is, perhaps, not immediately obvious, how it can lull the memory of misfortune, or appease the throbbings of anguish, to hear that others are more miserable; others, perhaps, unknown or wholly indifferent, whose prosperity raises no envy, and whose fall can gratify no resentment. Some topics of comfort arising, like that which gave hope and spirit to the captive of Sesostris, from the perpetual vicissitudes of life, and mutability of human affairs, may as properly raise the dejected as depress the proud and have an immediate tendency to exhilarate and revive. But how can it avail the man who languishes in the gloom of sorrow without prospect of emerging into the sunshine of cheerfulness, to hear that others are sunk yet deeper in the dungeon of misery, shackled with heavier chains, and surrounded with darker despera tion?

The solace arising from this consideration seems indeed the weakest of all others, and is perhaps never properly applied, but in case where there is no place for reflections of more speedy and pleasing efficacy. But even from such calamities life is by no means free; a thousand ills incurable, a thousand losses irreparable, a thousand difficulties insurmountable, are known or will be known, by all the sons of men. Native deformity cannot be rectified, a dead friend cannot return, and the hours of youth trifled away in folly, or lost in sickness, cannot be restored.

Under the oppression of such melancholy, it has been found useful to take a survey of the world, to contemplate the various scenes of distress in which mankind are struggling round us, and acquaint ourselves with the *terribiles visæ formæ*, the various shapes of misery, which make havoc of terrestrial happiness, range all corners almost without restraint, trample down our hopes at the hour of harvest, and, when we have built our schemes to the top, ruin their foundations.

The first effect of this meditation is, that it furnishes a new employment for the mind, and engages the passions on remoter objects; as kings have sometimes freed themselves from a subject too haughty to be governed, and too powerful to be crushed, by posting him in a distant province, till his popularity has subsided or his pride been repressed. The attention is dissipated by variety, and acts more weakly upon any single part, as that torrent may be drawn off to different channels, which, pouring down in one collected body, cannot be resisted. This species of comfort is, therefore, unavailing in severe paroxysms of corporeal pain, when the mind is every instant called back to misery, and in the first shock of any sudden evil; but will certainly be of use against encroaching melancholy, and a settled habit of gloomy thoughts.

It is further advantageous, as it supplies us with opportunities of making comparisons in our own favour. We know that very little of the pain, or pleasure, which does not begin and end in our senses, is otherwise than relative: we are rich or poor, great or little, in proportion to the number that excel us, or fall beneath us, in any of these respects; and, therefore, a man, whose uneasiness arises from reflection on any misfortune that throws him below those with whom he was once equal, is comforted by finding that he is not yet the lowest.

There is another kind of comparison, less tending towards the vice of envy, very well

lustrated by an old poet,* whose system will ot afford many reasonable motives to content. It is," says he, "pleasing to look from shore pon the tumults of a storm, and to see a ship ruggling with the billows; it is pleasing, not ecause the pain of another can give us delight, ut because we have a stronger impression of e happiness of safety." Thus, when we look road, and behold the multitudes that are oaning under evils heavier than those which e have experienced, we shrink back to our own ate, and instead of repining that so much must felt, learn to rejoice that we have not more to el.

By this observation of the miseries of others, titude is strengthened, and the mind brought a more extensive knowledge of her own pows. As the heroes of action catch the flame from e to another, so they, to whom Providence has otted the harder task of suffering with calmss and dignity, may animate themselves by the membrance of those evils which have been laid others, perhaps naturally as weak as themves, and bear up with vigour and resolution ainst their own oppressions, when they see it ssible that more severe afflictions may be rne.

There is still another reason why, to many nds, the relation of other men's infelicity may e a lasting and continual relief. Some, not ll instructed in the measures by which Proence distributes happiness, are perhaps mis by divines, who, as Bellarmine makes temal prosperity one of the characters of the true rch, have represented wealth and ease as the tain concomitants of virtue, and the unfailing ilt of the Divine approbation. Such suffer are dejected in their misfortunes, not so ch for what they feel, as for what they dread; because they cannot support the sorrows, or ure the wants, of their present condition, because they consider them as only the beings of more sharp and more lasting pains. these mourners it is an act of the highest rity to represent the calamities which not virtue has suffered, but virtue has incur; to inform them that one evidence of a re state, is the uncertainty of any present ard for goodness; and to remind them, from highest authority, of the distresses and pen of men of whom the world was not thy.

53.] Tuesday, Sept. 18, 1750.

Φείδεο τῶν κτεανῶν. *Epigram. Vet.*

Husband thy possessions.

re is scarcely among the evils of human life so generally dreaded as poverty. Every other species of misery, those, who are not much accustomed to disturb the present moment with reflection, can easily forget, because it is not always forced upon their regard: but it is impossible to pass a day or an hour in the confluxes of men, without seeing how much indigence is exposed to contumely, neglect, and insult; and, in its lowest state, to hunger and nakedness; to injuries against which every passion is in arms, and to wants which nature cannot sustain.

Against other evils the heart is often hardened by true or by false notions of dignity and reputation: thus we see dangers of every kind faced with willingness, because bravery in a good or bad cause is never without its encomiasts and admirers. But in the prospect of poverty, there is nothing but gloom and melancholy: the mind and body suffer together; its miseries bring no alleviations; it is a state in which every virtue is obscured, and in which no conduct can avoid reproach; a state in which cheerfulness is insensibility, and dejection sullenness, of which the hardships are without honour, and the labours without reward.

Of these calamities there seems not to be wanting a general conviction; we hear on every side the noise of trade, and see the streets thronged with numberless multitudes, whose faces are clouded with anxiety, and whose steps are hurried by precipitation, from no other motive than the hope of gain; and the whole world is put in motion, by the desire of that wealth, which is chiefly to be valued as it secures us from poverty; for it is more useful for defence than acquisition, and is not so much able to procure good as to exclude evil.

Yet there are always some whose passions or follies lead them to a conduct opposite to the general maxims and practice of mankind; some who seem to rush upon poverty with the same eagerness with which others avoid it, who see their revenues hourly lessened, and the estates which they inherit from their ancestors mouldering away, without resolution to change their course of life; who persevere against all remonstrances, and go forward with full career, though they see before them the precipice of destruction.

It is not my purpose in this paper, to expostulate with such as ruin their fortunes by expensive schemes of buildings and gardens, which they carry on with the same vanity that prompted them to begin, choosing, as it happens in a thousand other cases, the remote evil before the lighter, and deferring the shame of repentance till they incur the miseries of distress. Those for whom I intend my present admonitions, are the thoughtless, the negligent, and the dissolute, who having, by the viciousness of their own inclinations, or the seducements of alluring companions, been engaged in habits of expense, and accustomed to move in a certain round of pleasures disproportioned to their condition are with-

* Lucretius.—C.

out power to extricate themselves from the enchantments of customs, avoid the thought because they know it will be painful, and continue from day to day, and from month to month, to anticipate their revenues, and sink every hour deeper into the gulfs of usury and extortion.

This folly has less claim to pity, because it cannot be imputed to the vehemence of sudden passion; nor can the mischief which it produces be extenuated as the effect of any single act, which rage, or desire, might execute before there could be time for an appeal to reason. These men are advancing towards misery by soft approaches, and destroying themselves, not by the violence of a blow, which when once given, can never be recalled, but by a slow poison, hourly repeated, and obstinately continued.

This conduct is so absurd when it is examined by the unprejudiced eye of rational judgment, that nothing but experience could evince its possibility; yet absurd as it is, the sudden fall of some families, and the sudden rise of others, prove it to be common; and every year sees many wretches reduced to contempt and want, by their costly sacrifices to pleasure and vanity.

It is the fate of almost every passion, when it has passed the bounds which nature prescribes, to counteract its own purpose. Too much rage hinders the warrior from circumspection, too much eagerness of profit hurts the credit of the trader, too much ardour takes away from the lover that easiness of address with which ladies are delighted. Thus extravagance, though dictated by vanity, and incited by voluptuousness, seldom procures ultimately either applause or pleasure.

If praise be justly estimated by the character of those from whom it is received, little satisfaction will be given to the spendthrift by the encomiums which he purchases. For who are they that animate him in his pursuits, but young men, thoughtless and abandoned like himself, unacquainted with all on which the wisdom of nations has impressed the stamp of excellence, and devoid alike of knowledge and of virtue! By whom is his profusion praised, but by wretches who consider him as subservient to their purposes, sirens that entice him to shipwreck, and Cyclops that are gaping to devour him?

Every man, whose knowledge, or whose virtue, can give value to his opinion, looks with scorn, or pity, neither of which can afford much gratification to pride, on him whom the panders of luxury have drawn into the circle of their influence, and whom he sees parcelled out among the different ministers of folly, and about to be torn to pieces by tailors and jockeys, vintners and attorneys, who at once rob and ridicule him, and who are secretly triumphing over his weakness, when they present new incitements to h appetite, and heighten his desires by counte feited applause.

Such is the praise that is purchased by pr digality. Even when it is yet not discovered be false, it is the praise only of those whom it reproachful to please, and whose sincerity corrupted by their interest; men who live the riots which they encourage, and who kno that whenever their pupil grows wise, th shall lose their power. Yet with such flatteri if they could last, might the cravings of vani which is seldom very delicate, be satisfied; b the time is always hastening forward wh this triumph, poor as it is, shall vanish, a when those who now surround him with ob quiousness and compliments, fawn among h equipage, and animate his riots, shall turn up him with insolence, and reproach him with t vices promoted by themselves.

And as little pretensions has the man wh squanders his estate, by vain or vicious expens to greater degrees of pleasure than are obtain by others. To make any happiness sincere, is necessary that we believe it to be lasting since whatever we suppose ourselves in dang of losing, must be enjoyed with solicitude a uneasiness, and the more value we set upon the more must the present possession be embi tered. How can he then be envied for his fe city, who knows that its continuance cannot expected, and who is conscious that a very sho time will give him up to the gripe of poverti which will be harder to be borne, as he h given way to more excesses, wantoned greater abundance, and indulged his appeti with more profuseness?

It appears evident that frugality is necessa even to complete the pleasure of expense; for may be generally remarked of those who squa der what they know their fortune not suf cient to allow, that in their most jovial expen there always breaks out some proof of disconte and impatience; they either scatter with a kl of wild desperation, and affected lavishness, criminals brave the gallows when they can escape it, or pay their money with a peev anxiety, and endeavour at once to spend id and to save meanly: having neither firmness deny their passions, nor courage to grat them, they murmur at their own enjoymen and poison the bowl of pleasure by reflection the cost.

Among these men there is often the vocife tion of merriment, but very seldom the tra quillity of cheerfulness; they inflame th imaginations to a kind of momentary jollity, the help of wine and riot, and consider it as first business of the night to stupify recollecti and lay that reason asleep which disturbs th gayety, and calls upon them to retreat fr ruin.

But this poor broken satisfaction is of short ontinuance, and must be expiated by a long eries of misery and regret. In a short time he creditor grows impatient, the last acre is old, the passions and appetites still continue heir tyranny, with incessant calls for their sual gratifications, and the remainder of life asses away in vain repentance, or impotent esire.

o. 54.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 22, 1750.

Traditur dies die,
Novæque pergunt interire lunæ:
Tu secanda marmora
Locas sub ipsum funus; et sepulchri
Immemor, struis domos. HOR.

Day presses on the heels of day,
And moons increase to their decay;
But you, with thoughtless pride elate,
Unconscious of impending fate,
Command the pillar'd doom to rise,
When lo! thy tomb forgotten lies.—FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

AVE lately been called, from a mingled life business and amusement, to attend the last urs of an old friend; an office which has ed me, if not with melancholy, at least with ious reflections, and turned my thoughts to-rds the contemplation of those subjects, ich though of the utmost importance, and of lubitable certainty, are generally secluded m our regard, by the jollity of health, the ry of employment, and even by the calmer ersions of study and speculation; or if they ome accidental topics of conversation and ument, yet rarely sink deep into the heart, give occasion only to some subtilties of soning, or elegances of declamation, which heard, applauded, and forgotten.

t is, indeed, not hard to conceive how a man ustomed to extend his views through a long catenation of causes and effects, to trace gs from their origin to their period, and pare means with ends, may discover the kness of human schemes; detect the falla-by which mortals are deluded; show the fficiency of wealth, honours, and power, to happiness; and please himself, and his itors, with learned lectures on the vanity of

ut though the speculatist may see and show folly of terrestrial hopes, fears, and desires, y hour will give proofs that he never felt it. e him through the day or year, and you find him acting upon principles which he in common with the illiterate and unen-tened, angry and pleased, like the lowest of vulgar, pursuing with the same ardour, the e designs, grasping, with all the eagerness of transport, those riches which he knows he cannot keep, and swelling with the applause which he has gained by proving that applause is of no value.

The only conviction that rushes upon the soul, and takes away from our appetites and passions the power of resistance, is to be found, where I have received it, at the bed of a dying friend. To enter this school of wisdom is not the peculiar privilege of geometricians; the most sublime and important precepts require no uncommon opportunities, nor laborious preparations; they are enforced without the aid of eloquence, and understood without skill in analytic science. Every tongue can utter them, and every understanding can conceive them. He that wishes in earnest to obtain just sentiments concerning his condition, and would be intimately acquainted with the world, may find instructions on every side. He that desires to enter behind the scene, which every art has been employed to decorate, and every passion labours to illuminate, and wishes to see life stripped of those ornaments which make it glitter on the stage, and exposed in its natural meanness, impotence, and nakedness, may find all the delusion laid open in the chamber of disease: he will there find vanity divested of her robes, power deprived of her sceptre, and hypocrisy without her mask.

The friend whom I have lost was a man eminent for genius, and, like others of the same class, sufficiently pleased with acceptance and applause. Being caressed by those who have preferments and riches in their disposal, he considered himself as in the direct road of advancement, and had caught the flame of ambition by approaches to its object. But in the midst of his hopes, his projects, and his gayeties, he was seized by a lingering disease, which, from its first stage, he knew to be incurable. Here was an end of all his visions of greatness and happiness; from the first hour that his health declined, all his former pleasures grew tasteless. His friends expected to please him by those accounts of the growth of his reputation, which were formerly certain of being well received; but they soon found how little he was now affected by compliments, and how vainly they attempted, by flattery, to exhilarate the languor of weakness, and relieve the solicitude of approaching death. Whoever would know how much piety and virtue surpass all external goods, might here have seen them weighed against each other, where all that gives motion to the active, and elevation to the eminent, all that sparkles in the eye of hope, and pants in the bosom of suspicion, at once became dust in the balance, without weight and without regard.

Riches, authority, and praise, lose all their influence when they are considered as riches which to-morrow shall be bestowed upon another, au-

thority which shall this night expire for ever, and praise which, however merited, or however sincere, shall, after a few moments, be heard no more.

In those hours of seriousness and wisdom, nothing appeared to raise his spirits, or gladden his heart, but the recollection of acts of goodness; nor to excite his attention, but some opportunity for the exercise of the duties of religion. Every thing that terminated on this side of the grave was received with coldness and indifference, and regarded rather in consequence of the habit of valuing it, than from any opinion that it deserved value; it had little more prevalence over his mind than a bubble that was now broken, a dream from which he was awake. His whole powers were engrossed by the consideration of another state, and all conversation was tedious, that had not some tendency to disengage him from human affairs, and open his prospects into futurity.

It is now past; we have closed his eyes, and heard him breathe the groan of expiration. At the sight of this last conflict, I felt a sensation never known to me before; a confusion of passions, an awful stillness of sorrow, a gloomy terror without a name. The thoughts that entered my soul were too strong to be diverted, and too piercing to be endured; but such violence cannot be lasting, the storm subsided in a short time, I wept, retired, and grew calm.

I have from that time frequently revolved in my mind the effects which the observation of death produces, in those who are not wholly without the power and use of reflection; for by far the greater part it is wholly unregarded. Their friends and their enemies sink into the grave without raising any uncommon emotion, or reminding them that they are themselves on the edge of the precipice, and that they must soon plunge into the gulf of eternity.

It seems to me remarkable that death increases our veneration for the good, and extenuates our hatred of the bad. Those virtues which once we envied, as Horace observes, because they eclipsed our own, can now no longer obstruct our reputation, and we have therefore no interest to suppress their praise. That wickedness, which we feared for its malignity, is now become impotent, and the man whose name filled us with alarm, and rage, and indignation, can at last be considered only with pity or contempt.

When a friend is carried to his grave, we at once find excuses for every weakness, and palliations of every fault; we recollect a thousand endearments, which before glided off our minds without impression, a thousand favours unrepaid, a thousand duties unperformed, and wish, vainly wish, for his return, not so much that we may receive, as that we may bestow, happiness, and recompense that kindness which before we never understood.

There is not, perhaps, to a mind well in structed, a more painful occurrence than t death of one whom we have injured without r paration. Our crime seems now irretrievabl it is indelibly recorded, and the stamp of fate fixed upon it. We consider, with the most a flictive anguish, the pain which we have give and now cannot alleviate, and the losses whi we have caused, and now cannot repair.

Of the same kind are the emotions which th death of an emulator or competitor produce Whoever had qualities to alarm our jealousy had excellence to deserve our fondness; and whatever ardour of opposition interest may in flame us, no man ever outlived an enemy, who he did not then wish to have made a frien Those who are versed in literary history know that the elder Scaliger was the redoubted anta onist of Cardan and Erasmus; yet at the deat of each of his great rivals he relented, and com plained that they were snatched away from hi before their reconciliation was completed.

Tune etiam morieris? Ah! quid me linquis, Erasm
Ante meus quam sit conciliatus amor?

Art thou too fallen? ere anger could subside
nd love return, has great *Erasmus* died?

Such are the sentiments with which we fina ly review the effects of passion, but which w sometimes delay till we can no longer recti our errors. Let us therefore make haste to what we shall certainly at last wish to ha done; let us return the caresses of our friend and endeavour by mutual endearments heighten that tenderness which is the balm life. Let us be quick to repent of injuries whi repentance may not be a barren anguish, an let us open our eyes to every rival excellenc and pay early and willingly those honou which justice will compel us to pay at last.

ATHANATUS.

No. 55.] TUESDAY, SEPT. 25, 1750.

Maturo propior desine funeri
Inter ludere virgines,
Et stellis nebulam spargere candidis:
Non siquid Pholoen satis
Et te, Chlori, decet.——— HOR.

Now near to death that comes but slow,
Now thou art stepping down below;
Sport not amongst the blooming maids,
But think on ghosts and empty shades:
What suits with Pholoe in her bloom,
Gray Chloris, will not thee become;
A bed is different from a tomb. BEECH.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I HAVE been but a little time conversant in t world, yet I have already had frequent opp

inities of observing the little efficacy of remon-
rance and complaint, which, however extorted
y oppression, or supported by reason, are de-
sted by one part of the world as rebellion, cen-
ired by another as peevishness, by some heard
ith an appearance of compassion, only to be-
ay any of those sallies of vehemence and re-
ntment, which are apt to break out upon en-
uragement, and by others passed over with
difference and neglect, as matters in which
ey have no concern, and which, if they should
deavour to examine or regulate, they might
aw mischief upon themselves.

Yet since it is no less natural for those who
ink themselves injured to complain, than for
hers to neglect their complaints, I shall ven-
re to lay my case before you, in hopes that
u will enforce my opinion, if you think it
t, or endeavour to rectify my sentiments, if
un mistaken. I expect, at least, that you
ll divest yourself of partiality, and that
natever your age or solemnity may be, you
ll not, with the dotard's insolence, pro-
unce me ignorant and foolish, perverse and
ractory, only because you perceive that I am
ng.

My father dying when I was but ten years
, left me, and a brother two years younger
n myself, to the care of my mother, a wo-
n of birth and education, whose prudence or
ue he had no reason to distrust. She felt,
some time, all the sorrow which nature calls
h, upon the final separation of persons dear
ne another; and as her grief was exhausted
its own violence, it subsided into tenderness
me and my brother, and the year of mourn-
was spent in caresses, consolations, and in-
iction, in celebration of my father's virtues,
rofessions of perpetual regard to his memory,
hourly instances of such fondness as grati-
e will not easily suffer me to forget.

ut when the term of this mournful felicity was
red, and my mother appeared again without
ensigns of sorrow, the ladies of her acquaint-
began to tell her, upon whatever motives,
it was time to live like the rest of the
ld; a powerful argument, which is seldom
to a woman without effect. Lady Giddy
incessantly relating the occurrences of the
n, and Mrs. Gravely told her privately,
great tenderness, that it began to be pub-
observed how much she overacted her part,
that most of her acquaintance suspected her
of procuring another husband to be the
ground of all that appearance of tender-
and piety.

l the officiousness of kindness and folly was
d to change her conduct. She was at one
alarmed with censure, and at another fired
praise. She was told of balls, where others
e only because she was absent; of new
dies, to which all the town was crowding;
and of many ingenious ironies, by which domestic diligence was made contemptible.

It is difficult for virtue to stand alone against fear on one side, and pleasure on the other; especially when no actual crime is proposed, and prudence itself can suggest many reasons for relaxation and indulgence. My mamma was at last persuaded to accompany Miss Giddy to a play. She was received with a boundless profusion of compliments, and attended home by a very fine gentleman. Next day she was with less difficulty prevailed on to play at Mrs. Gravely's, and came home gay and lively; for the distinctions that had been paid her awakened her vanity, and good luck had kept her principles of frugality from giving her disturbance. She now made her second entrance into the world, and her friends were sufficiently industrious to prevent any return to her former life; every morning brought messages of invitation, and every evening was passed in places of diversion, from which she for some time complained that she had rather be absent. In a short time she began to feel the happiness of acting without control, of being unaccountable for her hours, her expenses, and her company; and learned by degrees to drop an expression of contempt, or pity, at the mention of ladies whose husbands were suspected of restraining their pleasures, or their play, and confessed that she loved to go and come as she pleased.

I was still favoured with some incidental precepts and transient endearments, and was now and then fondly kissed for smiling like my papa: but most part of her morning was spent in comparing the opinion of her maid and milliner, contriving some variation in her dress, visiting shops, and sending compliments; and the rest of the day was too short for visits, cards, plays, and concerts.

She now began to discover that it was impossible to educate children properly at home. Parents could not have them always in their sight; the society of servants was contagious; company produced boldness and spirit; emulation excited industry; and a large school was naturally the first step into the open world. A thousand other reasons she alleged, some of little force in themselves, but so well seconded by pleasure, vanity, and idleness, that they soon overcame all the remaining principles of kindness and piety, and both I and my brother were despatched to boarding schools.

How my mamma spent her time when she was thus disburdened I am not able to inform you, but I have reason to believe that trifles and amusements took still faster hold of her heart. At first, she visited me at school, and afterwards wrote to me; but, in a short time, both her visits and her letters were at an end, and no other notice was taken of me than to remit money for my support.

When I came home at the vacation, I found myself coldly received, with an observation, "that this girl will presently be a woman." I was, after the usual stay, sent to school again, and overheard my mother say, as I was a-going, "Well, now I shall recover."

In six months more I came again, and with the usual childish alacrity, was running to my mother's embrace, when she stopped me with exclamations at the suddenness and enormity of my growth, having, she said, never seen any body shoot up so much at my age. She was sure no other girls spread at that rate, and she hated to have children to look like women before their time. I was disconcerted, and retired without hearing any thing more than, "Nay, if you are angry, Madam Steeple, you may walk off."

When once the forms of civility are violated, there remains little hope of return to kindness or decency. My mamma made this appearance of resentment a reason for continuing her malignity; and poor Miss Maypole, for that was my appellation, was never mentioned or spoken to but with some expression of anger or dislike.

She had yet the pleasure of dressing me like a child, and I know not when I should have been thought fit to change my habit, had I not been rescued by a maiden sister of my father, who could not bear to see women in hanging sleeves, and therefore presented me with brocade for a gown, for which I should have thought myself under great obligations, had she not accompanied her favour with some hints that my mamma might now consider her age, and give me her ear-rings, which she had shown long enough in public places.

I now left the school, and came to live with my mamma, who considered me as a usurper that had seized the rights of a woman before they were due, and was pushing down the precipice of age, that I might reign without a superior. While I am thus beheld with jealousy and suspicion, you will readily believe that it is difficult to please. Every word and look is an offence. I never speak, but I pretend to some qualities and excellences, which it is criminal to possess; if I am gay, she thinks it early enough to coquette; if I am grave, she hates a prude in bibs; if I venture into company, I am in haste for a husband; if I retire to my chamber, such matron-like ladies are lovers of contemplation. I am on one pretence or other generally excluded from her assemblies, nor am I ever suffered to visit at the same place with my mamma. Every one wonders why she does not bring Miss more into the world, and when she comes home in vapours, I am certain that she has heard either of my beauty or my wit, and expect nothing for the ensuing week but taunts and menaces, contradiction and reproaches.

Thus I live in a state of continual persecution only because I was born ten years too soon, and cannot stop the course of nature or of time, but am unhappily a woman before my mother can willingly cease to be a girl. I believe you would contribute to the happiness of many families, if, by any arguments or persuasions you could make mothers ashamed of rivalling their children; if you could show them, that though they may refuse to grow wise, they must inevitably grow old; and that the proper solaces of age are not music and compliments but wisdom and devotion; that those who are so unwilling to quit the world will soon be driven from it; and that it is therefore their interest to retire while there yet remain a few hours for nobler employments.

I am, &c.

No. 56.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 29, 1750.

——*Valeat res ludicra, si me*
Palma negata macrum, donata reducit opimum.

HOR

Farewell the stage; for humbly I disclaim
Such fond pursuits of pleasure, or of fame,
If I must sink in shame, or swell with pride,
As the gay palm is granted or denied.

FRANCI

NOTHING is more unpleasing than to find the offence has been received when none was intended, and that pain has been given to those who were not guilty of any provocation. As the great end of society is mutual beneficence a good man is always uneasy when he finds himself acting in opposition to the purposes of life; because, though his conscience may easily acquit him of *malice prepense*, of settled hatred or contrivances of mischief, yet he seldom can be certain, that he has not failed by negligence or indolence; that he has not been hindered from consulting the common interest by too much regard to his own ease, or too much indifference to the happiness of others.

Nor is it necessary, that, to feel this uneasiness, the mind should be extended to any great diffusion of generosity, or melted by uncommon warmth of benevolence; for that prudence which the world teaches, and a quick sensibility of private interest, will direct us to shun needless enmities; since there is no man whose kindness we may not some time want, or whose malice we may not some time suffer.

I have therefore frequently looked with wonder, and now and then with pity, at the thoughtlessness with which some alienate from themselves the affections of all whom chance, business, or inclination, brings in their way. When we see a man pursuing some darling interest, without much regard to the opinion of the world, we justly consider him as con-

and dangerous, but are not long in discovering his motives; we see him actuated by passions which are hard to be resisted, and deluded by appearances which have dazzled stronger eyes. But the greater part of those who set mankind at defiance by hourly irritation, and who live out to infuse malignity, and multiply enemies, have no hopes to foster, no designs to promote, nor any expectations of attaining power by insolence, or of climbing to greatness by trampling on others. They give up all the sweets of kindness, for the sake of peevishness, petulence, or gloom; and alienate the world by neglect of the common forms of civility, and breach of the established laws of conversation.

Every one must, in the walks of life, have met with men of whom all speak with censure, though they are not chargeable with any crime, and whom none can be persuaded to love, though a reason can scarcely be assigned why they should be hated; and who, if their good qualities and actions sometimes force a commendation, have their panegyric always concluded with confessions of disgust; "he is a good man, but I cannot like him." Surely such persons have sold the esteem of the world at too low a price, since they have lost one of the rewards of virtue, without gaining the profits of wickedness.

This ill economy of fame is sometimes the effect of stupidity: men whose perceptions are languid and sluggish, who lament nothing but loss of money, and feel nothing but a blow, are often at a difficulty to guess why they are encompassed with enemies, though they neglect all those arts by which men are endeared to one another. They comfort themselves that they have lived irreproachably; that none can charge them with having endangered his life, or diminished his possessions; and therefore conclude that they suffer by some invincible fatality, or imputute the malice of their neighbours to ignorance or envy. They wrap themselves up in their innocence, and enjoy the congratulations of their own hearts, without knowing or suspecting that they are every day deservedly incurring resentments, by withholding from those with whom they converse, that regard, or appearance of regard, to which every one is entitled by the customs of the world.

There are many injuries which almost every man feels, though he does not complain, and which, upon those whom virtue, elegance, or amity, have made delicate and tender, fix deep and lasting impressions; as there are many arts of graciousness and conciliation, which are to be practised without expense, and by which those may be made our friends, who have never received from us any real benefit. Such arts, when they include neither guilt nor meanness, it is surely reasonable to learn, for who would want that love which is so easily to be gained? and such injuries are to be avoided; for who would be hated without profit!

Some, indeed, there are, for whom the excuse of ignorance or negligence cannot be alleged, because it is apparent that they are not only careless of pleasing, but studious to offend; that they contrive to make all approaches to them difficult and vexatious, and imagine that they aggrandize themselves by wasting the time of others in useless attendance, by mortifying them with slights, and teasing them with affronts.

Men of this kind are generally to be found among those that have not mingled much in general conversation, but spent their lives amidst the obsequiousness of dependents, and the flattery of parasites; and by long consulting only their own inclination, have forgotten that others have claim to the same deference.

Tyranny thus avowed is indeed an exuberance of pride, by which all mankind is so much enraged, that it is never quietly endured, except in those who can reward the patience which they exact; and insolence is generally surrounded only by such whose baseness inclines them to think nothing insupportable that produces gain, and who can laugh at scurrility and rudeness with a luxurious table and an open purse.

But though all wanton provocations and contemptuous insolence are to be diligently avoided, there is no less danger in timid compliance and tame resignation. It is common for soft and fearful tempers to give themselves up implicitly to the direction of the bold, the turbulent, and the overbearing; of those whom they do not believe wiser or better than themselves; to recede from the best designs where opposition must be encountered, and to fall off from virtue for fear of censure.

Some firmness and resolution is necessary to the discharge of duty; but it is a very unhappy state of life in which the necessity of such struggles frequently occurs; for no man is defeated without some resentment, which will be continued with obstinacy while he believes himself in the right, and exerted with bitterness, if even to his own conviction he is detected in the wrong.

Even though no regard be had to the external consequences of contrariety and dispute, it must be painful to a worthy mind to put others in pain, and there will be danger lest the kindest nature may be vitiated by too long a custom of debate and contest.

I am afraid that I may be taxed with insensibility by many of my correspondents, who believe their contributions unjustly neglected. And, indeed, when I sit before a pile of papers, of which each is the production of laborious study, and the offspring of a fond parent, I, who know the passions of an author, cannot remember how long they have lain in my boxes unregarded, without imagining to myself the various changes of sorrow, impatience, and resent-

ment, which the writers must have felt in this tedious interval.

These reflections are still more awakened, when, upon perusal, I find some of them calling for a place in the next paper, a place which they have never yet obtained: others writing in a style of superiority and haughtiness, as secure of deference, and above fear of criticism; others humbly offering their weak assistance with softness and submission, which they believe impossible to be resisted; some introducing their compositions with a menace of the contempt which he that refuses them will incur; others applying privately to the booksellers for their interest and solicitation; every one by different ways endeavouring to secure the bliss of publication. I cannot but consider myself as placed in a very incommodious situation, where I am forced to repress confidence, which it is pleasing to indulge, to repay civilities with appearances of neglect, and so frequently to offend those by whom I never was offended.

I know well how rarely an author, fired with the beauties of his new composition, contains his raptures in his own bosom, and how naturally he imparts to his friends his expectation of renown; and as I can easily conceive the eagerness with which a new paper is snatched up, by one who expects to find it filled with his own production, and perhaps has called his companions to share the pleasure of a second perusal, I grieve for the disappointment which he is to feel at the fatal inspection. His hopes, however, do not yet forsake him; he is certain of giving lustre the next day. The next day comes, and again he pants with expectation, and having dreamed of laurels and Parnassus, casts his eyes upon the barren page, with which he is doomed never more to be delighted.

For such cruelty what atonement can be made? For such calamities what alleviation can be found? I am afraid that the mischief already done must be without reparation, and all that deserves my care is prevention for the future. Let therefore the next friendly contributor, whoever he be, observe the cautions of Swift, and write secretly in his own chamber, without communicating his design to his nearest friend, for the nearest friend will be pleased with an opportunity of laughing. Let him carry it to the post himself, and wait in silence for the event. If it is published and praised, he may then declare himself the author; if it be suppressed, he may wonder in private without much vexation; and if it be censured, he may join in the cry, and lament the dulness of the writing generation.

No. 57.] TUESDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1750.

Non intelligunt homines quam magnum vectigal sit parsimonia. TULL.

The world has not yet learned the riches of frugality

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM always pleased when I see literature mad useful, and scholars descending from that eleva tion, which, as it raises them above commo life, must likewise hinder them from beholdin the ways of men otherwise than in a cloud o bustle and confusion. Having lived a life o business, and remarked how seldom any occur rences emerge for which great qualities are re quired, I have learned the necessity of regard ing little things; and though I do not preten to give laws to the legislators of mankind, or t limit the range of those powerful minds tha carry light and heat through all the regions o knowledge, yet I have long thought, that th greatest part of those who lose themselves i studies by which I have not found that the grow much wiser, might, with more advantag both to the public and themselves apply thei understandings to domestic arts, and store thei minds with axioms of humble prudence an private economy.

Your late paper on frugality was very ele gant and pleasing, but, in my opinion, not suf ficiently adapted to common readers, who pa little regard to the music of periods, the artific of connection, or the arrangement of the flower of rhetoric; but require a few plain and cogen instructions, which may sink into the mind b their own weight.

Frugality is so necessary to the happiness o the world, so beneficial in its various forms t every rank of men, from the highest of humai potentates, to the lowest labourer or artificer and the miseries which the neglect of it pro duces are so numerous and so grievous, that i ought to be recommended with every variatio of address, and adapted to every class of unde standing.

Whether those who treat morals as a scienc will allow frugality to be numbered among th virtues, I have not thought it necessary to in quire. For I, who draw my opinions from careful observation of the world, am satisfi with knowing what is abundantly sufficien for practice, that if it be not a virtue, it is, at least, a quality, which can seldom exist with out some virtues, and without which few vi tues can exist. Frugality may be termed th daughter of Prudence, the sister of Temperanc and the parent of Liberty. He that is ex travagant will quickly become poor, and p verty will enforce dependance, and invite co ruption; it will almost always produce a pa sive compliance with the wickedness of other and there are few who do not learn by degree to practise those crimes which they cease t censure.

If there are any who do not dread poverty dangerous to virtue, yet mankind seem unan

nous enough in abhorring it as destructive to appiness; and all to whom want is terrible pon whatever principle, ought to think themelves obliged to learn the sage maxims of our arsimonious ancestors, and attain the salutary rts of contracting expense; for without fruality none can be rich, and with it very few ould be poor.

To most other acts of virtue or exertions of isdom, a concurrence of many circumstances necessary, some previous knowledge must be ttained, some uncommon gifts of nature posessed, or some opportunity produced by an exraordinary combination of things; but the ere power of saving what is already in our ands, must be easy of acquisition to every ind; and as the example of Bacon may show, at the highest intellect cannot safely neglect it, thousand instances will every day prove, that e meanest may practice it with success.

Riches cannot be within the reach of great mbers, because to be rich is to possess more an is commonly placed in a single hand; and, many could obtain the sum which now makes man wealthy, the name of wealth must then transferred to still greater accumulations. ut I am not certain that it is equally impossie to exempt the lower classes of mankind from verty; because, though whatever be the wealth the community, some will always have least, d he that has less than any other is comparaely poor; yet I do not see any coactive necesy that many should be without the indispensie conveniences of life; but am sometimes clined to imagine, that, casual calamities exted, there might, by universal prudence, be cured a universal exemption from want; l that he who should happen to have least, ght notwithstanding have enough.

But without entering too far into speculations ich I do not remember that any political calator has attempted, and in which the most spicacious reasoner may be easily bewildered, s evident that they to whom Providence has tted no other care but of their own fortune their own virtue, which make far the greater t of mankind, have sufficient incitements to sonal frugality, since, whatever might be its eral effect upon provinces or nations, by ich it is never likely to be tried, we know h certainty, that there is scarcely any indiual entering the world, who, by prudent parony, may not reasonably promise himself a rful competence in the decline of life.

he prospect of penury in age is so gloomy terrifying, that every man who looks before must resolve to avoid it; and it must be ded generally by the science of sparing. For, gh in every age there are some, who by bold ntures, or by favourable accidents, rise sudly to riches, yet it is dangerous to indulge es of such rare events: and the bulk of mankind must owe their affluence to small and gradual profits, below which their expense must be resolutely reduced.

You must not therefore think me sinking below the dignity of a practical philosopher, when I recommend to the consideration of your readers, from the statesman to the apprentice, a position replete with mercantile wisdom, *A penny saved is two-pence got*; which may, I think, be accommodated to all conditions, by observing not only that they who pursue any lucrative employment will save time when they forbear expense, and that the time may be employed to the increase of profit; but that they who are above such minute considerations will find, by every victory over appetite or passion, new strength added to the mind, will gain the power of refusing those solicitations by which the young and vivacious are hourly assaulted, and in time set themselves above the reach of extravagance and folly.

It may, perhaps, be inquired by those who are willing rather to cavil than to learn, what is the just measure of frugality? and when expense, not absolutely necessary, degenerates into profusion? To such questions no general answer can be returned; since the liberty of spending, or necessity of parsimony, may be varied without end by different circumstances. It may, however, be laid down as a rule never to be broken, that *a man's voluntary expense should not exceed his revenue*. A maxim so obvious and incontrovertible, that the civil law ranks the prodigal with the madman, and debars them equally from the conduct of their own affairs. Another precept arising from the former, and indeed included in it, is yet necessary to be distinctly impressed upon the warm, the fanciful, and the brave; *Let no man anticipate uncertain profits*. Let no man presume to spend upon hopes, to trust his own abilities for means of deliverance from penury, to give a loose to his present desires, and leave the reckoning to fortune or to virtue.

To these cautions, which I suppose are, at least among the graver part of mankind, undisputed, I will add another, *Let no man squander against his inclination*. With this precept it may be, perhaps, imagined easy to comply; yet if those whom profusion has buried in prisons, or driven into banishment, were examined, it would be found that very few were ruined by their own choice, or purchased pleasure with the loss of their estates; but that they suffered themselves to be borne away by the violence of those with whom they conversed, and yielded reluctantly to a thousand prodigalities, either from a trivial emulation of wealth and spirit, or a mean fear of contempt and ridicule; an emulation for the prize of folly, or the dread of the laugh of fools.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

SOPHRON.

No. 58.] Saturday, October 6, 1750.

———Improbæ
Crescunt divitiæ, tamen
Curtæ nescio quid semper abest rei. HOR.

But, while in heaps his wicked wealth ascends,
He is not of his wish possess'd;
There's something wanting still to make him bless'd.
FRANCIS.

As the love of money has been, in all ages, one of the passions that have given great disturbance to the tranquillity of the world, there is no topic more copiously treated by the ancient moralists than the folly of devoting the heart to the accumulation of riches. They who are acquainted with these authors need not be told how riches excite pity, contempt, or reproach, whenever they are mentioned; with what numbers of examples the danger of large possessions is illustrated; and how all the powers of reason and eloquence have been exhausted in endeavours to eradicate a desire, which seems to have entrenched itself too strongly in the mind to be driven out, and which, perhaps, had not lost its power, even over those who declaimed against it, but would have broken out in the poet or the sage, if it had been excited by opportunity, and invigorated by the approximation of its proper object.

Their arguments have been, indeed, so unsuccessful, that I know not whether it can be shown, that by all the wit and reason which this favourite cause has called forth, a single convert was ever made; that even one man has refused to be rich, when to be rich was in his power, from the conviction of the greater happiness of a narrow fortune; or disburdened himself of wealth when he had tried its inquietudes, merely to enjoy the peace and leisure and security of a mean and unenvied state.

It is true, indeed, that many have neglected opportunities of raising themselves to honours and to wealth, and rejected the kindest offers of fortune: but however their moderation may be boasted by themselves, or admired by such as only view them at a distance, it will be, perhaps, seldom found that they value riches less, but that they dread labour or danger more than others; they are unable to rouse themselves to action, to strain in the race of competition, or to stand the shock of contest; but though they, therefore, decline the toil of climbing, they nevertheless wish themselves aloft, and would willingly enjoy what they dare not seize.

Others have retired from high stations, and voluntarily condemned themselves to privacy and obscurity. But, even these will not afford many occasions of triumph to the philosopher; for they have commonly either quitted that only which they thought themselves unable to hold, and prevented disgrace by resignation; or they have been induced to try new measures by general inconstancy, which always dreams of happiness in novelty, or by a gloomy disposition, which is disgusted in the same degree with every state, and wishes every scene of life to change as soon as it is beheld. Such men found high and low stations equally unable to satisfy the wishes of a distempered mind, and were unable to shelter themselves in the closest retreat from disappointment, solicitude, and misery.

Yet though these admonitions have been thus neglected by those, who either enjoyed riches or were able to procure them, it is not rashly to be determined that they are altogether without use; for since far the greatest part of mankind must be confined to conditions comparatively mean, and placed in situations from which they naturally look up with envy to the eminence before them, those writers cannot be thought ill employed that have administered remedies to discontent almost universal, by showing, that what we cannot reach may very well be forborne, that the inequality of distribution, at which we murmur, is for the most part less than it seems, and that the greatness, which we admire at a distance, has much fewer advantages, and much less splendour, when we are suffered to approach it.

It is the business of moralists to detect the frauds of fortune, and to show that she imposes upon the careless eye, by a quick succession of shadows, which will shrink to nothing in the gripe: that she disguises life in extrinsic ornaments, which serve only for show, and are laid aside in the hours of solitude, and of pleasure; and that when greatness aspires either to felicity or to wisdom, it shakes off those distinctions which dazzle the gazer, and awe the supplicant.

It may be remarked, that they whose condition has not afforded them the light of moral or religious instruction, and who collect all their ideas by their own eyes, and digest them by their own understandings, seem to consider those who are placed in ranks of remote superiority, as almost another and higher species of beings. As themselves have known little other misery than the consequences of want, they are with difficulty persuaded that where there is wealth there can be sorrow, or that those who glitter in dignity, and glide along in affluence, can be acquainted with pains and cares like those which lie heavy upon the rest of mankind.

This prejudice is, indeed, confined to the lowest meanness, and the darkest ignorance; but it is so confined only because others have been shown its folly, and its falsehood, because it has been opposed in its progress by history and philosophy, and hindered from spreading its infection by powerful preservatives.

The doctrine of the contempt of wealth

hough it has not been able to extinguish avarice
r ambition, or suppress that reluctance with
vhich a man passes his days in a state of inferi-
rity, must, at least, have made the lower con-
litions less grating and wearisome, and has con-
equently contributed to the general security of
ife, by hindering that fraud and violence, rapine
nd circumvention, which must have been pro-
ı ced by an unbounded eagerness of wealth, aris-
from an unshaken conviction that to be rich
be happy.

Whoever finds himself incited, by some vio-
nt impulse of passion, to pursue riches as the
nief end of being, must surely be so much a-
ırmed by the successive admonitions of those
hose experience and sagacity have recom-
ıended them as the guides of mankind, as to
op and consider whether he is about to engage
ı an undertaking that will reward his toil, and
examine, before he rushes to wealth, through
ght and wrong, what it will confer when he
ıs acquired it; and his examination will seldom
il to repress his ardour, and retard his violence.

Wealth is nothing in itself, it is not useful but
hen it departs from us; its value is found only
that which it can purchase, which, if we sup-
se it put to its best use by those that possess it,
ems not much to deserve the desire or envy of
wise man. It is certain that, with regard to
rporeal enjoyment, money can neither open
w avenues to pleasure, nor block up the pas-
ges of anguish.

Disease and infirmity still continue to torture
d enfeeble, perhaps exasperated by luxury, or
omoted by softness. With respect to the
ind, it has rarely been observed, that wealth
ntributes much to quicken the discernment,
arge the capacity, or elevate the imagination;
t may, by hiring flattery, or laying diligence
eep, confirm error and harden stupidity.

Wealth cannot confer greatness, for nothing
ı make that great, which the decree of nature
ordained to be little. The bramble may be
ced in a hot-bed, but can never become an
. Even royalty itself is not able to give that
nity which it happens not to find, but oppres-
feeble minds, though it may elevate the
ong. The world has been governed in the
ne of kings, whose existence has scarcely
n perceived by any real effects beyond their
n palaces.

When therefore the desire of wealth is taking
l of the heart, let us look round and see how
perates upon those whose industry or fortune
obtained it. When we find them oppressed
h their own abundance, luxurious without
sure, idle without ease, impatient and queru-
in themselves, and despised or hated by the
of mankind, we shall soon be convinced,
if the real wants of our condition are
fied, there remains little to be sought with
itude, or desired with eagerness.

No. 59.] TUESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1750.

Est aliquid, fatale malum per verba levare:
Hoc querulam Prognen Halcyonenque facit.
Hoc erat in solo quare Pæantius antro
Voce fatigaret Lemnia saxa sua.
Strangulat inclusus dolor, atque exæstuat intus:
Cogitur et vires multiplicare suas. OVID.

Complaining oft gives respite to our grief;
From hence the wretched Progne sought relief;
Hence the Pæantian chief his fate deplores,
And vents his sorrow to the Lemnian shores:
In vain by secrecy he would assuage
Our cares; conceal'd they gather tenfold rage.
F. LEWIS.

IT is common to distinguish men by the names of animals which they are supposed to resemble. Thus a hero is frequently termed a lion, and a statesman a fox, an extortioner gains the appellation of vulture, and a fop the title of monkey. There is also among the various anomalies of character, which a survey of the world exhibits, a species of beings in human form, which may be properly marked out as the screech-owls of mankind.

These screech-owls seem to be settled in an opinion that the great business of life is to complain, and that they were born for no other purpose than to disturb the happiness of others, to lessen the little comforts, and shorten the short pleasures of our condition, by painful remembrances of the past, or melancholy prognostics of the future; their only care is to crush the rising hope, to damp the kindling transport, and allay the golden hours of gayety with the hateful dross of grief and suspicion.

To those whose weakness of spirits, or timidity of temper, subjects them to impressions from others, and who are apt to suffer by fascination, and catch the contagion of misery, it is extremely unhappy to live within the compass of a screech-owl's voice; for it will often fill their ears in the hour of dejection, terrify them with apprehensions which their own thoughts would never have produced, and sadden, by intruded sorrows, the day which might have been passed in amusements or in business; it will burden the heart with unnecessary discontents, and weaken for a time that love of life which is necessary to the vigorous prosecution of any undertaking.

Though I have, like the rest of mankind, many failings and weaknesses, I have not yet, by either friends or enemies, been charged with superstition; I never count the company which I enter, and I look at the new moon indifferently over either shoulder. I have, like most other philosophers, often heard the cuckoo without money in my pocket, and have been sometimes reproached as fool-hardy for not turning down my eyes when a raven flew over my head. I never go home abruptly because a snake crosses

my way, nor have any particular dread of a climacterical year: yet I confess that, with all my scorn of old women, and their tales, I consider it as an unhappy day when I happen to be greeted, in the morning, by Suspirius the screech-owl.

I have now known Suspirius fifty-eight years and four months, and have never yet passed an hour with him in which he has not made some attack upon my quiet. When we were first acquainted, his great topic was the misery of youth without riches; and whenever we walked out together he solaced me with a long enumeration of pleasures, which, as they were beyond the reach of my fortune, were without the verge of my desires, and which I should never have considered as the objects of a wish, had not his unseasonable representations placed them in my sight.

Another of his topics is the neglect of merit, with which he never fails to amuse every man whom he sees not eminently fortunate. If he meets with a young officer, he always informs him of gentlemen whose personal courage is unquestioned, and whose military skill qualifies them to command armies, that have, notwithstanding all their merit, grown old with subaltern commissions. For a genius in the church, he is always provided with a curacy for life. The lawyer he informs of many men of great parts and deep study, who have never had an opportunity to speak in the courts: and meeting Serenus the physician, "Ah, doctor," says he, "what, a-foot still, when so many blockheads are rattling in their chariots? I told you seven years ago that you would never meet with encouragement, and I hope you will now take more notice, when I tell you that your Greek, and your diligence, and your honesty, will never enable you to live like yonder apothecary, who prescribes to his own shop, and laughs at the physician."

Suspirius has, in his time, intercepted fifteen authors in their way to the stage; persuaded nine and thirty merchants to retire from a prosperous trade for fear of bankruptcy, broke off a hundred and thirteen matches by prognostications of unhappiness, and enabled the small-pox to kill nineteen ladies, by perpetual alarms of the loss of beauty.

Whenever my evil stars bring us together, he never fails to represent to me the folly of my pursuits, and informs me that we are much older than when we begun our acquaintance, that the infirmities of decrepitude are coming fast upon me, that whatever I now get, I shall enjoy but a little time, that fame is to a man tottering on the edge of the grave of very little importance, and that the time is at hand when I ought to look for no other pleasures than a good dinner and an easy chair.

Thus he goes on in his unharmonious strain, displaying present miseries, and foreboding more, *νυκτικόραξ ἀεὶ θανατήφορος*, every syllable is loaded with misfortune, and death is always brought nearer to the view. Yet, what always raises my resentment and indignation, I do not perceive that his mournful meditations have much effect upon himself. He talks and has long talked of calamities, without discovering otherwise than by the tone of his voice that he feels any of the evils which he bewails or threatens, but has the same habit of uttering lamentations, as others of telling stories, and falls into expressions of condolence for past, or apprehension of future mischiefs, as all men studious of their ease have recourse to those subjects upon which they can most fluently or copiously discourse.

It is reported of the Sybarites, that they destroyed all their cocks, that they might dream out their morning dreams without disturbance. Though I would not so far promote effeminacy as to propose the Sybarites for an example, yet since there is no man so corrupt or foolish, but something useful may be learned from him, I could wish that, in imitation of a people not often to be copied, some regulations might be made to exclude screech-owls from all company, as the enemies of mankind, and confine them to some proper receptacle, where they may mingle sighs at leisure, and thicken the gloom of one another.

Thou prophet of evil, says Homer's Agamemnon, *thou never foretellest me good, but the joy of thy heart is to predict misfortunes.* Whoever is of the same temper, might there find the means of indulging his thoughts, and improving his vein of denunciation, and the flock of screech-owls might hoot together without injury to the rest of the world. Yet, though I have so little kindness for this dark generation, I am very far from intending to debar the soft and tender mind from the privilege of complaining, when the sigh arises from the desire not of giving pain, but of gaining ease. To hear complaints with patience, even when complaints are vain, is one of the duties of friendship; and though it must be allowed that he suffers most like a hero that hides his grief in silence,

Spem vultu simulat, premit altum corde dolorem

His outward smiles conceal'd his inward smart.

DRYDEN.

yet it cannot be denied, that he who complains acts like a man, like a social being, who looks for help from his fellow-creatures. Pity is to many of the unhappy a source of comfort in hopeless distresses, as it contributes to recommend them to themselves, by proving that they have not lost the regard of others; and Heaven seems to indicate the duty even of barren compassion, by inclining us to weep for evils which we cannot remedy.

No. 60.] Saturday, October 13, 1750.

—Quid sit pulchrum quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,
Plenius ac melius Chrysippo et Crantore dicit.

HOR.

Whose works the beautiful and base contain,
Of vice and virtue more instructive rules,
Than all the sober sages of the schools. FRANCIS.

All joy or sorrow for the happiness or calamities of others is produced by an act of the imagination, that realizes the event however fictitious, or approximates it however remote, by placing us, for a time, in the condition of him whose fortune we contemplate; so that we feel, while the deception lasts, whatever motions would be excited by the same good or evil happening to ourselves.

Our passions are therefore more strongly moved, in proportion as we can more readily adopt the pains or pleasure proposed to our minds, by recognising them as once our own, or considering them as naturally incident to our state of life. It is not easy for the most artful writer to give us an interest in happiness or misery, which we think ourselves never likely to feel, and with which we have never yet been made acquainted. Histories of the downfall of kingdoms, and revolutions of empires, are read with great tranquillity: the imperial tragedy pleases common auditors only by its pomp of ornament and grandeur of ideas; and the man whose faculties have been engrossed by business, and whose heart never fluttered but at the rise or fall of stocks, wonders how the attention can be seized, or the affection agitated, by a tale of love.

Those parallel circumstances and kindred images to which we readily conform our minds, are, above all others writings, to be found in narratives of the lives of particular persons; and therefore no species of writing seems more worthy of cultivation than biography, since none can be more delightful or more useful, none can more certainly enchain the heart by irresistible interest, or more widely diffuse instruction to every diversity of condition.

The general and rapid narratives of history, which involve a thousand fortunes in the business of a day, and complicate innumerable incidents in one great transaction, afford few lessons applicable to private life, which derives its comforts and its wretchedness from the right or wrong management of things, which nothing but their frequency makes considerable, *Parva non fiunt quotidie*, says Pliny, and which can have no place in those relations which never descend below the consultation of senates, the motions of armies, and the schemes of conspirators.

I have often thought that there has rarely passed a life of which a judicious and faithful narrative would not be useful. For, not only every man has, in the mighty mass of the world, great numbers in the same condition with himself, to whom his mistakes and miscarriages, escapes and expedients, would be of immediate and apparent use; but there is such a uniformity in the state of man, considered apart from adventitious and separable decorations and disguises, that there is scarce any possibility of good or ill, but is common to human kind. A great part of the time of those who are placed at the greatest distance by fortune, or by temper, must unavoidably pass in the same manner; and though, when the claims of nature are satisfied, caprice, and vanity, and accident, begin to produce discriminations and peculiarities, yet the eye is not very heedful or quick, which cannot discover the same causes still terminating their influence in the same effects, though sometimes accelerated, sometimes retarded, or perplexed by multiplied combinations. We are all prompted by the same motives, all deceived by the same fallacies, all animated by hope, obstructed by danger, entangled by desire, and seduced by pleasure.

It is frequently objected to relations of particular lives, that they are not distinguished by any striking or wonderful vicissitudes. The scholar, who passed his life among his books, the merchant, who conducted only his own affairs, the priest, whose sphere of action was not extended beyond that of his duty, are considered as no proper objects of public regard, however they might have excelled in their several stations, whatever might have been their learning, integrity, and piety. But this notion arises from false measures of excellence and dignity, and must be eradicated by considering, that, in the esteem of uncorrupted reason, what is of most use is of most value.

It is, indeed, not improper to take honest advantages of prejudice, and to gain attention by a celebrated name; but the business of the biographer is often to pass slightly over those performances and incidents, which produce vulgar greatness, to lead the thoughts into domestic privacies, and display the minute details of daily life, where exterior appendages are cast aside, and men excel each other only by prudence and by virtue. The account of Thuanus is, with great propriety, said by its author to have been written, that it might lay open to posterity the private and familiar character of that man, *cujus ingenium et candorem ex ipsius scriptis sunt olim semper miraturi*, whose candour and genius will to the end of time be by his writings preserved in admiration.

There are many invisible circumstances which, whether we read as inquirers after natural or moral knowledge, whether we intend to enlarge our science, or increase our virtue,

are more important than public occurrences. Thus Sallust, the great master of nature, has not forgotten, in his account of Catiline, to remark, that *his walk was now quick, and again slow*, as an indication of a mind revolving something with violent commotion. Thus the story of Melancthon affords a striking lecture on the value of time, by informing us, that when he made an appointment, he expected not only the hour but the minute to be fixed, that the day might not run out in the idleness of suspense: and all the plans and enterprises of De Witt are now of less importance to the world than that part of his personal character, which represents him as *careful of his health, and negligent of his life.*

But biography has often been allotted to writers who seem very little acquainted with the nature of their task, or very negligent about the performance. They rarely afford any other account than might be collected from public papers, but imagine themselves writing a life when they exhibit a chronological series of actions or preferments; and so little regard the manners or behaviour of their heroes, that more knowledge may be gained of a man's real character, by a short conversation with one of his servants, than from a formal and studied narrative, begun with his pedigree, and ended with his funeral.

If now and then they condescend to inform the world of particular facts, they are not always so happy as to select the most important. I know not well what advantage posterity can receive from the only circumstance by which Tickell has distinguished Addison from the rest of mankind, *the irregularity of his pulse:* nor can I think myself over-paid for the time spent in reading the life of Malherb, by being enabled to relate, after the learned biographer, that Malherb had two predominant opinions; one, that the looseness of a single woman might destroy all her boast of ancient descent; the other, that the French beggars made use very improperly and barbarously of the phrase *noble Gentleman*, because either word included the sense of both.

There are, indeed, some natural reasons why these narratives are often written by such as were not likely to give much instruction or delight, and why most accounts of particular persons are barren and useless. If a life be delayed till interest and envy are at an end, we may hope for impartiality, but must expect little intelligence; for the incidents which give excellence to biography are of a volatile and evanescent kind, such as soon escape the memory, and are rarely transmitted by tradition. We know how few can portray a living acquaintance, except by his most prominent and observable particularities, and the grosser features of his mind; and it may be easily imagined how much of this little knowledge may be lost in imparting it, and how soon a succession o copies will lose all resemblance of the original.

If the biographer writes from personal knowledge, and makes haste to gratify the publi curiosity, there is danger least his interest, hi fear, his gratitude, or his tenderness, overpowe his fidelity, and tempt him to conceal, if not t invent. There are many who think it an ac of piety to hide the faults or failings of thei friends, even when they can no longer suffer by their detection; we therefore see whole rank of characters adorned with uniform panegyric and not to be known from one another, but by extrinsic and casual circumstances. "Let me remember," says Hale, "when I find mysel inclined to pity a criminal, that there is likewise a pity due to the country." If we owe regard to the memory of the dead, there is yet more respect to be paid to knowledge, to virtue, and to truth.

No. 61.] TUESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1750.

Falsus honor juvat, et mendax infamia terret
Quem, nisi mendosum et mendacem?—— HOR.

False praise can charm, unreal shame controul—
Whom, but a vicious or a sickly soul?—

FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

IT is extremely vexatious to a man of eager and thirsty curiosity to be placed at a great distance from the fountain of intelligence, and not only never to receive the current of report till it has satiated the greatest part of the nation, but at last to find it mudded in its course, and corrupted with taints or mixtures from every channel through which it flowed.

One of the chief pleasures of my life is to hear what passes in the world, to know what are the schemes of the politic, the aims of the busy, and the hopes of the ambitious; what changes of public measures are approaching who is likely to be crushed in the collision o parties; who is climbing to the top of power and who is tottering on the precipice of disgrace. But as it is very common for us to desire most what we are least qualified to obtain I have suffered this appetite of news to outgrow all the gratifications which my present situation can afford it; for being placed in a remote country, I am condemned always to confound the future with the past, to form prognostications of events no longer doubtful and to consider the expediency of schemes already executed or defeated. I am perplexed with a perpetual deception in my prospects, like a man pointing his telescope at a remote star

vhich before the light reaches his eye has for-aken the place from which it was emitted.

The mortification of being thus always be-ind the active world in my reflections and iscoveries, is exceedingly aggravated by the etulance of those whose health, or business, r pleasure, brings them hither from London. 'or, without considering the insuperable dis-dvantages of my condition, and the unavoida-le ignorance which absence must produce, ıey often treat me with the utmost supercil-ousness of contempt, for not knowing what no ıuman sagacity can discover; and sometimes eem to consider me as a wretch scarcely wor-ıy of human converse, when I happen to talk f the fortune of a bankrupt, or propose the ealths of the dead, when I warn them of mis-iefs already incurred, or wish for measures ıat have been lately taken. They seem to tribute to the superiority of their intellects hat they only owe to the accident of their ɔnditions, and think themselves indisputably ıtitled to airs of insolence and authority, when ıey find another ignorant of facts, which, be-ıuse they echoed in the streets of London, they ıppose equally public in all other places, and ıown where they could neither be seen, relat-l, nor conjectured.

To this haughtiness they are indeed too much ıcouraged by the respect which, they receive nongst us, for no other reason than that they me from London. For no sooner is the ar-val of one of these disseminators of knowledge ıown in the country, than we crowd about m from every quarter, and by innumerable quiries flatter him into an opinion of his own ıportance. He sees himself surrounded by ultitudes, who propose their doubts, and re-r their controversies, to him, as to a being iscended from some nobler region, and he ows on a sudden oraculous and infallible, ves all difficulties, and sets all objections at fiance.

There is, in my opinion, great reason for specting, that they sometimes take advantage this reverential modesty, and impose upon istic understandings, with a false show of uni-rsal intelligence; for I do not find that they e willing to own themselves ignorant of any ing, or that they dismiss any inquirer with positive and decisive answer. The court, the y, the park, and exchange, are to those men unbounded observation equally familiar, and y are alike ready to tell the hour at which cks will rise, or the ministry be changed.

A short residence at London entitles a man knowledge, to wit, to politeness, and to a potic and dictatorial power of prescribing to rude multitude, whom he condescends to nour with a biennial visit; yet, I know not ll upon what motives, I have lately found self inclined to cavil at this prescription, and to doubt whether it be not, on some occasions, proper to withhold our veneration, till we are more authentically convinced of the merits of the claimant.

It is well remembered here, that, about seven years ago, one Frolic, a tall boy, with lank hair, remarkable for stealing eggs, and sucking them, was taken from the school in this parish, and sent up to London to study the law. As he had given amongst us no proofs of a genius designed by nature for extraordinary performances, he was, from the time of his departure, totally forgotten, nor was there any talk of his vices or virtues, his good or his ill fortune, till last summer a report burst upon us, that Mr. Frolic was come down in the first post-chaise which this village had seen, having travelled with such rapidity that one of his postilions had broken his leg, and another narrowly escaped suffocation in a quicksand; but that Mr. Frolic seemed totally unconcerned, for such things were never heeded at London.

Mr. Frolic next day appeared among the gentlemen at their weekly meeting on the bowling-green, and now were seen the effects of a London education. His dress, his language, his ideas, were all new, and he did not much endeavour to conceal his contempt of every thing that differed from the opinions, or practice, of the modish world. He showed us the deformity of our skirts and sleeves, informed us where hats of the proper size were to be sold, and recommended to us the reformation of a thousand absurdities in our clothes, our cookery, and our conversation. When any of his phrases were unintelligible, he could not suppress the joy of confessed superiority, but frequently delayed the explanation, that he might enjoy his triumph over our barbarity.

When he is pleased to entertain us with a story, he takes care to crowd into it names of streets, squares, and buildings, with which he knows we are unacquainted. The favourite topics of his discourse are the pranks of drunkards, and the tricks put upon country gentlemen by porters and link-boys. When he is with ladies, he tells them of the innumerable pleasures to which he can introduce them; but never fails to hint how much they will be deficient, at their first arrival, in the knowledge of the town. What it is *to know the town*, he has not indeed hitherto informed us, though there is no phrase so frequent in his mouth, nor any science which he appears to think of so great a value, or so difficult attainment.

But my curiosity has been most engaged by the recital of his own adventures and achievements. I have heard of the union of various characters in single persons, but never met with such a constellation of great qualities as this man's narrative affords. Whatever has distinguished the hero; whatever has elevated the

wit; whatever has endeared the lover, are all concentred in Mr. Frolic, whose life has, for seven years, been a regular interchange of intrigues, dangers, and waggeries, and who has distinguished himself in every character that can be feared, envied, or admired.

I question whether all the officers of the royal navy can bring together, from all their journals, a collection of so many wonderful escapes as this man has known upon the Thames, on which he has been a thousand and a thousand times on the point of perishing, sometimes by the terrors of foolish women in the same boat, sometimes by his own acknowledged imprudence in passing the river in the dark, and sometimes by shooting the bridge under which he has rencountered mountainous waves and dreadful cataracts.

Nor less has been his temerity by land, nor fewer his hazards. He has reeled with giddiness on the top of the monument; he has crossed the street amidst the rush of coaches; he has been surrounded by robbers without number; he has headed parties at the playhouse; he has scaled the windows of every toast, of whatever condition; he has been hunted for whole winters by his rivals; he has slept upon bulks, he has cut chairs, he has bilked coachmen; he has rescued his friends from the bailiffs; has knocked down the constable, has bullied the justice, and performed many other exploits, that have filled the town with wonder and with merriment.

But yet greater is the fame of his understanding than his bravery; for he informs us, that he is, at London, the established arbitrator of all points of honour, and the decisive judge of all performances of genius; that no musical performer is in reputation till the opinion of Frolic has ratified his pretensions; that the theatres suspend their sentence till he begins the clap or hiss, in which all are proud to concur; that no public entertainment has failed or succeeded, but because he opposed or favoured it; that all controversies at the gaming-table are referred to his determination; that he adjusts the ceremonial at every assembly, and prescribes every fashion of pleasure or of dress.

With every man whose name occurs in the papers of the day, he is intimately acquainted; and there are very few posts, either in the state or army, of which he has not more or less influenced the disposal. He has been very frequently consulted both upon war and peace; but the time is not yet come when the nation shall know how much it is indebted to the genius of Frolic.

Yet, notwithstanding all these declarations, I cannot hitherto persuade myself to see that Mr. Frolic has more wit, or knowledge, or courage, than the rest of mankind, or that any uncommon enlargement of his faculties has happened in the time of his absence. For when he talks on subjects known to the rest of the company he has no advantage over us, but by catches of interruption, briskness of interrogation, and pertness of contempt; and therefore if he has stunned the world with his name, and gained a place in the first ranks of humanity, I cannot but conclude, that either a little understanding confers eminence at London, or that Mr. Frolic thinks us unworthy of the exertion of his powers, or that his faculties are benumbed by rural stupidity, as the magnetic needle loses its animation in the polar climes.

I would not, however, like many hasty philosophers, search after the cause till I am certain of the effect; and therefore I desire to be informed, whether you have yet heard the great name of Mr. Frolic. If he is celebrated by other tongues than his own, I shall willingly propagate his praise; but if he has swelled amongst us with empty boasts, and honours conferred only by himself, I shall treat him with rustic sincerity, and drive him as an impostor from this part of the kingdom to some region of more credulity.

I am, &c.

RURICOLA.

No. 62.] SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1750.

Nunc ego Triptolemi cuperem conscendere currus
Misit in ignotam qui rude semen humum:
Nunc ego Medeæ vellem frænare dracones,
Quos habuit fugiens arce, Corinthe, tua;
Nunc ego jactandas optarem sumere pennas,
Sive tuas, Perseu; Dædale, sive tuas. OVID.

Now would I mount his car, whose bounteous hand
First sow'd with teeming seed the furrow'd land:
Now to Medea's dragons fix my reins,
That swiftly bore her from Corinthian plains:
Now on Dædalian waxen pinions stray,
Or those which wafted Perseus on his way.

F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM a young woman of a very large fortune, which, if my parents would have been persuaded to comply with the rules and customs of the polite part of mankind, might long since have raised me to the highest honours of the female world; but so strangely have they hitherto contrived to waste my life, that I am now on the borders of twenty, without having ever danced but at our monthly assembly, or been toasted but among a few gentlemen of the neighbourhood, or seen any company in which it was worth a wish to be distinguished.

My father having impaired his patrimony in soliciting a place at court, at last grew wise enough to cease his pursuit; and, to repair the consequences of expensive attendance and negligence of his affairs, married a lady much older than himself, who had lived in the fashionable

orld till she was considered as an incumbrance
on parties of pleasure, and as I can collect
om incidental informations, retired from gay
semblies just time enough to escape the morti-
ation of universal neglect.

She was, however, still rich, and not yet
rinkled; my father was too distressfully em-
rrassed to think much on any thing but
e means of extrication, and though it is not
tely that he wanted the delicacy which polite
nversation will always produce in understand-
gs not remarkably defective, yet he was con-
nted with a match, by which he might be set
e from inconveniences that would have de-
oyed all the pleasures of imagination, and
ten from softness and beauty the power of
ighting.

As they were both somewhat disgusted with
ir treatment in the world, and married,
ough without any dislike of each other, yet
ncipally for the sake of setting themselves
e from dependence on caprice or fashion, they
n retired into the country, and devoted their
s to rural business and diversions.

They had not much reason to regret the
nge of their situation; for their vanity,
ich had so long been tormented by neglect and
appointment, was here gratified with every
our that could be paid them. Their long
siliarity with public life, made them the
cles of all those who aspired to intelligence or
teness. My father dictated politics, my
her prescribed the mode, and it was sufficient
otitle any family to some consideration, that
were known to visit at Mrs. Courtly's.

n this state they were, to speak in the style
novelists, made happy by the birth of your
espondent. My parents had no other child,
as therefore not brow-beaten by a saucy
her, or lost in a multitude of co-heiresses,
se fortunes being equal, would probably
conferred equal merit, and procured equal
rd; and as my mother was now old, my
erstanding and my person had fair play, my
iries were not checked, my advances towards
ortance were not repressed, and I was soon
red to tell my own opinions, and early ac-
med to hear my own praises.

these accidental advantages I was much
ed above the young ladies with whom I
ersed, and was treated by them with great
ence. I saw none who did not seem to
ss my superiority, and to be held in awe by
splendour of my appearance; for the fond-
of my father made him pleased to see me
ed, and my mother had no vanity nor ex-
s to hinder her from concurring with his
nation.

us, Mr. Rambler, I lived without much
e after any thing beyond the circle of our
; and here I should have quietly continued
tion out my time among my books and my needle, and my company, had not my curiosity been every moment excited by the conversation of my parents, who, whenever they sit down to familiar prattle, and endeavour the entertainment of each other, immediately transport themselves to London, and relate some adventure in a hackney coach, some frolic at a masquerade, some conversation in the Park, or some quarrel at an assembly, display the magnificence of a birth-night, relate the conquests of maids of honour, or give a history of diversions, shows, and entertainments, which I had never known but from their accounts.

I am so well versed in the history of the gay world, that I can relate, with great punctuality, the lives of all the last race of wits and beauties; can enumerate, with exact chronology, the whole succession of celebrated singers, musicians, tragedians, comedians, and harlequins; can tell to the last twenty years all the changes of fashions; and am, indeed, a complete antiquary with respect to head-dresses, dances, and operas.

You will easily imagine, Mr. Rambler, that I could not hear these narratives, for sixteen years together, without suffering some impressions, and wishing myself nearer to those places where every hour brings some new pleasure, and life is diversified with an inexhausted succession of felicity.

I indeed often asked my mother why she left a place which she recollected with so much delight, and why she did not visit London once a year, like some other ladies, and initiate me in the world by showing me its amusements, its grandeur, and its variety. But she always told me that the days which she had seen were such as will never come again, that all diversion is now degenerated, that the conversation of the present age is insipid, that their fashions are unbecoming, their customs absurd, and their morals corrupt; that there is no ray left of the genius which enlightened the times that she remembers; that no one who had seen, or heard, the ancient performers, would be able to bear the bunglers of this despicable age: and that there is now neither politeness, nor pleasure, nor virtue, in the world. She therefore assures me that she consults my happiness by keeping me at home, for I should now find nothing but vexation and disgust, and she should be ashamed to see me pleased with such fopperies and trifles, as take up the thoughts of the present set of young people.

With this answer I was kept quiet for severa years, and thought it no great inconvenience to be confined to the country, till last summer a young gentleman and his sister came down to pass a few months with one of our neighbours. They had generally no great regard for the country ladies, but distinguished me by a particular complaisance, and as we grew intimate gave me such a detail of the elegance, the splen-

dour, the mirth, the happiness of the town, that I am resolved to be no longer buried in ignorance and obscurity, but to share with other wits the joy of being admired, and divide with other beauties the empire of the world.

I do not find, Mr. Rambler, upon a deliberate and impartial comparison, that I am excelled by Belinda in beauty, in wit, in judgment, in knowledge, or in any thing, but a kind of gay, lively familiarity, by which she mingles with strangers as with persons long acquainted, and which enables her to display her powers without any obstruction, hesitation, or confusion. Yet she can relate a thousand civilities paid to her in public, can produce, from a hundred lovers, letters filled with praises, protestations, ecstacies, and despair; has been handed by dukes to her chair; has been the occasion of innumerable quarrels; has paid twenty visits in an afternoon; been invited to six balls in an evening, and been forced to retire to lodgings in the country from the importunity of courtship, and the fatigue of pleasure.

I tell you, Mr. Rambler, I will stay here no longer. I have at last prevailed upon my mother to send me to town, and shall set out in three weeks on the grand expedition. I intend to live in public, and to crowd into the winter every pleasure which money can purchase, and every honour which beauty can obtain.

But this tedious interval how shall I endure? Cannot you alleviate the misery of delay by some pleasing description of the entertainments of the town? I can read, I can talk, I can think of nothing else; and if you will not soothe my impatience, heighten my ideas, and animate my hopes, you may write for those who have more leisure, but are not to expect any longer the honour of being read by those eyes which are now intent only on conquest and destruction.

RHODOCLIA.

No. 68.] TUESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1750.

——Habebat sæpe ducentos,
Sæpe decem servos; modo reges atque tetrarchas,
Omnia magna loquens: modo, sit mihi mensa tripes, et
Concha salis puri, et toga, quæ defendere frigus,
Quamvis crassa queat. HOR.

Now with two hundred slaves he crowds his train;
Now walks with ten. In high and haughty strain
At morn, of kings and governors he prates;
At night,—"A frugal table, O ye fates,
A little shell the sacred salt to hold,
And clothes, though coarse, to keep me from the cold."

FRANCIS.

IT has been remarked, perhaps, by every writer who has left behind him observations upon life, that no man is pleased with his present state; which proves equally unsatisfactory, says Horace, whether fallen upon by chance or chose with deliberation; we are always disgusted with some circumstance or other of our situation, and imagine the condition of others more abundant in blessings, or less exposed to calamities.

This universal discontent has been generally mentioned with great severity of censure, as unreasonable in itself, since of two, equally envious of each other, both cannot have the larger share of happiness, and as tending to darken life with unnecessary gloom, by withdrawing our minds from the contemplation and enjoyment of that happiness which our state affords us, and fixing our attention upon foreign objects which we only behold to depress ourselves, and increase our misery by injurious comparisons.

When this opinion of the felicity of others predominates in the heart, so as to excite resolutions of obtaining, at whatever price, the condition to which such transcendent privileges are supposed to be annexed; when it bursts forth to action, and produces fraud, violence, and injustice, it is to be pursued with all the rigour of legal punishments. But while operating only upon the thoughts, it disturbs none but him who has happened to admit it, and however it may interrupt content, makes no attack on piety or virtue, I cannot think it so far criminal as ridiculous, but that it may deserve some pity and admit some excuse.

That all are equally happy, or miserable, I suppose none is sufficiently enthusiastical to maintain; because though we cannot judge of the condition of others, yet every man has found frequent vicissitudes in his own state, and must therefore be convinced that life is susceptible of more or less felicity. What then shall forbid us to endeavour the alteration of that which is capable of being improved, and to grasp at augmentations of good, when we know it possible to be increased, and believe that any particular change of situation will increase it?

If he that finds himself uneasy may reasonably make efforts to rid himself from vexation, all mankind have a sufficient plea for some degree of restlessness, and the fault seems to be little more than too much temerity of conclusion, in favour of something not yet experienced, and too much readiness to believe, that the misery which our own passions and appetites produce, is brought upon us by accidental causes and external efficients.

It is, indeed, frequently discovered by us, that we complained too hastily of peculiar hardships, and imagined ourselves distinguished by embarrassments, in which other classes of men were equally entangled. We often change a light evil for a greater evil, and wish ourselves restored again to the state from which we thought it desirable to be delivered. But this knowledge, though it is easily gained by the trial, is not always attainable any other way; and that er-

annot justly be reproached which reason could ot obviate, nor prudence avoid.

To take a view at once distinct and compre- ensive of human life, with all its intricacies of ombination, and varieties of connection, is be- ond the power of mortal intelligences. Of the ate with which practice has not acquainted us e snatch a glimpse, we discern a point, and gulate the rest by passion and by fancy. In is inquiry every favourite prejudice, every in- te desire, is busy to deceive us. We are un- ppy, at least less happy than our nature seems admit; we necessarily desire the melioration our lot; what we desire we very reasonably k, and what we seek we are naturally eager believe that we have found. Our confidence often disappointed, but our reason is not con- iced, and there is no man who does not hope something which he has not, though per- os his wishes lie inactive, because he foresees difficulty of attainment. As among the merous students of Hermetic philosophy, not appears to have desisted from the task of nsmutation, from conviction of its impossi- ity, but from weariness of toil, or impatience elay, a broken body, or exhausted fortune. resolution and mutability are often the ts of men whose views are wide, and whose gination is vigorous and excursive, because cannot confine their thoughts within their boundaries of action, but are continually ging over all the scenes of human existence, consequently are often apt to conceive that fall upon new regions of pleasure, and start possibilities of happiness. Thus they are led with a perpetual succession of schemes, pass their lives in alternate elation and ow, for want of that calm and immoveable iescence in their condition, by which men ower understandings are fixed for ever to rtain point, or led on in the plain beaten which their fathers and grandsires have len before them.

two conditions of life equally inviting to rospect, that will always have the disad- ge which we have already tried; because vils which we have felt we cannot exten- and though we have, perhaps from na- the power as well of aggravating the ity which we fear, as of heightening the ng we expect, yet in those meditations we indulge by choice, and which are not upon the mind by necessity, we have the art of fixing our regard upon the pleasing images, and suffer hope to dispose hts by which we look upon futurity.

good and ill of different modes of life are imes so equally opposed, that perhaps no ver yet made his choice between them upon conviction, and adequate knowledge; and ore fluctuation of will is not more won- , when they are proposed to the election, than oscillations of a beam charged with equal weights. The mind no sooner imagines itself determined by some prevalent advantage, than some convenience of equal weight is discovered on the other side, and the resolutions which are suggested by the nicest examination, are often repented as soon as they are taken.

Eumenes, a young man of great abilities, inherited a large estate from a father long eminent in conspicuous employments. His father harassed with competitions, and perplexed with multiplicity of business, recommended the quiet of a private station with so much force, that Eumenes for some years resisted every motion of ambitious wishes; but being once provoked by the sight of oppression, which he could not redress, he began to think it the duty of an honest man to enable himself to protect others, and gradually felt a desire of greatness, excited by a thousand projects of advantage to his country. His fortune placed him in the senate, his knowledge and eloquence advanced him at court, and he possessed that authority and influence which he had resolved to exert for the happiness of mankind.

He now became acquainted with greatness, and was in a short time convinced, that in proportion as the power of doing well is enlarged, the temptations to do ill are multiplied and enforced. He felt himself every moment in danger of being either seduced or driven from his honest purposes. Sometimes a friend was to be gratified, and sometimes a rival to be crushed, by means which his conscience could not approve. Sometimes he was forced to comply with the prejudices of the public, and sometimes with the schemes of the ministry. He was by degrees wearied with perpetual struggles to unite policy and virtue, and went back to retirement as the shelter of innocence, persuaded that he could only hope to benefit mankind, by a blameless example of private virtue. Here he spent some years in tranquillity and beneficence; but finding that corruption increased and false opinions in government prevailed, he thought himself again summoned to posts of public trust, from which new evidence of his own weakness again determined him to retire.

Thus men may be made inconstant by virtue and by vice, by too much or too little thought; yet inconstancy, however dignified by its motives, is always to be avoided, because life allows us but a small time for inquiry and experiment, and he that steadily endeavours at excellence, in whatever employment, will more benefit mankind than he that hesitates in choosing his part till he is called to the performance. The traveller that resolutely follows a rough and winding path, will sooner reach the end of his journey, than he that is always changing his direction, and wastes the hours of day-light in looking for smoother ground and shorter passages.

No. 64.] Saturday, October 27, 1750.

Idem velle, et idem nolle, ea demum firma amicitia est. SALLUST.

To live in friendship, is to have the same desires and the same aversions.

When Socrates was building himself a house at Athens, being asked by one that observed the littleness of the design, why a man so eminent would not have an abode more suitable to his dignity? he replied, that he should think himself sufficiently accommodated if he could see that narrow habitation filled with real friends. Such was the opinion of this great master of human life, concerning the infrequency of such a union of minds as might deserve the name of friendship, that among the multitudes whom vanity or curiosity, civility or veneration, crowded about him, he did not expect, that very spacious apartments would be necessary to contain all that should regard him with sincere kindness, or adhere to him with steady fidelity.

So many qualities are indeed requisite to the possibility of friendship, and so many accidents must concur to its rise and its continuance, that the greatest part of mankind content themselves without it, and supply its place as they can, with interest and dependance.

Multitudes are unqualified for a constant and warm reciprocation of benevolence, as they are incapacitated for any other elevated excellence, by perpetual attention to their interest, and unresisting subjection to their passions. Long habits may superinduce inability to deny any desire, or repress, by superior motives, the importunities of any immediate gratification, and an inveterate selfishness will imagine all advantages diminished in proportion as they are communicated.

But not only this hateful and confirmed corruption, but many varieties of disposition, not inconsistent with common degrees of virtue, may exclude friendship from the heart. Some ardent enough in their benevolence, and defective neither in officiousness nor liberality, are mutable and uncertain, soon attracted by new objects, disgusted without offence, and alienated without enmity. Others are soft and flexible, easily influenced by reports or whispers, ready to catch alarms from every dubious circumstance, and to listen to every suspicion which envy and flattery shall suggest, to follow the opinion of every confident adviser, and move by the impulse of the last breath. Some are impatient of contradiction, more willing to go wrong by their own judgment, than to be indebted for a better or a safer way to the sagacity of another, inclined to consider counsel as insult, and inquiry as want of confidence, and to confer their regard on no other terms than unreserved submission and implicit compliance. Some are dark and involved, equally careful to conceal good and bad purposes; and pleased with producing effects by invisible means, and showing their design only in its execution. Others are universally communicative, alike open to every eye, and equally profuse of their own secrets and those of others, without the necessary vigilance of caution, or the honest arts of prudent integrity, ready to accuse without malice, and to betray without treachery. Any of these may be useful to the community, and pass through the world with the reputation of good purposes and uncorrupted morals, but they are unfit for close and tender intimacies. He cannot properly be chosen for a friend whose kindness is exhaled by its own warmth, or frozen by the first blast of slander; he can not be a useful counsellor who will hear no opinion but his own; he will not much invite confidence whose principal maxim is to suspect, nor can the candour and frankness of that man be much esteemed, who spreads his arms to human kind, and makes every man without distinction, a denizen of his bosom.

That friendship may be at once fond and lasting, there must not only be equal virtue on each part, but virtue of the same kind; not only the same end must be proposed, but the same means must be approved by both. We are often by superficial accomplishments and accidental endearments, induced to love those whom we cannot esteem; we are sometimes, by great abilities, and incontestible evidences of virtue, compelled to esteem those whom we cannot love. But friendship, compounded of esteem and love, derives from one its tenderness, and its permanence from the other; and therefore requires not only that its candidates should gain the judgment, but that they should attract the affections; that they should not only be firm in the day of distress, but gay in the hour of jollity; not only useful in exigences, but pleasant in familiar life; their presence should give cheerfulness as well as courage, and dispel all the gloom of fear and of melancholy.

To this mutual complacency is generally requisite a uniformity of opinions, at least in those active and conspicuous principles which discriminate parties in government, and sects in religion, and which every day operate more or less on the common business of life. Even though great tenderness has, perhaps, sometimes known to continue between persons eminent in contrary factions; yet such friendships are to be shown rather as prodigies than examples, and it is no more proper to regulate our conduct by such instances, than to leap a precipice, because some have fallen from it and escaped with life.

It cannot but be extremely difficult to preserve private kindness in the midst of public opposition, in which will necessarily be involved

thousand incidents extending their influence to conversation and privacy. Men engaged, by moral or religious motives, in contrary parties, will generally look with different eyes upon every man, and decide almost every question upon different principles. When such occasions of dispute happen, to comply is to betray our cause, and to maintain friendship by ceasing to deserve it; to be silent is to lose the happiness and dignity of independence, to live in perpetual constraint, and to desert, if not to betray: and who shall determine which of two friends shall yield, where neither believes himself mistaken, and both confess the importance of the question? What then remains but contradiction and debate? And from those what can be expected, but acrimony, and vehemence, the insolence of triumph, the vexation of defeat, and, in time, a weariness of contest, and an extinction of benevolence? Exchange of endearments and intercourse of civility may continue, indeed, as boughs may for a while be verdant, when the root is wounded; but the poison of discord is infused, and though the countenance may preserve its smile, the heart is hardening and contracting.

That man will not be long agreeable, whom we see only in times of seriousness and severity; and, therefore, to maintain the softness and serenity of benevolence, it is necessary that friends partake each other's pleasures as well as cares, and be led to the same diversions by similitude of taste. This is, however, not to be considered as equally indispensable with conformity of principles, because any man may honestly, according to the precepts of Horace, resign the gratifications of taste to the humour of another, and friendship may well deserve the sacrifice of pleasure, though not of conscience.

It was once confessed to me, by a painter, that no professor of his art ever loved another. This declaration is so far justified by the knowledge of life, as to damp the hopes of warm and constant friendship between men whom their studies have made competitors, and whom every flatterer and every censurer are hourly inciting against each other. The utmost expectation that experience can warrant, is, that they should forbear open hostilities and secret machinations still, when the whole fraternity is attacked, be ready to unite against a common foe. Some, however, though few, may perhaps be found, in whom emulation has not been able to overpower generosity, who are distinguished from lower beings by nobler motives than the love of fame, and can preserve the sacred flame of friendship from the gusts of pride, and the mists of interest.

Friendship is seldom lasting but between equals, or where the superiority on one side is reduced by some equivalent advantage on the other. Benefits which cannot be repaid, and obligations which cannot be discharged, are not commonly found to increase affection; they excite gratitude, indeed, and heighten veneration; but commonly take away that easy freedom and familiarity of intercourse, without which, though there may be fidelity, and zeal, and admiration, there cannot be friendship. Thus imperfect are all earthly blessings; the great effect of friendship is beneficence, yet by the first act of uncommon kindness it is endangered, like plants that bear their fruit and die. Yet this consideration ought not to restrain bounty, or repress compassion; for duty is to be preferred before convenience, and he that loses part of the pleasures of friendship by his generosity, gains in its place the gratulation of his conscience.

No. 65.] TUESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 1750.

——Garrit aniles
Ex re fabellas.—— HOR.

The cheerful sage, when solemn dictates fail,
Conceals the moral counsel in a tale.

OBIDAH, the son of Abensina, left the caravansary early in the morning, and pursued his journey through the plains of Indostan. He was fresh and vigorous with rest; he was animated with hope; he was incited by desire; he walked swiftly forward over the valleys, and saw the hills gradually rising before him. As he passed along, his ears were delighted with the morning song of the bird of paradise, he was fanned by the last flutters of the sinking breeze, and sprinkled with dew by groves of spices; he sometimes contemplated the towering height of the oak, monarch of the hills; and sometimes caught the gentle fragrance of the primrose, eldest daughter of the spring; all his senses were gratified, and all care was banished from his heart.

Thus he went on till the sun approached his meridian, and the increasing heat preyed upon his strength; he then looked round about him for some more commodious path. He saw, on his right hand, a grove that seemed to wave its shades as a sign of invitation; he entered it, and found the coolness and verdure irresistibly pleasant. He did not, however forget whither he was travelling, but found a narrow way bordered with flowers, which appeared to have the same direction with the main road, and was pleased that, by this happy experiment, he had found means to unite pleasure with business, and to gain the rewards of diligence, without suffering its fatigues. He, therefore, still continued to walk for a time, without the least remission of his ardour, except that he was sometimes tempted to stop by the music of the birds whom the heat had assembled in the shade; and sometimes amused himself with plucking the

flowers that covered the banks on either side, or the fruits that hung upon the branches. At last the green path began to decline from its first tendency, and to wind among hills and thickets, cooled with fountains and murmuring with water-falls. Here Obidah paused for a time, and began to consider whether it were longer safe to forsake the known and common track; but remembering that the heat was now in its greatest violence, and that the plain was dusty and uneven, he resolved to pursue the new path which he supposed only to make a few meanders, in compliance with the varieties of the ground, and to end at last in the common road.

Having thus calmed his solicitude, he renewed his pace, though he suspected that he was not gaining ground. This uneasiness of his mind inclined him to lay hold on every new object, and give way to every sensation that might soothe or divert him. He listened to every echo, he mounted every hill for a fresh prospect, he turned aside to every cascade, and pleased himself with tracing the course of a gentle river that rolled among the trees, and watered a large region with innumerable circumvolutions. In these amusements the hours passed away uncounted, his deviations had perplexed his memory, and he knew not towards what point to travel. He stood pensive and confused, afraid to go forward lest he should go wrong, yet conscious that the time of loitering was now past. While he was thus tortured with uncertainty, the sky was overspread with clouds, the day vanished from before him, and a sudden tempest gathered round his head. He was now roused by his danger to a quick and painful remembrance of his folly; he now saw how happiness is lost when ease is consulted; he lamented the unmanly impatience that prompted him to seek shelter in the grove, and despised the petty curiosity that led him on from trifle to trifle. While he was thus reflecting, the air grew blacker, and a clap of thunder broke his meditation.

He now resolved to do what remained yet in his power, to tread back the ground which he had passed, and try to find some issue where the wood might open into the plain. He prostrated himself on the ground, and commended his life to the Lord of nature. He rose with confidence and tranquillity, and pressed on with his sabre in his hand, for the beasts of the desert were in motion, and on every hand were heard the mingled howls of rage and fear, and ravage and expiration; all the horrors of darkness and solitude surrounded him: the winds roared in the woods, and the torrents tumbled from the hills,

——χειμάρροι ποταμοὶ, πατ' ὄρεως ῥίονας,
Ἐξ μεσονυκτίου συμβάλλοντες ὄβριμον ὕδωρ,
Τῶνδε τε πλῆτες δῶσιν ἰὼ σύριγγι ἑκλυε ποιμήν.

Work'd into sudden rage by wintery showers,
Down the steep hill the roaring torrent pours!
The mountain shepherd hears the distant noise.

Thus forlorn and distressed, he wandered through the wild, without knowing whither he was going, or whether he was every moment drawing nearer to safety or to destruction. At length not fear but labour began to overcome him; his breath grew short, and his knees trembled, and he was on the point of lying down in resignation to his fate, when he beheld through the brambles the glimmer of a taper. He advanced towards the light, and finding that it proceeded from the cottage of a hermit, he called humbly at the door, and obtained admission. The old man set before him such provisions as he had collected for himself, on which Obidah fed with eagerness and gratitude.

When the repast was over, "Tell me," said the hermit, "by what chance thou hast been brought hither; I have been now twenty years an inhabitant of the wilderness, in which I never saw a man before." Obidah then related the occurrences of his journey, without any concealment or palliation.

"Son," said the hermit, "let the errors and follies, the dangers and escape of this day, sink deep into thy heart. Remember, my son, that human life is the journey of a day. We rise in the morning of youth full of vigour and full of expectation; we set forward with spirit and hope, with gayety and with diligence, and travel on a while in the straight road of piety towards the mansions of rest. In a short time we remit our fervour, and endeavour to find some mitigation of our duty, and some more easy means of obtaining the same end. We then relax our vigour, and resolve no longer to be terrified with crimes at a distance, but rely upon our own constancy, and venture to approach what we resolve never to touch. We thus enter the bowers of ease, and repose in the shades of security. Here the heart softens, and vigilance subsides; we are then willing to inquire whether another advance cannot be made, and whether we may not, at least, turn our eyes upon the gardens of pleasure. We approach them with scruple and hesitation; we enter them, but enter timorous and trembling, and always hope to pass through them without losing the road of virtue, which we, for awhile, keep in our sight, and to which we propose to return. But temptation succeeds temptation, and one compliance prepares us for another; we in time lose the happiness of innocence, and solace our disquiet with sensual gratifications. By degrees we let fall the remembrance of our original intention, and quit the only adequate object of rational desire. We entangle ourselves in business, immerge ourselves in luxury, and rove through the labyrinths of inconstancy,

till the darkness of old age begins to invade us, and disease and anxiety obstruct our way. We then look back upon our lives with horror, with sorrow, with repentance; and wish, but too often vainly wish, that we had not forsaken the ways of virtue. Happy are they, my son, who shall learn from thy example not to despair, but shall remember that though the day is past, and their strength is wasted, there yet remains one effort to be made; that reformation is never hopeless, nor sincere endeavours ever unassisted; that the wanderer may at length return after all his errors, and that he who implores strength and courage from above shall find danger and difficulty give way before him. Go now, my son, to thy repose, commit thyself to the care of Omnipotence, and when the morning calls again to toil, begin anew thy journey and thy life."

No. 66.] SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1750.

——Pauci dignoscere possunt
Vera bona, atque illis multum diversa, remota
Erroris nebula. JUV.

——How few
Know their own good; or, knowing it, pursue?
How void of reason are our hopes and fears?
DRYDEN.

THE folly of human wishes and pursuits has always been a standing subject of mirth and declamation, and has been ridiculed and lamented from age to age; till perhaps the fruitless repetition of complaints and censures may be justly numbered among the subjects of censure and complaint.

Some of these instructors of mankind have not contented themselves with checking the overflows of passion, and lopping the exuberance of desire, but have attempted to destroy the root as well as the branches; and not only to confine the mind within bounds, but to smooth it for ever by a dead calm. They have employed their reason and eloquence to persuade us, that nothing is worth the wish of a wise man, have represented all earthly good and evil as indifferent, and counted among vulgar errors the dread of pain, and the love of life.

It is almost always the unhappiness of a victorious disputant, to destroy his own authority by claiming too many consequences, or diffusing his proposition to an indefensible extent. When we have heated our zeal in a cause, and elated our confidence with success, we are naturally inclined to pursue the same train of reasoning to establish some collateral truth, to remove some adjacent difficulty, and to take in the whole comprehension of our system. As a prince, in the ardour of acquisition, is willing to secure his first conquest by the addition of another, adds fortress to fortress, and city to city, till despair and opportunity turn his enemies upon him, and he loses in a moment the glory of a reign.

The philosophers having found an easy victory over those desires which we produce in ourselves, and which terminate in some imaginary state of happiness unknown and unattainable, proceeded to make further inroads upon the heart, and attacked at last our senses and our instincts. They continued to war upon nature with arms, by which only folly could be conquered; they therefore lost the trophies of their former combats, and were considered no longer with reverence or regard.

Yet it cannot be with justice denied, that these men have been very useful monitors, and have left many proofs of strong reason, deep penetration, and accurate attention to the affairs of life, which it is now our business to separate from the foam of a boiling imagination, and to apply judiciously to our own use. They have shown that most of the conditions of life, which raise the envy of the timorous, and rouse the ambition of the daring, are empty shows of felicity, which when they become familiar, lose their power of delighting; and that the most prosperous and exalted have very few advantages over a meaner and more obscure fortune, when their dangers and solicitudes are balanced against their equipage, their banquets, and their palaces.

It is natural for every man uninstructed to murmur at his condition, because, in the general infelicity of life, he feels his own miseries, without knowing that they are common to all the rest of the species; and, therefore, though he will not be less sensible of pain by being told that others are equally tormented, he will at least be freed from the temptation of seeking, by perpetual changes, that ease which is no where to be found; and, though his disease still continues, he escapes the hazard of exasperating it by remedies.

The gratifications which affluence of wealth, extent of power, and eminence of reputation confer, must be always, by their own nature, confined to a very small number; and the life of the greater part of mankind must be lost in empty wishes and painful comparisons, were not the balm of philosophy shed upon us, and our discontent at the appearances of an unequal distribution soothed and appeased.

It seemed, perhaps, below the dignity of the great masters of moral learning, to descend to familiar life, and caution mankind against that petty ambition which is known among us by the name of Vanity; which yet had been an undertaking not unworthy of the longest beard, and most solemn austerity. For though the passions of little minds, acting in low stations, do not fill the world with bloodshed and devastations, or mark, by great events, the periods of

time, yet they torture the breast on which they seize, infest those that are placed within the reach of their influence, destroy private quiet and private virtue, and undermine insensibly the happiness of the world.

The desire of excellence is laudable, but is very frequently ill directed. We fall, by chance, into some class of mankind, and without consulting nature or wisdom, resolve to gain their regard by those qualities which they happen to esteem. I once knew a man remarkably dim-sighted, who, by conversing much with country gentlemen, found himself irresistibly determined to sylvan honours. His great ambition was to shoot flying, and he therefore spent whole days in the woods pursuing game; which, before he was near enough to see them, his approach frighted away.

When it happens that the desire tends to objects which produce no competition, it may be overlooked with some indulgence, because, however fruitless or absurd, it cannot have ill effects upon the morals. But most of our enjoyments owe their value to the peculiarity of possession, and when they are rated at too high a value, give occasion to stratagems of malignity, and incite opposition, hatred, and defamation. The contest of two rural beauties for preference and distinction, is often sufficiently keen and rancorous to fill their breasts with all those passions, which are generally thought the curse only of senates, of armies, and of courts, and the rival dancers of an obscure assembly have their partisans and abettors, often not less exasperated against each other than those who are promoting the interests of rival monarchs.

It is common to consider those whom we find infected with an unreasonable regard for trifling accomplishments, as chargeable with all the consequences of their folly, and as the authors of their own unhappiness; but perhaps, those whom we thus scorn or detest, have more claim to tenderness than has been yet allowed them. Before we permit our severity to break loose upon any fault or error, we ought surely to consider how much we have countenanced or promoted it. We see multitudes busy in the pursuit of riches, at the expense of wisdom and of virtue: but we see the rest of mankind approving their conduct, and inciting their eagerness, by paying that regard and deference to wealth, which wisdom and virtue only can deserve. We see women universally jealous of the reputation of their beauty, and frequently look with contempt on the care with which they study their complexions, endeavour to preserve, or to supply the bloom of youth, regulate every ornament, twist their hair into curls, and shade their faces from the weather. We recommend the care of their nobler part, and tell them how little addition is made by all their arts to the graces of the mind. But when was it known that female goodness or knowledge was able to attract that officiousness, or inspire that ardour, which beauty produces whenever it appears? And with what hope can we endeavour to persuade the ladies, that the time spent at the toilet is lost in vanity, when they have every moment some new conviction, that their interest is more effectually promoted by a riband well disposed, than by the brightest act of heroic virtue?

In every instance of vanity it will be found that the blame ought to be shared among more than it generally reaches; all who exalt trifles by immoderate praise, or instigate needless emulation by invidious incitements, are to be considered as perverters of reason, and corrupters of the world; and since every man is obliged to promote happiness and virtue, he should be careful not to mislead unwary minds, by appearing to set too high a value upon things by which no real excellence is conferred.

No. 67.] TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1750.

Αἱ δ' ἐλπίδες βόσκουσι φυγάδας ὡς λόγος,
Καλῶς βλέπουσιν ὄμμασι, μέλλουσι δέ. EURIP.

Exiles, the proverb says, subsist on hope.
Delusive hope still points to distant good,
To good that mocks approach.

THERE is no temper so generally indulged as hope; other passions operate by starts on particular occasions, or in certain parts of life; but hope begins with the first power of comparing our actual with our possible state, and attends us through every stage and period, always urging us forward to new acquisitions, and holding out some distant blessing to our view, promising us either relief from pain, or increase of happiness.

Hope is necessary in every condition. The miseries of poverty, of sickness, of captivity, would, without this comfort, be insupportable; nor does it appear that the happiest lot of terrestrial existence can set us above the want of this general blessing; or that life, when the gifts of nature and of fortune are accumulated upon it, would not still be wretched, were it not elevated and delighted by the expectation of some new possession, of some enjoyment yet behind, by which the wish shall be at last satisfied, and the heart filled up to its utmost extent.

Hope is, indeed, very fallacious, and promises what it seldom gives; but its promises are more valuable than the gifts of fortune, and it seldom frustrates us without assuring us of recompensing the delay by a greater bounty.

I was musing on this strange inclination which every man feels to deceive himself, and considering the advantages and dangers proceeding from this gay prospect of futurity, when, falling asleep, on a sudden I found myself placed in a garden, of which my sight could descry no

imits. Every scene about me was gay and ladsome, light with sunshine, and fragrant vith perfumes; the ground was painted with ll the variety of spring, and all the choir of ature was singing in the groves. When I had ecovered from the first raptures, with which he confusion of pleasure had for a time enranced me, I began to take a particular and eliberate view of this delightful region. I then erceived that I had yet higher gratifications to xpect, and that at a small distance from me, ere were brighter flowers, clearer fountains, nd more lofty groves, where the birds, which yet heard but faintly, were exerting all the ower of melody. The trees about me were beauful with verdure, and fragrant with blossoms; ut I was tempted to leave them by the sight of pe fruits, which seemed to hang only to be ucked. I therefore walked hastily forwards, ut found, as I proceeded, that the colours of ie field faded at my approach, the fruit fell be- re I reached it, the birds, flew still singing fore me, and though I pressed onward with eat celerity, I was still in sight of pleasures which I could not yet gain the possession, d which seemed to mock my diligence, and retire as I advanced.

Though I was confounded with so many alrnations of joy and grief, I yet persisted to forward, in hopes that these fugitive delights ould in time be overtaken. At length I saw innumerable multitude of every age and sex, ho seemed all to partake of some general feliy; for every cheek was flushed with confince, and every eye sparkled with eagerness: t each appeared to have some particular and ret pleasure, and very few were willing to mmunicate their intentions, or extend their ncern beyond themselves. Most of them med, by the rapidity of their motion, too sy to gratify the curiosity of a stranger, and erefore I was content for a while to gaze on them, without interrupting them with oublesome inquiries. At last I observed one n worn with time, and unable to struggle in e crowd: and therefore, supposing him more leisure, I began to accost him: but he turned m me with anger, and told me he must not disturbed, for the great hour of projection s now come when Mercury should lose his gs, and slavery should no longer dig the ne for gold.

I left him, and attempted another, whose tness of mien, and easy movement, gave me son to hope for a more agreeable reception; he told me with a low bow, that nothing uld make him more happy than an oppority of serving me, which he could not now nt, for a place which he had been twenty rs soliciting would be soon vacant. From n I had recourse to the next, who was deting in haste to take possession of the estate of an uncle, who by the course of nature could not live long. He that followed was preparing to dive for treasure in a new-invented bell; and another was on the point of discovering the longitude.

Being thus rejected wheresoever I applied myself for information, I began to imagine it best to desist from inquiry, and try what my own observation would discover: but seeing a young man, gay and thoughtless, I resolved upon one more experiment, and was informed that I was in the garden of Hope, the daughter of Desire, and that all those whom I saw thus tumultuously bustling round me were incited by the promises of Hope, and hastening to seize the gifts which she held in her hand.

I turned my sight upward, and saw a goddess in the bloom of youth sitting on a throne; around her lay all the gifts of fortune, and all the blessings of life were spread abroad to view; she had a perpetual gayety of aspect, and every one imagined that her smile, which was impartial and general, was directed to himself, and triumphed in his own superiority to others, who had conceived the same confidence from the same mistake.

I then mounted an eminence, from which I had a more extensive view of the whole place, and could with less perplexity consider the different conduct of the crowds that filled it. From this station I observed, that the entrance into the garden of Hope was by two gates, one of which was kept by Reason, and the other by Fancy. Reason was surly and scrupulous, and seldom turned the key without many interrogatories, and long hesitation; but Fancy was a kind and gentle portress, she held her gate wide open, and welcomed all equally to the district under her superintendency: so that the passage was crowded by all those who either feared the examination of Reason, or had been rejected by her.

From the gate of Reason there was a way to the throne of Hope, by a craggy, slippery, and winding path, called the *Strait of Difficulty*, which those who entered with the permission of the guard endeavoured to climb. But though they surveyed the way very cheerfully before they began to rise, and marked out the several stages of their progress, they commonly found unexpected obstacles, and were obliged frequently to stop on the sudden, where they imagined the way plain and even. A thousand intricacies embarrassed them, a thousand slips threw them back, and a thousand pitfalls impeded their advance. So formidable were the dangers, and so frequent the miscarriages, that many returned from the first attempt, and many fainted in the midst of the way, and only a very small number were led up to the summit of Hope, by the hand of Fortitude. Of these few the greater part, when they had obtained the gift which

Hope had promised them, regretted the labour which it cost, and felt in their success the regret of disappointment; the rest retired with their prize, and were led by Wisdom to the bowers of Content.

Turning then towards the gate of Fancy, I could find no way to the seat of Hope; but though she sat full in view, and held out her gifts with an air of invitation, which filled every heart with rapture, the mountain was, on that side, inaccessibly steep, but so channelled and shaded, that none perceived the impossibility of ascending it, but each imagined himself to have discovered a way to which the rest were strangers. Many expedients were indeed tried by this industrious tribe, of whom some were making themselves wings, which others were contriving to actuate by the perpetual motion. But with all their labour and all their artifices, they never rose above the ground, or quickly fell back, nor ever approached the throne of Hope, but continued still to gaze at a distance, and laughed at the slow progress of those whom they saw toiling in the *Strait of Difficulty*.

Part of the favourites of Fancy, when they had entered the garden, without making, like the rest, an attempt to climb the mountain, turned immediately to the vale of Idleness, a calm and undisturbed retirement, from whence they could always have Hope in prospect, and to which they pleased themselves with believing that she intended speedily to descend. These were indeed scorned by all the rest; but they seemed very little affected by contempt, advice, or reproof, but were resolved to expect at ease the favour of the goddess.

Among this gay race I was wandering, and found them ready to answer all my questions, and willing to communicate their mirth; but turning round, I saw two dreadful monsters entering the vale, one of whom I knew to be Age, and the other Want. Sport and revelling were now at an end, and a universal shriek of affright and distress burst out and awaked me.

No. 68.] SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1750.

Vivendum recte, cum propter plurima, tum his Præcipue causis, ut linguas mancipiorum Contemnas; nam lingua mali pars pessima servi.
JUV.

Let us live well: were it alone for this
The baneful tongues of servants to despise:
Slander, that worst of poisons, ever finds
An easy entrance to ignoble minds. HERVEY.

THE younger Pliny has very justly observed, that of actions that deserve our attention, the most splendid are not always the greatest. Fame, and wonder, and applause, are not excited but by external and adventitious circumstances, often distinct and separate from virtu and heroism. Eminence of station, greatne of effect, and all the favours of fortune, mu concur to place excellence in public view; bu fortitude, diligence, and patience, divested their show, glide unobserved through the crow of life, and suffer and act, though with the sam vigour and constancy, yet without pity ar without praise.

This remark may be extended to all parts life. Nothing is to be estimated by its effe upon common eyes and common ears. A thou sand miseries make silent and invisible inroa on mankind, and the heart feels innumerab throbs, which never break into complaint. Pe haps, likewise, our pleasures are for the mo part equally secret, and most are borne up b some private satisfaction, some internal con sciousness, some latent hope, some peculi prospect, which they never communicate, bu reserve for solitary hours, and clandestine m ditation.

The main of life is, indeed, composed of sma incidents and petty occurrences; of wishes f objects not remote, and grief for disappointmen of no fatal consequence; of insect vexatio which sting us and fly away, impertinenc which buzz a while about us, and are heard m more; of meteorous pleasures which dance b fore us and are dissipated; of compliment which glide off the soul like other music, ar are forgotten by him that gave and him that r ceived them.

Such is the general heap out of which eve man is to cull his own condition: for as th chemists tell us, that all bodies are resolvab into the same elements, and that the boundle variety of things arises from the different pr portions of very few ingredients; so a few pai and a few pleasures are all the materials of hu man life, and of these the proportions are part allotted by Providence, and partly left to th arrangement of reason and of choice.

As these are well or ill disposed, man is fo the most part happy or miserable. For ver few are involved in great events, or have the thread of life entwisted with the chain of caus on which armies or nations are suspended; an even those who seem wholly busied in publ affairs, and elevated above low cares, or trivi pleasures, pass the chief part of their time familiar and domestic scenes; from these the came into public life, to these they are ever hour recalled by passions not to be suppressed in these they have the reward of their toils, an to these at last they retire.

The great end of prudence is to give cheerfu ness to those hours which splendour cannot gil and acclamation cannot exhilarate; those so intervals of unbended amusement, in which man shrinks to his natural dimensions, an throws aside the ornaments or disguises, with

feels in privacy to be useless incumbrances, d to lose all effect when they become familiar. be happy at home is the ultimate result of ambition, the end to which every enterprise d labour tends, and of which every desire ompts the prosecution.

It is, indeed, at home that every man must known by those who would make a just es- ate either of his virtue or felicity; for smiles d embroidery are alike occasional, and the nd is often dressed for show in painted hon- and fictitious benevolence.

Every man must have found some whose lives, very house but their own, were a continual es of hypocrisy, and who concealed under appearances bad qualities, which, whenever y thought themselves out of the reach of sure, broke out from their restraint, like nds imprisoned in their caverns, and whom ry one had reason to love, but they whose a wise man is chiefly solicitous to procure. d there are others who, without any show eneral goodness, and without the attractions which popularity is conciliated, are received ng their own families as bestowers of hap- ss, and reverenced as instructors, guardians, benefactors.

he most authentic witnesses of any man's acter are those who know him in his own ily, and see him without any restraint or of conduct, but such as he voluntarily pre- es to himself. If a man carries virtue with into his private apartments, and takes no ntage of unlimited power or probable se- ; if we trace him through the round of his , and find that his character, with those ances which mortal frailty must always , is uniform and regular, we have all the nce of his sincerity that one man can have regard to another: and, indeed, as hypoc- cannot be its own reward, we may, without ation, determine that his heart is pure.

e highest panegyric, therefore, that private e can receive, is the praise of servants. however vanity or insolence may look with contempt on the suffrage of men nified by wealth, and unenlightened by tion, it very seldom happens that they end or blame without justice. Vice irtue are easily distinguished. Oppres- according to Harrington's aphorism, be felt by those who cannot see it; and, ps, it falls out very often that, in moral ons, the philosophers in the gown, and in very, differ not so much in their senti- , as in their language, and have equal of discerning right, though they cannot it out to others with equal address.

ere are very few faults to be committed in le, or without some agents, partners, con- tes, or witnesses; and, therefore, the ser- must commonly know the secrets of a mas- ter, who has any secrets to entrust; and fail- ings, merely personal, are so frequently expos- ed by that security which pride and folly gener- ally produce, and so inquisitively watched by that desire of reducing the inequalities of con- dition, which the lower orders of the world will always feel, that the testimony of a menial domestic can seldom be considered as defective for want of knowledge. And though its im- partiality may be sometimes suspected, it is at least as credible as that of equals, where rivalry instigates censure, or friendship dictates pal- liations.

The danger of betraying our weakness to our servants, and the impossibility of concealing it from them, may be justly considered as one motive to a regular and irreproachable life. For no condition is more hateful or despicable, than his who has put himself in the power of his servant; in the power of him whom, perhaps, he has first corrupted by making him subservient to his vices, and whose fidelity he therefore can- not enforce by any precepts of honesty or reason. It is seldom known that authority thus acquir- ed, is possessed without insolence, or that the master is not forced to confess, by his tameness or forbearance, that he has enslaved himself by some foolish confidence. And his crime is equally punished, whatever part he takes of the choice to which he is reduced; and he is from that fatal hour, in which he sacrificed his dig- nity to his passions, in perpetual dread of inso- lence or defamation; of a controller at home, or an accuser abroad. He is condemned to purchase, by continual bribes, that secrecy which bribes never secured, and which, after a long course of submission, promises, and anxie- ties, he will find violated in a fit of rage, or in a frolic of drunkenness.

To dread no eye, and to suspect no tongue, is the great prerogative of innocence; an exemp- tion granted only to invariable virtue. But guilt has always its horrors and solicitudes: and, to make it yet more shameful and detest- able, it is doomed often to stand in awe of those, to whom nothing could give influence or weight, but their power of betraying.

No. 69.] TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1750.

Flet quoque, ut in speculo rugas adspexit aniles,
Tyndaris; et secum, cur sit bis rapta, requirit
Tempus edax rerum, tuque invidiosa vetustas
Omnia destruitis: vitiataque dentibus ævi
Paullatim lentâ consumitis omnia morte. OVID.

The dreaded wrinkles when poor Helen spied,
Ah! why this second rape?—with tears she cried.
Time, thou devourer, and thou envious age
Who all destroy with keen corroding rage,
Beneath your jaws, whate'er have pleased or please
Must sink, consumed by swift or slow degrees.
ELPHINSTON.

AN old Greek epigrammatist, intending to show

the miseries that attend the last stage of man, imprecates upon those, who are so foolish as to wish for long life, the calamity of continuing to grow old from century to century. He thought that no adventitious or foreign pain was requisite; that decrepitude itself was an epitome of whatever is dreadful; and nothing could be added to the curse of age, but that it should be extended beyond its natural limits.

The most indifferent or negligent spectator can indeed scarcely retire without heaviness of heart, from a view of the last scenes of the tragedy of life, in which he finds those who, in the former parts of the drama, were distinguished by opposition of conduct, contrariety of designs, and dissimilitude of personal qualities, all involved in one common distress, and all struggling with affliction which they cannot hope to overcome.

The other miseries, which waylay our passage through the world, wisdom may escape, and fortitude may conquer; by caution and circumspection we may steal along with very little to obstruct or incommode us; by spirit and vigour we may force a way, and reward the vexation of contest by the pleasures of victory. But a time must come when our policy and bravery shall be equally useless; when we shall all sink into helplessness and sadness, without any power of receiving solace from the pleasures that have formerly delighted us, or any prospect of emerging into a second possession of the blessings that we have lost.

The industry of man has, indeed, not been wanting in endeavours to procure comforts for these hours of dejection and melancholy, and to gild the dreadful gloom with artificial light. The most usual support of old age is wealth. He whose possessions are large, and whose chests are full, imagines himself always fortified against invasions on his authority. If he has lost all other means of government, if his strength and his reason fail him, he can at last alter his will; and, therefore, all that have hopes must likewise have fears, and he may still continue to give laws to such as have not ceased to regard their own interest.

This is indeed too frequently the citadel of the dotard, the last fortress to which age retires, and in which he makes the stand against the upstart race that seizes his domains, disputes his commands, and cancels his prescriptions. But here, though there may be safety, there is no pleasure; and what remains is but a proof that more was once possessed.

Nothing seems to have been more universally dreaded by the ancients than orbity, or want of children; and, indeed, to a man who has survived all the companions of his youth, all who have participated his pleasures and his cares, have been engaged in the same events, and filled their minds with the same conceptions, this full-peopled world is a dismal solitude. He stan forlorn and silent, neglected or insulted, in t midst of multitudes, animated with hopes whi he cannot share, and employed in business whi he is no longer able to forward or retard; n can he find any to whom his life or his dea are of importance, unless he has secured son domestic gratifications, some tender emplo ments, and endeared himself to some whose i terest and gratitude may unite them to him.

So different are the colours of life as we lo forward to the future, or backward to the pas and so different the opinions and sentimen which this contrariety of appearance natural produces, that the conversation of the old ar young ends generally with contempt or pity either side. To a young man entering t world with fullness of hope, and ardour of pu suit, nothing is so unpleasing as the cold cautio the faint expectations, the scrupulous diffidenc which experience and disappointments certainl infuse; and the old man wonders in his tu that the world never can grow wiser, th neither precepts, nor testimonies, can cure bo of their credulity and sufficiency; and that n one can be convinced that snares are laid fo him, till he finds himself entangled.

Thus one generation is always the scorn an wonder of the other, and the notions of the o and young are like liquors of different gravi and texture which never can unite. The spiri of youth sublimed by health, and volatilised b passion, soon leave behind them the phlegma sediment of wariness and deliberation, and burs out in temerity and enterprise. The tenderne therefore, which nature infuses, and which lo habits of beneficence confirm, is necessary to r concile such opposition; and an old man mu be a father to bear with patience those folli and absurdities which he will perpetually im gine himself to find in the schemes and expect tions, the pleasures and the sorrows, of the who have not yet been hardened by time, a chilled by frustration.

Yet, it may be doubted, whether the pleasu of seeing children ripening into strength, be overbalanced by the pain of seeing some fall the blossom, and others blasted in their growt some shaken down with storms, some tain with cankers, and some shrivelled in the sha and whether he that extends his care beyo himself, does not multiply his anxieties m than his pleasures, and weary himself to no p pose, by superintending what he cannot gulate.

But, though age be to every order of hum beings sufficiently terrible, it is particularly be dreaded by fine ladies, who have had no o end or ambition than to fill up the day and night with dress, diversions, and flattery. who, having made no acquaintance with kno ledge, or with business, have constantly cou

all their ideas from the current prattle of the hour, and been indebted for all their happiness to compliments and treats. With these ladies age begins early, and very often lasts long; it begins when their beauty fades, when their mirth loses its sprightliness, and their motion its ease. From that time, all which gave them joy vanishes from about them; they hear the praises bestowed on others, which used to swell their bosoms with exultation. They visit the seats of felicity, and endeavour to continue the habit of being delighted. But pleasure is only received when we believe that we give it in return. Neglect and petulance inform them that their power and their value are past; and what then remains but a tedious and comfortless uniformity of time, without any motion of the heart, or exercise of the reason?

Yet, however age may discourage us by its appearance from considering it in prospect, we shall all by degrees certainly be old; and therefore we ought to inquire what provision can be made against that time of distress? what happiness can be stored up against the winter of life? and how we may pass our latter years with serenity and cheerfulness?

If it has been found by the experience of mankind, that not even the best seasons of life are able to supply sufficient gratifications, without anticipating uncertain felicities, it cannot surely be supposed that old age, worn with labours, harassed with anxieties, and tortured with diseases, should have any gladness of its own, or feel any satisfaction from the contemplation of the present. All the comfort that can now be expected must be recalled from the past, or borrowed from the future; the past is very often exhausted, all the events or actions of which the memory can afford pleasure are quickly recollected; and the future lies beyond the grave, where it can be reached only by virtue and devotion.

Piety is the only proper and adequate relief for decaying man. He that grows old without religious hopes, as he declines into imbecility, will feels pains and sorrows incessantly crowding upon him, falls into a gulph of bottomless misery, in which every reflection must plunge him deeper, and where he finds only new gradations of anguish, and precipices of horror.

No. 70.] SATURDAY, Nov. 17, 1750.

——*Argentea proles,*
Auro deterior, fulvo pretiosior ære. OVID.

Succeeding times a silver age behold,
Excelling brass, but more excell'd by gold.
DRYDEN.

PLATO, in his celebrated distribution of mankind, divides them into three orders of intellect. "The first place," says he, "belongs to him that can by his own powers discern what is right and fit, and penetrate to the remoter motives of action. The second is claimed by him that is willing to hear instruction, and can perceive right and wrong when they are shown him by another; but he that has neither acuteness nor docility, who can neither find the way by himself, nor will be led by others, is a wretch without use or value."

If we survey the moral world, it will be found that the same division may be made of men, with regard to their virtue. There are some whose principles are so firmly fixed, whose conviction is so constantly present to their minds, and who have raised in themselves such ardent wishes for the approbation of God, and the happiness with which he has promised to reward obedience and perseverance, that they rise above all other cares and considerations, and uniformly examine every action and desire, by comparing it with the Divine commands. There are others in a kind of equipoise between good and ill; who are moved on the one part by riches or pleasure, by the gratifications of passion and the delights of sense; and, on the other, by laws of which they own the obligation, and rewards of which they believe the reality, and whom a very small addition of weight turns either way. The third class consists of beings immersed in pleasures, or abandoned to passion, without any desire of higher good, or any effort to extend their thoughts beyond immediate and gross satisfactions.

The second class is so much the most numerous, that it may be considered as comprising the whole body of mankind. Those of the last are not very many, and those of the first are very few; and neither the one nor the other fall much under the consideration of the moralist, whose precepts are intended chiefly for those who are endeavouring to go forward up the steeps of virtue, not for those who have already reached the summit, or those who are resolved to stay for ever in their present situation.

To a man not versed in the living world, but accustomed to judge only by speculative reason, it is scarcely credible that any one should be in this state of indifference, or stand undetermined and unengaged, ready to follow the first call to either side. It seems certain, that either a man must believe that virtue will make him happy, and resolve therefore to be virtuous, or think that he may be happy without virtue, and therefore cast off all care but for his present interest. It seems impossible that conviction should be on one side, and practice on the other; and that he who has seen the right way should voluntarily shut his eyes, that he may quit it with more tranquillity. Yet all these absurdities are every hour to be found; the wisest and

best men deviate from known and acknowledged duties, by inadvertency or surprise; and most are good no longer than while temptation is away, than while their passions are without excitements, and their opinions are free from the counteraction of any other motive.

Among the sentiments which almost every man changes as he advances into years, is the expectation of uniformity of character. He that without acquaintance with the power of desire, the cogency of distress, the complications of affairs, or the force of partial influence, has filled his mind with the excellence of virtue, and, having never tried his resolution in any encounters with hope or fear, believes it able to stand firm whatever shall oppose it, will be always clamorous against the smallest failure, ready to exact the utmost punctualities of right, and to consider every man that fails in any part of his duty, as without conscience and without merit; unworthy of trust or love, of pity or regard; as an enemy whom all should join to drive out of society, as a pest which all should avoid, or as a weed which all should trample.

It is not but by experience, that we are taught the possibility of retaining some virtues, and rejecting others, or of being good or bad to a particular degree. For it is very easy to the solitary reasoner, to prove, that the same arguments by which the mind is fortified against one crime are of equal force against all, and the consequence very naturally follows, that he whom they fail to move on any occasion, has either never considered them, or has by some fallacy taught himself to evade their validity; and that, therefore, when a man is known to be guilty of one crime, no farther evidence is needful of his depravity and corruption.

Yet, such is the state of all mortal virtue, that it is always uncertain and variable, sometimes extending to the whole compass of duty, and sometimes shrinking into a narrow space, and fortifying only a few avenues of the heart, while all the rest is left open to the incursions of appetite, or given up to the dominion of wickedness. Nothing therefore is more unjust than to judge of man by too short an acquaintance, and too slight inspection; for it often happens that, in the loose, and thoughtless, and dissipated, there is a secret radical worth which may shoot out by proper cultivation; that the spark of heaven, though dimmed and obstructed, is not yet extinguished, but may, by the breath of counsel and exhortation, be kindled into flame.

To imagine that every one who is not completely good is irrecoverably abandoned, is to suppose that all are capable of the same degrees of excellence; it is indeed to exact from all that perfection which none ever can attain. And since the purest virtue is consistent with some vice, and the virtue of the greatest number with almost an equal proportion of contrary qualities, let none too hastily conclude, that all goodness is lost, though it may for a time be clouded and overwhelmed; for most minds are the slaves of external circumstances, and conform to any hand that undertakes to mould them, roll down any torrent of custom in which they happen to be caught, or bend to any importunity that bears hard against them.

It may be particularly observed of women, that they are for the most part good or bad, as they fall among those who practise vice or virtue; and that neither education nor reason gives them much security against the influence of example. Whether it be that they have less courage to stand against opposition, or that their desire of admiration makes them sacrifice their principles to the poor pleasure of worthless praise, it is certain, whatever be the cause, that female goodness seldom keeps its ground against laughter, flattery, or fashion.

For this reason, every one should consider himself as entrusted, not only with his own conduct, but with that of others; and as accountable, not only for the duties which he neglects, or the crime that he commits, but for that negligence and irregularity which he may encourage or inculcate. Every man, in whatever station, has, or endeavours to have, his followers, admirers, and imitators, and has therefore the influence of his example to watch with care; he ought to avoid not only crimes, but the appearance of crimes; and not only to practise virtue, but to applaud, countenance, and support it. For it is possible that for want of attention, we may teach others faults from which ourselves are free, or, by a cowardly desertion of a cause which we ourselves approve, may pervert those who fix their eyes upon us, and, having no rule of their own to guide their course, are easily misled by the abberrations of that example which they choose for their directions.

No. 71.] TUESDAY, Nov. 20, 1750.

Vivere quod propero pauper, nec inutilis annis
Da veniam, properat vivere nemo satis. MART.

True, Sir, to live I haste, your pardon give,
For tell me, who makes haste enough to live?
F. LEWIS.

MANY words and sentences are so frequently heard in the mouths of men, that a superficial observer is inclined to believe, that they must contain some primary principle, some great rule of action, which it is proper always to have present to the attention, and by which the use of every hour is to be adjusted. Yet, if we consider the conduct of those sententious phi-

osophers, it will often be found that they repeat these aphorisms, merely because they have somewhere heard them, because they have nothing else to say, or because they think veneration gained by such appearances of wisdom, but that no ideas are annexed to the words, and that, according to the old blunder of the followers of Aristotle, their souls are mere pipes or organs, which transmit sounds, but do not understand them.

Of this kind is the well-known and well-attested position, that *life is short*, which may be heard among mankind by an attentive auditor, many times a day, but which never yet within my reach of observation left any impression upon the mind; and perhaps, if my readers will turn their thoughts back upon their old friends, they will find it difficult to call a single man to remembrance, who appeared to know that life was short till he was about to lose it.

It is observable that Horace, in his account of the characters of men, as they are diversified by the various influence of time, remarks, that the old man is *dilator, spe longus*, given to procrastination, and inclined to extend his hopes to a great distance. So far are we generally from thinking what we often say of the shortness of life, that at the time when it is necessarily shortest, we form projects which we delay to execute, indulge such expectations as nothing but a long train of events can gratify, and suffer those passions to gain upon us, which are only excusable in the prime of life.

These reflections were lately excited in my mind, by an evening's conversation with my friend Prospero, who, at the age of fifty-five, has bought an estate, and is now contriving to dispose and cultivate it with uncommon elegance. His great pleasure is to walk among lately trees, and lie musing in the heat of noon under their shade; he is therefore maturely considering how he shall dispose his walks and grooves, and has at last determined to send for the best plans from Italy, and forbear planting till the next season.

Thus is life trifled away in preparations to do what never can be done, if it be left unattempted till all the requisites which imagination can suggest are gathered together. Where our design terminates only in our own satisfaction, the neglect is of no great importance; for the pleasure of expecting enjoyment is often greater than that of obtaining it, and the completion of almost every wish is found a disappointment; but when many others are interested in the undertaking, when any design is formed, in which the improvement or security of mankind is involved, nothing is more unworthy either of wisdom or benevolence, than to delay it from time to time, or to forget how much every day takes away from our power, and how soon an idle purpose to do an action sinks into a mournful wish that it had once been done.

We are frequently importuned, by the bacchanalian writers, to lay hold on the present hour, to catch the pleasures within our reach, and remember that futurity is not at our command.

Τὸ ῥόδον ἀκμάζει βαιὸν χρόνον. ἢν δὲ παρέλθῃς,
Ζητῶν ἐυρήσεις οὐ ῥόδον, ἀλλὰ βάτον.

Soon fades the rose; once past the fragrant hour,
The loiterer finds a bramble for a flower.

But surely these exhortations may, with equal propriety, be applied to better purposes; it may be at least inculcated that pleasures are more safely postponed than virtues, and that greater loss is suffered by missing an opportunity of doing good, than an hour of giddy frolic and noisy merriment.

When Baxter had lost a thousand pounds, which he had laid up for the erection of a school, he used frequently to mention the misfortune as an incitement to be charitable while God gives the power of bestowing, and considered himself as culpable in some degree for having left a good action in the hands of chance, and suffered his benevolence to be defeated for want of quickness and diligence.

It is lamented by Hearne, the learned antiquary of Oxford, that this general forgetfulness of the fragility of life, has remarkably infected the students of monuments and records; as their employment consists in first collecting, and afterwards in arranging or abstracting, what libraries afford them, they ought to amass no more than they can digest; but when they have undertaken a work, they go on searching and transcribing, call for new supplies, when they are already overburdened, and at last leave their work unfinished. *It is*, says he, *the business of a good antiquary, as of a good man, to have mortality always before him.*

Thus, not only in the slumber of sloth, but in the dissipation of ill-directed industry, is the shortness of life generally forgotten. As some men lose their hours in laziness, because they suppose, that there is time enough for the reparation of neglect; others busy themselves in providing that no length of life may want employment; and it often happens, that sluggishness and activity are equally surprised by the last summons, and perish not more differently from each other, than the fowl that received the shot in her flight, from her that is killed upon the bush.

Among the many improvements made by the last centuries in human knowledge, may be numbered the exact calculations of the value of life; but whatever may be their use in traffic, they seem very little to have advanced morality. They have hitherto been rather applied to the

acquisition of money, than of wisdom; the computer refers none of his calculations to his own tenure, but persists, in contempt of probability, to foretel old age to himself, and believes that he is marked out to reach the utmost verge of human existence, and see thousands and ten thousands fall into the grave.

So deeply is this fallacy rooted in the heart, and so strongly guarded by hope and fear against the approach of reason, that neither science nor experience can shake it, and we act as if life were without end, though we see and confess its uncertainty and shortness.

Divines have, with great strength and ardour, shown the absurdity of delaying reformation and repentance; a degree of folly, indeed, which sets eternity to hazard. It is the same weakness, in proportion to the importance of the neglect, to transfer any care, which now claims our attention, to a future time; we subject ourselves to needless dangers from accidents which early diligence would have obviated, or perplex our minds by vain precautions, and make provision for the execution of designs, of which the opportunity once missed never will return.

As he that lives longest lives but a little while, every man may be certain that he has no time to waste. The duties of life are commensurate to its duration, and every day brings its task, which if neglected is doubled on the morrow. But he that has already trifled away those months and years, in which he should have laboured, must remember that he has now only a part of that of which the whole is little; and that since the few moments remaining are to be considered as the last trust of Heaven, not one is to be lost.

No. 72.] SATURDAY, Nov. 24, 1750.

Omnis Aristippum decuit color, et status, et res,
Tentantem majora, fere presentibus æquum. HOR

Yet Aristippus every dress became,
In every various change of life the same;
And though he aim'd at things of higher kind,
Yet to the present held an equal mind. FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOSE who exalt themselves into the chair of Instruction, without inquiring whether any will submit to their authority, have not sufficiently considered how much of human life passes in little incidents, cursory conversation, slight business, and casual amusements; and therefore they have endeavoured only to inculcate the more awful virtues, without condescending to regard those petty qualities, which grow important only by their frequency, and which, though they produce no single acts of heroism, nor astonish us by great events, yet are every moment exerting their influence upon us, and make the draught of life sweet or bitter by imperceptible instillations. They operate unseen and unregarded, as change of air makes us sick or healthy, though we breathe it without attention, and only know the particles that impregnate it by their salutary or malignant effects.

You have shown yourself not ignorant of the value of those subaltern endowments, yet have hitherto neglected to recommend good-humour to the world, though a little reflection will show you that it is the *balm of being*, the quality to which all that adorns or elevates mankind must owe its power of pleasing. Without good-humour, learning and bravery can only confer that superiority which swells the heart of the lion in the desert, where he roars without reply, and ravages without resistance. Without good-humour, virtue may awe by its dignity, and amaze by its brightness; but must always be viewed at a distance, and will scarcely gain a friend or attract an imitator.

Good-humour may be defined a habit of being pleased; a constant and perennial softness of manner, easiness of approach, and suavity of disposition; like that which every man perceives in himself, when the first transports of new felicity have subsided, and his thoughts are only kept in motion by a slow succession of soft impulses. Good-humour is a state between gayety and unconcern, the act or emanation of a mind at leisure to regard the gratification of another.

It is imagined by many, that whenever they aspire to please, they are required to be merry, and to show the gladness of their souls by flights of pleasantry, and bursts of laughter. But though these men may be for a time heard with applause and admiration, they seldom delight us long. We enjoy them a little, and then retire to easiness and good-humour, as the eye gazes awhile on eminence glittering with the sun, but soon turns aching away to verdure and to flowers.

Gayety is to good-humour as animal perfumes to vegetable fragrance; the one overpowers weak spirits, and the other recreates and revives them. Gayety seldom fails to give some pain; the hearers either strain their faculties to accompany its towerings, or are left behind in envy and despair. Good-humour boasts no faculties which every one does not believe in his own power, and pleases principally by not offending.

It is well known that the most certain way to give any man pleasure, is to persuade him that you receive pleasure from him, to encourage him to freedom and confidence, and to avoid any such appearance of superiority as may overbear and depress him. We see many that by this art only, spend their days in the midst of caresses, invitations, and civilities; and with-

t any extraordinary qualities or attainments, e the universal favourites of both sexes, and rtainly find a friend in every place. The dar- gs of the world will, indeed, be generally ind such as excite neither jealousy nor fear, d are not considered as candidates for any inent degree of reputation, but content them- ves with common accomplishments, and en- avour rather to solicit kindness than to raise eem; therefore, in assemblies and places of ort, it seldom fails to happen, that though at entrance of some particular person, every e brightens with gladness, and every hand is ended in salutation, yet if you pursue him be- id the first exchange of civilities, you will find n of very small importance, and only wel- ne to the company, as one by whom all con- e themselves admired, and with whom any is at liberty to amuse himself when he can d no other auditor or companion; as one with om all are at ease, who will hear a jest with- criticism, and a narrative without contra- ion, who laughs with every wit, and yields very disputer.

There are many whose vanity always in- es them to associate with those from whom have no reason to fear mortification; and e are times in which the wise and the wing are willing to receive praise without labour of deserving it, in which the most ated mind is willing to descend, and the active to be at rest. All therefore are at e hour or another fond of companions whom can entertain upon easy terms, and who relieve them from solitude, without con- ning them to vigilance and caution. We nost inclined to love when we have nothing ar, and he that encourages us to please our- s, will not be long without preference in ffection to those whose learning holds us e distance of pupils, or whose wit calls all tion from us, and leaves us without im- nce and without regard.

is remarked by Prince Henry, when he Falstaff lying on the ground, that *he could better spared a better man.* He was well inted with the vices and follies of him n he lamented; but while his conviction lled him to do justice to superior quali- is tenderness still broke out at the remem- e of Falstaff, of the cheerful companion, d buffoon, with whom he had passed his n all the luxury of idleness, who had d him with unenvied merriment, and he could at once enjoy and despise.

may perhaps think this account of those re distinguished for their good humour, ry consistent with the praises which I estowed upon it. But surely nothing can vidently show the value of this quality, hat it recommends those who are desti- all other excellences, and procures re- gard to the trifling, friendship to the worthless, and affection to the dull.

Good-humour is indeed generally degraded by the characters in which it is found; for, being considered as a cheap and vulgar quality, we find it often neglected by those that, having excellences of higher reputation and brighter splendour, perhaps imagine that they have some right to gratify themselves at the expense of others, and are to demand compliance rather than to practise it. It is by some unfortunate mistake that almost all those who have any claim to esteem or love, press their pretensions with too little consideration of others. This mistake, my own interest, as well as my zeal for general happiness, makes me desirous to rectify; for I have a friend, who, because he knows his own fidelity and usefulness, is never willing to sink into a companion: I have a wife, whose beauty first subdued me, and whose wit confirmed her conquest, but whose beauty now serves no other purpose than to entitle her to tyranny, and whose wit is only used to justify perverseness.

Surely nothing can be more unreasonable than to lose the will to please, when we are conscious of the power, or show more cruelty than to choose any kind of influence before that of kindness. He that regards the welfare of others, should make his virtue approachable, that it may be loved and copied; and he that considers the wants which every man feels, or will feel, of external assistance, must rather wish to be surrounded by those that love him, than by those that admire his excellences, or solicit his favours; for admiration ceases with novelty, and interest gains its end and retires. A man whose great qualities want the ornament of superficial attractions, is like a naked mountain with mines of gold, which will be frequented only till the treasure is exhausted.

I am, &c.

PHILOMIDES.

No. 73.] TUESDAY, Nov. 27, 1750.

Stulte, quid O frustra votis puerilibus optas
Quæ non ulla tulit, fertve, feretve dies. OVID.

Why thinks the fool, with childish hope, to see
What neither is, nor was, nor e'er shall be?
ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

IF you feel any of that compassion which you recommend to others, you will not disregard a case which I have reason from observation to believe very common, and which I know by experience to be very miserable. And though the querulous are seldom received with great ardour of kindness, I hope to escape the morti-

fication of finding that my lamentations spread the contagion of impatience, and produce anger rather than tenderness. I write not merely to vent the swelling of my heart, but to inquire by what means I may recover my tranquillity: and shall endeavour at brevity in my narrative, having long known that complaint quickly tires, however elegant or however just.

I was born in a remote county, of a family that boasts alliances with the greatest names in English history, and extends its claims of affinity to the Tudors and Plantagenets. My ancestors by little and little wasted their patrimony, till my father had not enough left for the support of a family, without descending to the cultivation of his own grounds, being condemned to pay three sisters the fortunes allotted them by my grandfather, who is suspected to have made his will when he was incapable of adjusting properly the claims of his children, and who, perhaps without design, enriched his daughters by beggaring his son. My aunts being, at the death of their father, neither young nor beautiful, nor very eminent for softness of behaviour, were suffered to live unsolicited, and by accumulating the interest of their portions, grew every day richer and prouder. My father pleased himself with foreseeing that the possessions of those ladies must revert at last to the hereditary estate, and, that his family might lose none of its dignity, resolved to keep me untainted with a lucrative employment: whenever therefore I discovered any inclination to the improvement of my condition, my mother never failed to put me in mind of my birth, and charged me to do nothing with which I might be reproached when I should come to my aunt's estate.

In all the perplexities or vexations which want of money brought upon us, it was our constant practice to have recourse to futurity. If any of our neighbours surpassed us in appearance, we went home and contrived an equipage, with which the death of my aunts was to supply us. If any purseproud upstart was deficient in respect, vengeance was referred to the time in which our estate was to be repaired. We registered every act of civility and rudeness, inquired the number of dishes at every feast, and minuted the furniture of every house, that we might, when the hour of affluence should come, be able to eclipse all their splendour, and surpass all their magnificence.

Upon plans of elegance, and schemes of pleasure, the day rose and set, and the year went round unregarded, while we were busied in laying out plantations on ground not yet our own, and deliberating whether the manor-house should be rebuilt or repaired. This was the amusement of our leisure, and the solace of our exigences; we met together only to contrive how our approaching fortune should be enjoyed; for in this our conversation always ended, whatever subject it began. We had none of collateral interests, which diversify the life others with joys and hopes, but had turned whole attention on one event, which we co neither hasten nor retard, and had no other ject of curiosity than the health or sickness my aunts, of which we were careful to proc very exact and early intelligence.

This visionary opulence for a while soothe our imagination, but afterwards fired wishes, and exasperated our necessities, and father could not always restrain himself fr exclaiming, that no creature had so many li as a cat and an old maid. At last, upon the covery of his sister from an ague, which was supposed to have caught by sparing fire, began to lose his stomach, and four mont afterwards sunk into the grave.

My mother, who loved her husband, survi him but a little while, and left me the sole h of their lands, their schemes, and their wish As I had not enlarged my conceptions either books or conversation, I differed only from father by the freshness of my cheeks, and vigour of my step: and, like him, gave way no thoughts but of enjoying the wealth whi my aunts were hoarding.

At length the eldest fell ill. I paid the civil ties and compliments which sickness requir with the utmost punctuality. I dreamed eve night of escutcheons and white gloves, and quired every morning at an early hour, whethe there were any news of my dear aunt. At la a messenger was sent to inform me that I mu come to her without the delay of a moment. went and heard her last advice, but opening h will, found that she had left her fortune to h second sister.

I hung my head; the youngest sister threa ened to be married, and every thing was dis pointment and discontent. I was in danger losing irreparably one third of my hopes, a was condemned still to wait for the rest. part of my terror I was soon eased; for youth, whom his relations would have compell to marry the old lady, after innumerable sti lations, articles, and settlements, ran away wi the daughter of his father's groom; and aunt, upon this conviction of the perfidy of m resolved never to listen more to amorous dresses.

Ten years longer I dragged the shackles expectation, without ever suffering a day to p in which I did not compute how much chance was improved of being rich to-morro At last the second lady died, after a short ness, which yet was long enough to afford time for the disposal of her estate, which gave to me after the death of her sister.

I was now relieved from part of my mise a large fortune, though not in my power,

tain and unalienable; nor was there now
y danger that I might at last be frustrated of
hopes by a fret of dotage, the flatteries of a
mber-maid, the whispers of a tale-bearer, or
officiousness of a nurse. But my wealth
s yet in reversion, my aunt was to be buried
re I could emerge to grandeur and pleasure;
there were yet, according to my father's
rvation, nine lives between me and happi-
s.

however lived on, without any clamours of
ontent, and comforted myself with consider-
that all are mortal, and they who are con-
ally decaying must at last be destroyed.
ut let no man from this time suffer his felicity
epend on the death of his aunt. The good
lewoman was very regular in her hours, and
le in her diet; and in walking or sitting
waking or sleeping, had always in view
preservation of her health. She was subject
disorder but hypochondriac dejection; by
h, without intention, she increased my
ries, for whenever the weather was cloudy,
ould take her bed and send me notice that her
was come. I went with all the haste of eager-
and sometimes received passionate injunc-
to be kind to her maid, and directions how
st offices should be performed; but if be-
y arrival the sun happened to break out,
wind to change, I met her at the door, or
her in the garden, bustling and vigilant,
ll the tokens of long life.
metimes, however, she fell into distempers,
as thrice given over by the doctor, yet
ind means of slipping through the gripe
h, and after having tortured me three
s at each time with violent alternations of
nd fear, came out of her chamber without
her hurt than the loss of flesh, which in a
eeks she recovered by broths and jellies.
nost have sagacity sufficient to guess at
ires of an heir, it was the constant prac-
those who were hoping at second hand,
leavoured to secure my favour against the
hen I should be rich, to pay their court,
rming me that my aunt began to droop,
e had lately a bad night, that she coughed
and that she could never climb May
, at least, that the autumn would carry
Thus was I flattered in the winter with
rcing winds of March, and in summer
e fogs of September. But she lived
spring and fall, and set heat and cold at
, till, after near half a century, I buried
he fourteenth of last June, aged ninety-
ars, five months, and six days.
wo months after her death I was rich,
pleased with that obsequiousness and
e which wealth instantaneously pro-
But this joy is now past, and I have re-
gain to my old habit of wishing. Being
ned to give the future full power over
my mind, and to start away from the scene before me to some expected enjoyment, I deliver up myself to the tyranny of every desire which fancy suggests, and long for a thousand things which I am unable to procure. Money has much less power than is ascribed to it by those that want it. I had formed schemes which I cannot execute, I had supposed events which do not come to pass, and the rest of my life must pass in craving solicitude, unless you can find some remedy for a mind corrupted with an inveterate disease of wishing, and unable to think on any thing but wants, which reason tells me will never be supplied.

I am, &c.

CUPIDUS.

No. 74.] SATURDAY, DEC. 1, 1750.

Rixatur de lana sæpe caprina. HOR.

For nought tormented, she for nought torments.
ELPHINSTON.

MEN seldom give pleasure, where they are not pleased themselves; it is necessary, therefore, to cultivate an habitual alacrity and cheerfulness, that in whatever state we may be placed by Providence, whether we are appointed to confer or receive benefits, to implore or to afford protection, we may secure the love of those with whom we transact. For though it is generally imagined, that he who grants favours, may spare any attention to his behaviour, and that usefulness will always procure friends; yet it has been found, that there is an art of granting requests, an art very difficult of attainment; that officiousness and liberality may be so adulterated, as to lose the greater part of their effect; that compliance may provoke, relief may harass, and liberality distress.

No disease of the mind can more fatally disable it from benevolence, the chief duty of social beings, than ill-humour or peevishness; for though it breaks not out in paroxysms of outrage, nor bursts into clamour, turbulence, and bloodshed, it wears out happiness by slow corrosion, and small injuries incessantly repeated. It may be considered as the canker of life, that destroys its vigour, and checks its improvement, that creeps on with hourly depredations, and taints and vitiates what it cannot consume.

Peevishness, when it has been so far indulged, as to outrun the motions of the will, and discover itself without premeditation, is a species of depravity in the highest degree disgusting and offensive, because no rectitude of intention, nor softness of address, can ensure a moment's exemption from affront and indignity. While we are courting the favour of a peevish man, and exerting ourselves in the most diligent civility, an unlucky syllable displeases, an unheeded cir-

cumstance ruffles and exasperates; and in the moment when we congratulate ourselves upon having gained a friend, our endeavours are frustrated at once; and all our assiduity forgotten in the casual tumult of some trifling irritation.

This troublesome impatience is sometimes nothing more than the symptom of some deeper malady. He that is angry without daring to confess his resentment, or sorrowful without the liberty of telling his grief, is too frequently inclined to give vent to the fermentations of his mind at the first passages that are opened, and to let his passions boil over upon those whom accident throws in his way. A painful and tedious course of sickness frequently produces such an alarming apprehension of the least increase of uneasiness, as keeps the soul perpetually on the watch, such a restless and incessant solicitude, as no care or tenderness can appease, and can only be pacified by the cure of the distemper, and the removal of that pain by which it is excited.

Nearly approaching to this weakness, is the captiousness of old age. When the strength is crushed, the senses are dulled, and the common pleasures of life become insipid by repetition, we are willing to impute our uneasiness to causes not wholly out of our power, and please ourselves with fancying that we suffer by neglect, unkindness, or any evil which admits a remedy, rather than by the decays of nature, which cannot be prevented or repaired. We therefore revenge our pains upon those on whom we resolve to charge them; and too often drive mankind away at the time we have the greatest need of tenderness and assistance.

But though peevishness may sometimes claim our compassion, as the consequence or concomitant of misery, it is very often found, where nothing can justify or excuse its admission. It is frequently one of the attendants on the prosperous, and is employed by insolence in exacting homage, or by tyranny in harassing subjection. It is the offspring of idleness or pride; of idleness anxious for trifles; or pride unwilling to endure the least obstruction of her wishes. Those who have long lived in solitude indeed naturally contract this unsocial quality, because, having long had only themselves to please, they do not readily depart from their own inclinations; their singularities therefore are only blameable, when they have imprudently or morosely withdrawn themselves from the world; but there are others, who have, without any necessity, nursed up this habit in their minds, by making implicit submissiveness the condition of their favour, and suffering none to approach them, but those who never speak but to applaud, or move but to obey.

He that gives himself up to his own fancy, and converses with none but such as he hires to lull him on the down of absolute authority, to soothe him with obsequiousness, and regale him w flattery, soon grows too slothful for the labour contest, too tender for the asperity of contrad tion, and too delicate for the coarseness truth; a little opposition offends, a little straint enrages, and a little difficulty perple him; having been accustomed to see every thi give way to his humour, he soon forgets own littleness, and expects to find the wor rolling at his beck, and all mankind employ to accommodate and delight him.

Tetrica had a large fortune bequeathed to by an aunt, which made her very early ind pendent, and placed her in a state of superiori to all about her. Having no superfluity of u derstanding, she was soon intoxicated by t flatteries of her maid, who informed her th ladies, such as she, had nothing to do but t pleasure their own way; that she wanted n thing from others, and had therefore no reas to value their opinion; that money was eve thing; and that they who thought themselv ill-treated, should look for better usage amo their equals.

Warm with these generous sentiments, Te rica came forth into the world, in which s endeavoured to force respect by haughtiness mien and vehemence of language; but havin neither birth, beauty, nor wit, in any uncommo degree, she suffered such mortifications fro those who thought themselves at liberty to r turn her insults, as reduced her turbulence cooler malignity, and taught her to practise b arts of vexation only where she might hope tyrannize without resistance. She continu from her twentieth to her fifty-fifth year torment all her inferiors with so much diligenc that she has formed a principle of disappro tion, and finds in every place something to gra her mind, and disturb her quiet.

If she takes the air, she is offended with heat or cold, the glare of the sun, or the gl of the clouds; if she makes a visit, the ro in which she is to be received, is too light, or dark, or furnished with something which cannot see without aversion. Her tea is no of the right sort; the figures on the China her disgust. Where there are children, hates the gabble of brats; where there are n she cannot bear a place without some cheer ness and rattle. If many servants are kept a house, she never fails to tell how Lord F ish was ruined by a numerous retinue; if she relates the story of a miser that made company wait on themselves. She quarre with one family, because she had an unplea view from their windows; with another, cause the squirrel leaped within two yard her; and with a third, because she could bear the noise of the parrot.

Of milliners and mantua-makers she is proverbial torment. She compels them to

ir work, then to unmake it, and contrive it
er another fashion; then changes her mind,
l likes it better as it was at first; then will
ve a small improvement. Thus she proceeds
no profit can recompense the vexation; they
last leave the clothes at her house, and refuse
serve her. Her maid, the only being that
endure her tyranny, professes to take her
n course, and hear her mistress talk. Such
he consequence of peevishness; it can be borne
y when it is despised.

t sometimes happens that too close an atten-
to minute exactness, or a too rigorous habit
xamining every thing by the standard of per-
ion, vitiates the temper, rather than im-
ves the understanding, and teaches the mind
iscern faults with unhappy penetration. It
ident likewise to men of vigorous imagina-
to please themselves too much with futuri-
and to fret because those expectations are dis-
inted, which should never have been form-
Knowledge and genius are often enemies
iet, by suggesting ideas of excellence, which
and the performances of men cannot attain.
let no man rashly determine, that his un-
ngness to be pleased is a proof of under-
ling, unless his superiority appears from
doubtful evidence; for though peevishness
sometimes justly boast its descent from
ing or from wit, it is much oftener of base
ction, the child of vanity, and nursling of
rance.

75.] TUESDAY, DEC. 4, 1750.

tur nemo, nisi cui Fortuna secunda est,
, simul intonuit, proxima quæque fugat.
OVID.

smiling Fortune spreads her golden ray,
wd around to flatter and obey:
hen she thunders from an angry sky,
ends, our flatterers, our lovers fly.
MISS A. W.*

TO THE RAMBLER.

diligence with which you endeavour to
te the knowledge of nature, manners,
e, will perhaps incline you to pay some
to the observations of one who has been
to know mankind by unwelcome infor-
, and whose opinions are the result, not
ary conjectures, but of practice and ex-
e.

s born to a large fortune, and bred to
owledge of those arts which are supposed
mplish the mind, and adorn the person
man. To these attainments, which cus-
d education almost forced upon me, I
ome voluntary acquisitions by the use
, and the conversation of that species of

* Anna Williams.

men whom the ladies generally mention with terror and aversion under the name of scholars, but whom I have found a harmless and inoffensive order of beings, not so much wiser than ourselves, but that they may receive as well as communicate knowledge, and more inclined to degrade their own character by cowardly submission, than to overbear or oppress us with their learning or their wit.

From these men, however, if they are by kind treatment encouraged to talk, something may be gained, which, embellished with elegancy, and softened by modesty, will always add dignity and value to female conversation; and from my acquaintance with the bookish part of the world, I derived many principles of judgment and maxims of prudence, by which I was enabled to draw upon myself the general regard in every place of concourse or pleasure. My opinion was the great rule of approbation, my remarks were remembered by those who desired the second degree of fame, my mien was studied, my dress was imitated, my letters were handed from one family to another, and read by those who copied them as sent to themselves; my visits were solicited as honours, and multitudes boasted of an intimacy with Melissa, who had only seen me by accident, and whose familiarity had never proceeded beyond the exchange of a compliment, or return of a courtesy.

I shall make no scruple of confessing that I was pleased with this universal veneration, because I always considered it as paid to my intrinsic qualities and inseparable merit, and very easily persuaded myself that fortune had no part in my superiority. When I looked upon my glass, I saw youth and beauty, with health that might give me reason to hope their continuance; when I examined my mind, I found some strength of judgment, and fertility of fancy: and was told that every action was grace, and that every accent was persuasion.

In this manner my life passed like a continual triumph amidst acclamations, and envy, and courtship, and caresses: to please Melissa was the general ambition, and every stratagem of artful flattery was practised upon me. To be flattered is grateful, even when we know that our praises are not believed by those who pronounce them; for they prove, at least, our power, and show that our favour is valued, since it is purchased by the meanness of falsehood. But, perhaps, the flatterer is not often detected; for an honest mind is not apt to suspect, and no one exerts the power of discernment with much vigour when self-love favours the deceit.

The number of adorers, and the perpetual distraction of my thoughts by new schemes of pleasure, prevented me from listening to any of those who crowd in multitudes to give girls ad-

vice, and kept me unmarried and unengaged to my twenty-seventh year, when, as I was towering in all the pride of uncontested excellency, with a face yet little impaired, and a mind hourly improving, the failure of a fund, in which my money was placed, reduced me to a frugal competency, which allowed little beyond neatness and independence.

I bore the diminution of my riches without any outrages of sorrow, or pusillanimity of dejection. Indeed, I did not know how much I had lost, for, having always heard and thought more of my wit and beauty, than of my fortune, it did not suddenly enter my imagination, that Melissa could sink beneath her established rank, while her form and her mind continued the same; that she could cease to raise admiration but by ceasing to deserve it, or feel any stroke but from the hand of time.

It was in my power to have concealed the loss, and to have married, by continuing the same appearance, with all the credit of my original fortune; but I was not so far sunk in my own esteem, as to submit to the baseness of fraud, or to desire any other recommendation than sense and virtue. I therefore dismissed my equipage, sold those ornaments which were become unsuitable to my new condition, and appeared among those with whom I used to converse with less glitter, but with equal spirit.

I found myself received at every visit with sorrow beyond what is naturally felt for calamities in which we have no part, and was entertained with condolence and consolation so frequently repeated, that my friends plainly consulted rather their own gratification than my relief. Some from that time refused my acquaintance, and forbore, without any provocation, to repay my visits; some visited me, but after a longer interval than usual, and every return was still with more delay; nor did any of my female acquaintances fail to introduce the mention of my misfortunes, to compare my present and former condition, to tell me how much it must trouble me to want the splendour which I became so well, to look at pleasures which I had formerly enjoyed, and to sink to a level with those by whom I had been considered as moving in a higher sphere, and who had hitherto approached me with reverence and submission, which I was now no longer to expect.

Observations like these are commonly nothing better than covert insults, which serve to give vent to the flatulence of pride, but they are now and then imprudently uttered by honesty and benevolence, and inflict pain where kindness is intended; I will, therefore, so far maintain my antiquated claim to politeness, as to venture the establishment of this rule, that no one ought to remind another of misfortunes of which the sufferer does not complain, and which there are no means proposed of alleviating. You have no right to excite thoughts which necessarily g pain whenever they return, and which perh might not have revived but by absurd and seasonable compassion.

My endless train of lovers immediately wi drew, without raising any emotions. greater part had indeed always professed court, as it is termed, upon the square, had quired my fortune, and offered settlemen these had undoubtedly a right to retire with censure, since they had openly treated money, as necessary to their happiness, a who can tell how little they wanted any o portion? I have always thought the clamo of women unreasonable, who imagine the selves injured because the men, who follow them upon the supposition of a greater fortu reject them when they are discovered to h less. I have never known any lady, who not think wealth a title to some stipulations her favour: and surely what is claimed by possession of money is justly forfeited by its l She that has once demanded a settlement allowed the importance of fortune; and wh she cannot show pecuniary merit, why sho she think her cheapener obliged to purchase?

My lovers were not all contented with sil desertion. Some of them revenged the neg which they had formerly endured by wan and superfluous insults, and endeavoured mortify me, by paying, in my presence, th civilities to other ladies, which were once voted only to me. But, as it had been my r to treat men according to the rank of their tellect, I had never suffered any one to wa his life in suspense, who could have employe to better purposes, and had therefore no enem but coxcombs, whose resentment and resp were equally below my consideration.

The only pain which I have felt from deg dation, is the loss of that influence which I h always exerted on the side of virtue, in the fence of innocence, and the assertion of tru I now find my opinions slighted, my sentime criticised, and my arguments opposed by th that used to listen to me without reply, struggle to be first in expressing their con tion.

The female disputants have wholly thro off my authority; and if I endeavour to enfo my reasons by an appeal to the scholars happen to be present, the wretches are cert to pay their court by sacrificing me and system to a finer gown; and I am every h insulted with contradiction by cowards, could never find till lately that Melissa liable to error.

There are two persons only whom I can charge with having changed their conduct w my change of fortune. One is an old cur that has passed his life in the duties of his p fession, with great reputation for his knowle

d piety; the other is a lieutenant of dragoons. he parson made no difficulty in the height of y elevation to check me when I was pert, and struct me when I blundered; and if there is ny alteration, he is now more timorous st his freedom should be thought rudeness. he soldier never paid me any particular ad- esses, but very rigidly observed all the rules of liteness, which he is now so far from relaxing, at whenever he serves the tea, he obstinately rries me the first dish, in defiance of the owns and whispers of the table.

This, Mr. Rambler, is *to see the world*. It is possible for those that have only known afflu- e and prosperity, to judge rightly of them- ves or others. The rich and the powerful live a perpetual masquerade, in which all about m wear borrowed characters; and we only cover in what estimation we are held, when can no longer give hopes or fears.

I am, &c.

MELISSA.

76.] SATURDAY, DEC. 8, 1750.

——*Silvis ubi passim*
vlantes error certo de tramite pellit,
e sinistrorsum, hic dextrorsum abit; unus utrique
rror, sed variis illudit partibus. HOR.

hile many error draws mankind astray
om truth's sure path, each takes his devious way?
e to the right, one to the left recedes,
ke deluded as each fancy leads.
ELPHINSTON.

easy for every man, whatever be his cha- r with others, to find reasons for esteeming elf, and therefore censure, contempt, or diction of crimes, seldom deprive him of his favour. Those, indeed, who can see only ual facts, may look upon him with abhor- ; but when he calls himself to his own aal, he finds every fault, if not absolutely d, yet so much palliated by the goodness of tention, and the cogency of the motive, ery little guilt or turpitude remains; and he takes a survey of the whole complica- f his character, he discovers so many latent nces, so many virtues that want but an unity to exert themselves in act, and so kind wishes for universal happiness, that ks on himself as suffering unjustly under famy of single failings, while the general r of his mind is unknown or unregarded. s natural to mean well, when only ab- d ideas of virtue are proposed to the mind, particular passion turns us aside from de; and so willing is every man to flatter f, that the difference between approving nd obeying them, is frequently forgotten; acknowledges the obligations of morality, and pleases his vanity with enforcing them to others, concludes himself zealous in the cause of virtue, though he has no longer any regard to her precepts, than they conform to his own desires; and counts himself among her warmest lovers, because he praises her beauty, though every rival steals away his heart.

There are, however, great numbers who have little recourse to the refinements of speculation, but who yet live at peace with themselves, by means which require less understanding, or less attention. When their hearts are burthened with the consciousness of a crime, instead of seeking for some remedy within themselves, they look round upon the rest of mankind, to find others tainted with the same guilt; they please themselves with observing, that they have numbers on their side; and that, though they are hunted out from the society of good men, they are not likely to be condemned to solitude.

It may be observed, perhaps without exception, that none are so industrious to detect wickedness, or so ready to impute it, as they whose crimes are apparent and confessed. They envy an unblemished reputation, and what they envy they are busy to destroy; they are unwilling to suppose themselves meaner and more corrupt than others, and therefore willingly pull down from their elevations those with whom they cannot rise to an equality. No man yet was ever wicked without secret discontent, and according to the different degrees of remaining virtue, or unextinguished reason, he either endeavours to reform himself, or corrupt others; either to regain the station which he has quitted, or prevail on others to imitate his defection.

It has always been considered as an alleviation of misery not to suffer alone, even when union and society can contribute nothing to resistance or escape; some comfort of the same kind seems to incite wickedness to seek associates, though indeed another reason may be given; for as guilt is propagated the power of reproach is diminished, and among numbers equally detestable every individual may be sheltered from shame, though not from conscience.

Another lenitive, by which the throbs of the breast are assuaged, is the contemplation not of the same, but of different crimes. He that cannot justify himself by his resemblance to others, is ready to try some other expedient, and to inquire what will rise to his advantage from opposition and dissimilitude. He easily finds some faults in every human being, which he weighs against his own, and easily makes them preponderate while he keeps the balance in his own hand, and throws in or takes out at his pleasure circumstances that make them heavier or lighter. He then triumphs in his comparative purity, and sets himself at ease, not because he can refute the charges advanced against him, but because he can censure his accusers with

equal justice, and no longer fears the arrows of reproach, when he has stored his magazine of malice with weapons equally sharp and equally envenomed.

This practice, though never just, is yet specious and artful, when the censure is directed against deviations to the contrary extreme. The man who is branded with cowardice, may, with some appearance of propriety, turn all his force of argument against a stupid contempt of life, and rash precipitation into unnecessary danger. Every recession from temerity is an approach towards cowardice; and though it be confessed that bravery, like other virtues, stands between faults on either hand, yet the place of the middle point may always be disputed; he may therefore often impose upon careless understandings, by turning the attention wholly from himself, and keeping it fixed invariably on the opposite fault; and by showing how many evils are avoided by his behaviour, he may conceal for a time those which are incurred.

But vice has not always opportunities or address for such artful subterfuges; men often extenuate their own guilt, only by vague and general charges upon others, or endeavour to gain rest to themselves, by pointing some other prey to the pursuit of censure.

Every whisper of infamy is industriously circulated, every hint of suspicion eagerly improved, and every failure of conduct joyfully published by those whose interest it is, that the eye and voice of the public should be employed on any rather than on themselves.

All these artifices, and a thousand others equally vain and equally despicable, are incited by that conviction of the deformity of wickedness, from which none can set himself free, and by an absurd desire to separate the cause from the effects, and to enjoy the profit of crimes without suffering the shame. Men are willing to try all methods of reconciling guilt and quiet, and when their understandings are stubborn and uncomplying, raise their passions against them, and hope to overpower their own knowledge.

It is generally not so much the desire of men, sunk into depravity, to deceive the world as themselves; for when no particular circumstances make them dependent on others, infamy disturbs them little, but as it revives their remorse, and is echoed to them from their own hearts. The sentence most dreaded is that of reason and conscience, which they would engage on their side at any price but the labours of duty and the sorrows of repentance. For this purpose every seducement and fallacy is sought, the hopes still rest upon some new experiment till life is at an end; and the last hour steals on unperceived, while the faculties are engaged in resisting reason, and repressing the sense of the Divine disapprobation.

No. 77.] TUESDAY, DEC. 11, 1750.

Os dignum æterno nitidum quod fulgeat auro,
Si mallet laudare Deum, cui sordida monstra
Prætulit, et liquida temeravit crimine vocem.
PRUDENT.

A golden [illegible] such a wit might claim,
Had G[illegible] strung the noble flame;
But ah! [illegible] a subject has he sung!
What [illegible] profanes his tongue!
F. LEWIS.

AMONG those whose hopes of distinction, [illegible] riches, arise from an opinion of their intellectual attainments, it has been, from age to age, an established custom, to complain of the ingratitude of mankind to their instructors, and the discouragement which men of genius and study suffer from avarice and ignorance, from the prevalence of false taste, and the encroachment of barbarity.

Men are most powerfully affected by those evils which themselves feel, or which appear before their own eyes; and as there has never been a time of such general felicity, but that many have failed to obtain the rewards to which they had, in their own judgment, a just claim, some offended writer has always declaimed, in the rage of disappointment, against his age or nation; nor is there one who has not fallen upon times more unfavourable to learning than any former century, or who does not wish, that he had been reserved in the insensibility of non-existence to some happier hour, when literary merit shall no longer be despised, and the gifts and caresses of mankind shall recompense the toils of study, and add lustre to the charms of wit.

Many of these clamours are undoubtedly to be considered only as the bursts of pride never to be satisfied, as the prattle of affectation mimicing distresses unfelt, or as the common places of vanity solicitous for splendour of sentences and acuteness of remark. Yet it cannot be denied, that frequent discontent must proceed from frequent hardships; and though it is evident, that not more than one age or people can deserve the censure of being more averse from learning than any other, yet at all times knowledge must have encountered impediments, and wit been mortified with contempt, and harassed with persecution.

It is not necessary, however, to join immediately in the outcry, or to condemn mankind as pleased with ignorance, or always envious of superior abilities. The miseries of the learned have been related by themselves; and since they have not been found exempt from the partiality with which men look upon their own actions and sufferings, we may conclude that they have not forgotten to deck their calamities with the brightest ornaments and strongest

colours. The logician collected all his subtilties when they were to be employed in his own defence; and the master of rhetoric exerted against his adversary all the arts by which hatred is embittered, and indignation inflamed.

To believe no man in his own cause, is the standing and perpetual rule of distributive justice. Since, therefore, in the controversy between the learned and their enemies, we have only the pleas of one party, of the party more able to delude our understandings, and engage our passions, we must determine our opinion by facts uncontested, and evidences on each side allowed to be genuine.

By this procedure, I know not whether the students will find their cause promoted, or their compassion which they expect much increased. Let their conduct be impartially surveyed; let them be allowed no longer to direct attention at their pleasure, by expatiating on their own deserts; let neither the dignity of knowledge overwe the judgment, nor the graces of elegance seduce it. It will then, perhaps, be found, that they were not able to produce claims to kinder treatment, but provoked the calamities which they suffered, and seldom wanted friends, but when they wanted virtue.

That few men, celebrated for theoretic wisdom, live with conformity to their precepts, must be readily confessed; and we cannot wonder that the indignation of mankind rises with great vehemence against those, who neglect the duties which they appear to know with so strong conviction the necessity of performing. Yet once no man has power of acting equal to that of thinking, I know not whether the speculatist may not sometimes incur censures too severe, and by those who form ideas of his life from their knowledge of his books, be considered as worse than others, only because he was expected to be better.

He, by whose writings the heart is rectified, the appetites counteracted, and the passions repressed, may be considered as not unprofitable to the great republic of humanity, even though his behaviour should not always exemplify his rules. His instructions may diffuse their influence to regions, in which it will not be inquired, whether the author be *albus an ater*, good or bad; to times, when all his faults and all his follies shall be lost in forgetfulness, among things of no concern or importance to the world; and he may kindle in thousands and in thousands that flame which burnt but dimly in himself, through the fumes of passion, or the damps of cowardice. The vicious moralist may be considered as a taper, by which we are lighted through the labyrinth of complicated passions, he extends his radiance further than his heat, and guides all that are within view, but burns only those who make too near approaches.

Yet since good or harm must be received for the most part from those to whom we are familiarly known, he whose vices overpower his virtues, in the compass to which his vices can extend, has no reason to complain that he meets not with affection or veneration, when those with whom he passes his life are more corrupted by his practice than enlightened by his ideas. Admiration begins where acquaintance ceases; and his favourers are distant, but his enemies at hand.

Yet many have dared to boast of neglected merit, and to challenge their age for cruelty and folly, of whom it cannot be alleged that they have endeavoured to increase the wisdom or virtue of their readers. They have been at once profligate in their lives, and licentious in their compositions; have not only forsaken the paths of virtue, but attempted to lure others after them. They have smoothed the road of perdition, covered with flowers the thorns of guilt, and taught temptation sweeter notes, softer blandishments, and stronger allurements.

It has been apparently the settled purpose of some writers, whose powers and acquisitions place them high in the ranks of literature, to set fashion on the side of wickedness; to recommend debauchery and lewdness, by associating them with qualities most likely to dazzle the discernment, and attract the affections; and to show innocence and goodness with such attendant weaknesses as necessarily expose them to contempt and derision.

Such naturally found intimates among the corrupt, the thoughtless, and the intemperate; passed their lives amidst the levities of sportive idleness, or the warm professions of drunken friendship; and fed their hopes with the promises of wretches, whom their precepts had taught to scoff at truth. But when fools had laughed away their sprightliness, and the languors of excess could no longer be relieved, they saw their protectors hourly drop away, and wondered and stormed to find themselves abandoned. Whether their companions persisted in wickedness, or returned to virtue, they were left equally without assistance; for debauchery is selfish and negligent, and from virtue the virtuous only can expect regard.

It is said by Florus of Catiline, who died in the midst of slaughtered enemies, that *his death had been illustrious, had it been suffered for his country*. Of the wits who have languished away life under the pressures of poverty, or in the restlessness of suspense, caressed and rejected, flattered and despised, as they were of more or less use to those who styled themselves their patrons, it might be observed, that their miseries would enforce compassion, had they been brought upon them by honesty and religion.

The wickedness of a loose or profane author is more atrocious than that of the giddy libertine, or drunken ravisher, not only because it extends its effects wider, as a pestilence that taints the air is more destructive than poison infused in a draught, but because it is committed with cool deliberation. By the instantaneous violence of desire, a good man may sometimes be surprised before reflection can come to his rescue; when the appetites have strengthened their influence by habit, they are not easily resisted or suppressed; but for the frigid villany of studious lewdness, for the calm malignity of laboured impiety, what apology can be invented? What punishment can be adequate to the crime of him who retires to solitudes for the refinement of debauchery; who tortures his fancy, and ransacks his memory, only that he may leave the world less virtuous than he found it; that he may intercept the hopes of the rising generation; and spread snares for the soul with more dexterity?

What were their motives, or what their excuses, is below the dignity of reason to examine. If having extinguished in themselves the distinction of right and wrong, they were insensible of the mischief which they promoted, they deserved to be hunted down by the general compact, as no longer partaking of social nature; if influenced by the corruption of patrons, or readers, they sacrificed their own convictions to vanity or interest, they were to be abhorred with more acrimony than he that murders for pay; since they committed greater crimes without greater temptations.

Of him to whom much is given, much shall be required. Those, whom God has favoured with superior faculties, and made eminent for quickness of intuition, and accuracy of distinctions, will certainly be regarded as culpable in his eye, for defects and deviations which, in souls less enlightened, may be guiltless. But, surely, none can think without horror on that man's condition, who has been more wicked in proportion as he had more means of excelling in virtue, and used the light imparted from Heaven only to embellish folly, and shed lustre upon crimes.

No. 78.] SATURDAY, DEC. 15, 1750.

——*Mors sola fatetur*
Quantula sint hominum corpuscula. JUV.

Death only this mysterious truth unfolds,
The mighty soul how small a body holds.
DRYDEN.

CORPORAL sensation is known to depend so much upon novelty, that custom takes away from many things their power of giving pleasure or pain. Thus a new dress becomes easy by wearing it, and the palate is reconciled by degrees to dishes which at first disgusted it. That by long habit of carrying a burden, we lose, in great part, our sensibility of its weight any man may be convinced by putting on for an hour the armour of our ancestors; for he will scarcely believe that men would have had much inclination to marches and battles, encumbered and oppressed, as he will find himself, with the ancient panoply. Yet the heroes that overrun regions, and stormed towns in iron accoutrements, he knows not to have been bigger, and has no reason to imagine them stronger, than the present race of men: he therefore must conclude, that their peculiar powers were conferred only by peculiar habits, and that their familiarity with the dress of war enabled them to move in it with ease, vigour, and agility.

Yet it seems to be the condition of our present state, that pain should be more fixed and permanent than pleasure. Uneasiness gives way by slow degrees, and is long before it quits its possession of the sensory; but all our gratifications are volatile, vagrant, and easily dissipated. The fragrance of the jessamine bower is lost after the enjoyment of a few moments, and the Indian wanders among his native spices without any sense of their exhalations. It is, indeed, not necessary to show by many instances what all mankind confess, by an incessant call for variety, and restless pursuit of enjoyments, which they value only because unpossessed.

Something similar, or analogous, may be observed in effects produced immediately upon the mind! nothing can strongly strike or affect us, but what is rare or sudden. The most important events, when they become familiar, are no longer considered with wonder or solicitude, and that which at first filled up our whole attention, and left no place for any other thought, is soon thrust aside into some remote repository of the mind, and lies among other lumber in the memory, overlooked and neglected. Thus far the mind resembles the body, but here the similitude is at an end.

The manner in which external force acts upon the body is very little subject to the regulation of the will; no man can at pleasure obtund or invigorate his senses, prolong the agency of an impulse, or continue the presence of any image traced upon the eye, or any sound infused into the ear. But our ideas are more subject to choice; we can call them before us, and command their stay, we can facilitate and promote their recurrence, we can either repress their intrusion, or hasten their retreat. It is therefore the business of wisdom and virtue, to select among numberless objects striving for our notice, such as may enable us to exalt our reason, extend our views, and secure our happiness

But this choice is to be made with very little regard to rareness or frequency; for nothing is aluable merely because it is either rare or com-ıon, but because it is adapted to some useful urpose, and enables us to supply some defi-iency of our nature.

Milton has judiciously represented the father f mankind, as seized with horror and astonish-ıent at the sight of death, exhibited to him on he mount of vision. For surely, nothing can o much disturb the passions, or perplex the in-ellects of man, as the disruption of his union vith visible nature; a separation from all that as hitherto delighted or engaged him; a change ot only of the place, but the manner of his be-ıg; an entrance into a state not simply which e knows not, but which perhaps he has not ıculties to know; an immediate and percepti-le communication with the Supreme Being, ıd, what is above all distressful and alarming, ıe final sentence and unalterable allotment.

Yet we to whom the shortness of life has ıven frequent occasions of contemplating mor-ılity, can, without emotion, see generations of ıen pass away, and are at leisure to establish ıodes of sorrow, and adjust the ceremonial of ath. We can look upon funeral pomp as a mmon spectacle in which we have no concern, ıd turn away from it to trifles and amuse-ents, without dejection of look, or inquietude heart.

It is, indeed, apparent from the constitution the world, that there must be a time for her thoughts; and a perpetual meditation on the last hour, however it may become the litude of a monastery, is inconsistent with ıy duties of common life. But surely the membrance of death ought to predominate in r minds, as an habitual and settled principle, vays operating, though not always perceived; d our attention should seldom wander so far m our own condition, as not to be recalled d fixed by sight of an event, which must n, we know not how soon, happen likewise ourselves, and of which, though we cannot point the time, we may secure the conse-nce.

Every instance of death may justly awaken fears and quicken our vigilance, but its fre-ncy so much weakens its effect, that we are dom alarmed unless some close connection is ken, some scheme frustrated, or some hope ated. Many therefore seem to pass on from th to decrepitude, without any reflection on end of life, because they are wholly involved hin themselves, and look on others only as abitants of the common earth, without any ectation of receiving good, or intention of towing it.

Events, of which we confess the importance, ite little sensibility, unless they affect us e nearly than as sharers in the common in-terest of mankind; that desire which every man feels of being remembered and lamented, is often mortified when we remark how little concern is caused by the eternal departure even of those who have passed their lives with public honours, and been distinguished by extraordinary performances. It is not possible to be regarded with tenderness except by a few. That merit which gives greatness and renown, diffuses its influence to a wide compass, but acts weakly on every single breast; it is placed at a distance from common spectators, and shines like one of the remote stars, of which the light reaches us but not the heat. The wit, the hero, the philosopher, whom their tempers or their fortunes have hindered from intimate relations, die, without any other effect than that of adding a new topic to the conversation of the day. They impress none with any fresh conviction of the fragility of our nature, because none had any particular interest in their lives, or was united to them by a reciprocation of benefits and endearments.

Thus it often happens, that those who in their lives were applauded and admired, are laid at last in the ground without the common honour of a stone; because by those excellences with which many were delighted, none had been obliged, and though they had many to celebrate, they had none to love them.

Custom so far regulates the sentiments, at least of common minds, that I believe men may be generally observed to grow less tender as they advance in age. He who, when life was new, melted at the loss of every companion, can look in time, without concern, upon the grave into which his last friend was thrown, and into which himself is ready to fall; not that he is more willing to die than formerly, but that he is more familiar to the death of others, and therefore is not alarmed so far as to consider how much nearer he approaches to his end. But this is to submit tamely to the tyranny of accident, and to suffer our reason to lie useless. Every funeral may justly be considered as a summons to prepare for that state, into which it shows us that we must some time enter; and the summons is more loud and piercing, as the event of which it warns us is at less distance. To neglect at any time preparation for death, is to sleep on our post at a siege; but to omit it in old age, is to sleep at an attack.

It has always appeared to me one of the most striking passages in the visions of Quevedo, which stigmatizes those as fools who complain that they failed of happiness by sudden death. "How," says he, "can death be sudden to a being who always knew that he must die, and that the time of his death was uncertain?"

Since business and gayety are always drawing our attention away from a future state, some admonition is frequently necessary to reca. it

to our minds; and what can more properly renew the impression than the examples of mortality which every day supplies? The great incentive to virtue is the reflection that we must die; it will therefore be useful to accustom ourselves, whenever we see a funeral, to consider how soon we may be added to the number of those whose probation is past, and whose happiness or misery shall endure for ever.

No. 79.] TUESDAY, DEC. 18, 1750.

Tam sæpe nostrum decipi Fabullum, quid
Miraris, Aule? Semper bonus homo tiro est.
MART.

You wonder I've so little wit,
Friend John, so often to be bit.—
None better guard against a cheat
Than he who is a knave complete. F. LEWIS.

SUSPICION, however necessary it may be to our safe passage through ways beset on all sides by fraud and malice, has been always considered, when it exceeds the common measures, as a token of depravity and corruption; and a Greek writer of sentences has laid down, as a standing maxim, that *he who believes not another on his oath, knows himself to be perjured.*

We can form our opinions of that which we know not, only by placing it in comparison with something that we know; whoever therefore is overrun with suspicion, and detects artifice and stratagem in every proposal, must either have learned by experience or observation the wickedness of mankind, and been taught to avoid fraud by having often suffered or seen treachery, or he must derive his judgment from the consciousness of his own disposition, and impute to others the same inclinations, which he feels predominant in himself.

To learn caution by turning our eyes upon life, and observing the arts by which negligence is surprised, timidity overborne, and credulity amused, requires either great latitude of converse and long acquaintance with business, or uncommon activity of vigilance, and acuteness of penetration. When, therefore, a young man, not distinguished by vigour of intellect, comes into the world full of scruples and diffidence; makes a bargain with many provisional limitations; hesitates in his answer to a common question, lest more should be intended than he can immediately discover: has a long reach in detecting the projects of his acquaintance; considers every caress as an act of hypocrisy, and feels neither gratitude nor affection from the tenderness of his friends, because he believes no one to have any real tenderness but for himself; whatever expectations this early sagacity may raise of his future eminence or riches, I can seldom forbear to consider him as a wretch incapable of generosity or benevolence; as a villain early completed beyond the need of common opportunities and gradual temptations.

Upon men of this class instruction and admonition are generally thrown away, because they consider artifice and deceit as proofs of understanding; they are misled at the same time by the two great seducers of the world, vanity and interest, and not only look upon those who act with openness and confidence, as condemned by their principles to obscurity and want, but as contemptible for narrowness of comprehension, shortness of views, and slowness of contrivance.

The world has been long amused with the mention of policy in public transactions, and of art in private affairs; they have been considered as the effects of great qualities, and as unattainable by men of the common level: yet I have not found many performances either of art or policy, that required such stupendous efforts of intellect, or might not have been effected by falsehood and impudence, without the assistance of any other powers. To profess what he does not mean, to promise what he cannot perform, to flatter ambition with prospects of promotion, and misery with hopes of relief, to soothe pride with appearances of submission, and appease enmity by blandishments and bribes, can surely imply nothing more or greater that a mind devoted wholly to its own purposes, a face that cannot blush, and a heart that cannot feel.

These practices are so mean and base, that who finds in himself no tendency to use them cannot easily believe that they are considered others with less detestation; he therefore suffers himself to slumber in false security, and becomes a prey to those who applaud their own subtilty, because they know how to steal upon his sleep, and exult in the success which they could never have obtained, had they not tempted a man better than themselves, who was hindered from obviating their stratagems, not by folly, but by innocence.

Suspicion is, indeed, a temper so uneasy and restless, that it is very justly appointed the comitant of guilt. It is said, that no torture equal to the inhibition of sleep long continued, a pain to which the state of that man bears very exact analogy, who dares never give rest to his vigilance and circumspection, but considers himself as surrounded by secret foes, and fears to entrust his children, or his friend, with the secret that throbs in his breast and the anxiety that break into his face. To avoid, at this expense, those evils to which easiness and friendship might have exposed him, is surely to buy safety at too dear a rate, and, in the language of the Roman satirist, to save life by losing all for which a wise man would live.*

When in the diet of the German empire

* Propter vitam vivendi perdere causas.

Camerarius relates, the princes were once displaying their felicity, and each boasting the advantages of his own dominion, one who possessed a country not remarkable for the grandeur of its cities, or the fertility of its soil, rose to speak, and the rest listened between pity and contempt, till he declared, in honour of his territories, that he could travel through them without a guard, and if he was weary, sleep in safety upon the lap of the first man whom he should meet; a commendation which would have been ill exchanged for the boast of palaces, pastures, or streams.

Suspicion is not less an enemy to virtue than to happiness; he that is already corrupt is naturally suspicious, and he that becomes suspicious will quickly be corrupt. It is too common for us to learn the frauds by which ourselves have suffered; men who are once persuaded that deceit will be employed against them, sometimes think the same arts justified by the necessity of defence. Even they whose virtue is too well established to give way to example, or be shaken by sophistry, must yet feel their love of mankind diminished with their esteem, and grow less zealous for the happiness of those by whom they imagine their own happiness endangered.

Thus we find old age, upon which suspicion has been strongly impressed, by long intercourse with the world, inflexible and severe, not easily softened by submission, melted by complaint, or subdued by supplication. Frequent experience of counterfeited miseries, and dissembled virtue, in time overcomes that disposition to tenderness and sympathy, which is so powerful in our younger years; and they that happen to petition the old for compassion or assistance, are doomed to languish without regard, and suffer for the crimes of men who have formerly been found undeserving or ungrateful.

Historians are certainly chargeable with the depravation of mankind, when they relate without censure those stratagems of war by which the virtues of an enemy are engaged to his destruction. A ship comes before a port, weather-beaten and shattered, and the crew implore the liberty of repairing their breaches, supplying themselves with necessaries, or burying their dead. The humanity of the inhabitants inclines them to consent; the strangers enter the town with their weapons concealed, fall suddenly upon their benefactors, destroy those that make resistance, and become masters of the place; they return home rich with plunder, and their success recorded to encourage imitation.

But surely war has its laws, and ought to be conducted with some regard to the universal interest of man. Those may justly be pursued as enemies to the community of nature, who suffer hostility to vacate the unalterable laws of right, and pursue their private advantage by means, which, if once established, must destroy kindness, cut off from every man all hopes of assistance from another, and fill the world with perpetual suspicion and implacable malevolence. Whatever is thus gained ought to be restored, and those who have conquered by such treachery may be justly denied the protection of their native country.

Whoever commits a fraud is guilty not only of the particular injury to him whom he deceives, but of the diminution of that confidence which constitutes not only the ease but the existence of society. He that suffers by imposture has too often his virtue more impaired than his fortune. But as it is necessary not to invite robbery by supineness, so it is our duty not to suppress tenderness by suspicion; it is better to suffer wrong than to do it, and happier to be sometimes cheated than not to trust.

No. 80.] SATURDAY, DEC. 22, 1750.

Vides ut alta stet nive candidum
Soracte, nec jam sustineant onus
Silvæ laborantes——— HOR.

Behold yon mountain's hoary height
Made higher with new mounts of snow;
Again behold the winter's weight
Oppress the labouring woods below. DRYDEN.

As Providence has made the human soul an active being always impatient for novelty, and struggling for something yet unenjoyed with unwearied progression, the world seems to have been eminently adapted to this disposition of the mind; it is formed to raise expectations by constant vicissitudes, and to obviate satiety by perpetual change.

Wherever we turn our eyes, we find something to revive our curiosity, and engage our attention. In the dusk of the morning we watch the rising of the sun, and see the day diversify the clouds, and open new prospects in its gradual advance. After a few hours we see the shades lengthen, and the light decline, till the sky is resigned to a multitude of shining orbs different from each other in magnitude and splendour. The earth varies its appearance as we move upon it; the woods offer their shades, and the fields their harvests; the hill flatters with an extensive view, and the valley invites with shelter, fragrance, and flowers.

The poets have numbered among the felicities of the golden age, an exemption from the change of seasons, and a perpetuity of spring; but I am not certain that in this state of imaginary happiness they have made sufficient provision for that insatiable demand of new gratifications, which seems particularly to characterize the nature of man. Our sense of delight is in a great measure comparative, and arises at once from the sensations which we feel, and those which we remember: thus ease after torment is

pleasure for a time, and we are very agreeably recreated, when the body, chilled with the weather, is gradually recovering its natural tepidity; but the joy ceases when we have forgot the cold: we must fall below ease again, if we desire to rise above it, and purchase new felicity by voluntary pain. It is therefore not unlikely that however the fancy may be amused with the description of regions in which no wind is heard but the gentle zephyr, and no scenes are displayed but valleys enamelled with unfading flowers, and woods waving their perennial verdure, we should soon grow weary of uniformity, find our thoughts languish for want of other subjects, call on Heaven for our wonted round of seasons, and think ourselves liberally recompensed for the inconveniences of summer and winter, by new perceptions of the calmness and mildness of the intermediate variations.

Every season has its particular power of striking the mind. The nakedness and asperity of the wintry world always fill the beholder with pensive and profound astonishment; as the variety of the scene is lessened, its grandeur is increased; and the mind is swelled at once by the mingled ideas of the present and the past, of the beauties which have vanished from the eyes, and the waste and desolation that are now before them.

It is observed by Milton, that he who neglects to visit the country in spring, and rejects the pleasures that are then in their first bloom and fragrance, is guilty of *sullenness against nature*. If we allot different duties to different seasons, he may be charged with equal disobedience to the voice of nature, who looks on the bleak hills and leafless woods, without seriousness and awe. Spring is the season of gayety, and winter of terror; in spring the heart of tranquillity dances to the melody of the groves, and the eye of benevolence sparkles at the sight of happiness and plenty. In the winter, compassion melts at universal calamity, and the tear of softness starts at the wailings of hunger, and the cries of the creation in distress.

Few minds have much inclination to indulge heaviness and sorrow, nor do I recommend them beyond the degree necessary to maintain in its full vigour that habitual sympathy and tenderness, which, in a world of so much misery, is necessary to the ready discharge of our most important duties. The winter therefore is generally celebrated as the proper season for domestic merriment and gayety. We are seldom invited by the votaries of pleasure to look abroad for any other purpose, than that we may shrink back with more satisfaction to our coverts, and when we have heard the howl of the tempest, and felt the gripe of the frost, congratulate each other with more gladness upon a close room, an easy chair, a large fire, and a smoking dinner.

Winter brings natural inducements to jollity and conversation. Differences, we know, are never so effectually laid asleep, as by some common calamity: an enemy unites all to whom he threatens danger. The rigour of winter brings generally to the same fire-side, those, who by the opposition of inclinations, or difference of employment, moved in various directions through the other parts of the year; and when they have met, and find it their mutual interest to remain together, they endear each other by mutual compliances, and often wish for the continuance of the social season, with all its bleakness and all its severities.

To the men of study and imagination the winter is generally the chief time of labour. Gloom and silence produce composure of mind and concentration of ideas; and the privation of external pleasure naturally causes an effort to find entertainment within. This is the time, in which those whom literature enables to find amusements for themselves, have more than common convictions of their own happiness. When they are condemned by the elements to retirement, and debarred from most of the diversions which are called in to assist the flight of time, they can find new subjects of inquiry, and preserve themselves from that weariness, which hangs always flagging upon the vacant mind.

It cannot indeed be expected of all to be poets and philosophers; it is necessary that the greater part of mankind should be employed in the minute business of common life; minute, indeed, not if we consider its influence upon our happiness, but if we respect the abilities requisite to conduct it. These must necessarily be more dependent on accident for the means of spending agreeably those hours which their occupations leave unengaged, or nature obliges them to allow to relaxation. Yet even on these I would willingly impress such a sense of the value of time, as may incline them to find out for their careless hours amusements of more use and dignity than the common games, which not only weary the mind without improving it, but strengthen the passions of envy and avarice, and often lead to fraud and to profusion, to corruption and ruin. It is unworthy of a reasonable being to spend any of the little time allotted us, without some tendency, either direct or oblique, to the end of our existence. And though every moment cannot be laid out on the formal and regular improvement of our knowledge, or in the stated practice of a moral or religious duty, yet no day should be so spent as to exclude wisdom or virtue, or pass without possibility of qualifying us more or less for the better employment of the hour which are to come.

It is scarcely possible to pass an hour in honest conversation, without being able, when we rise from it, to please ourselves with having given or received some advantages; but a man may shuffle cards, or rattle dice, from noon

midnight, without tracing any new idea in his mind, or being able to recollect the day by any other token than his gain or loss, and a confused remembrance of agitated passions and clamorous altercations.

However, as experience is of more weight than precept, any of my readers, who are contriving how to spend the dreary months before them, may consider which of their past amusements fills them now with the greatest satisfaction, and resolve to repeat those gratifications of which the pleasure is most durable.

No. 81.] TUESDAY, DEC. 25, 1750.

Discite Justitiam moniti —— VIRG.

Hear, and be just.

AMONG questions which have been discussed, without any approach to decision, may be numbered the precedency or superior excellence of one virtue to another, which has long furnished a subject of dispute to men whose leisure sent them out into the intellectual world in search of employment, and who have, perhaps, been sometimes withheld from the practice of their favourite duty, by zeal for its advancement, and diligence in its celebration.

The intricacy of this dispute may be alleged as a proof of that tenderness for mankind which Providence has, I think, universally displayed, by making attainments easy in proportion as they are necessary. That all the duties of morality ought to be practised, is without difficulty discoverable, because ignorance or uncertainty would immediately involve the world in confusion and distress; but which duty ought to be most esteemed, we may continue to debate without inconvenience; so all be diligently performed as there is opportunity or need: for upon practice, not upon opinion, depends the happiness of mankind; and controversies, merely speculative, are of small importance in themselves, however they may have sometimes heated a disputant, or provoked a faction.

Of the Divine Author of our religion it is impossible to peruse the evangelical histories, without observing how little he favoured the vanity of inquisitiveness; how much more rarely he condescended to satisfy curiosity than to relieve distress; and how much he desired that his followers should rather excel in goodness than in knowledge. His precepts tend immediately to the rectification of the moral principles, and the direction of daily conduct, without ostentation, without art, at once irrefragable and plain, such as well-meaning simplicity may readily conceive, and of which we cannot mistake the meaning, but when we are afraid to find it.

The measure of justice prescribed to us, in our transactions with others, is remarkably clear and comprehensive: *Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them.* A law by which every claim of right may be immediately adjusted as far as the private conscience requires to be informed; a law, of which every man may find the exposition in his own breast, and which may always be observed without any other qualifications than honesty of intention, and purity of will.

Over this law, indeed, some sons of sophistry have been subtle enough to throw mists, which have darkened their own eyes. To perplex this universal principle, they have inquired whether a man, conscious to himself of unreasonable wishes, be bound to gratify them in another. But surely there needed no long deliberation to conclude, that the desires, which are to be considered by us as the measure of right, must be such as we approve, and that we ought to pay no regard to those expectations in others which we condemn in ourselves, and which, however they may intrude upon our imagination, we know it our duty to resist and suppress.

One of the most celebrated cases which have been produced as requiring some skill in the direction of conscience to adapt them to this great rule, is that of a criminal asking mercy of his judge, who cannot but know, that if he was in the state of the supplicant he should desire that pardon which he now denies. The difficulty of this sophism will vanish, if we remember that the parties are, in reality, on one side the criminal, and on the other the community, of which the magistrate is only the minister, and by which he is intrusted with the public safety. The magistrate, therefore, in pardoning a man unworthy of pardon, betrays the trust with which he is invested, gives away what is not his own, and, apparently, does to others what he would not that others should do to him. Even the community, whose right is still greater to arbitrary grants of mercy, is bound by those laws which regard the great republic of mankind, and cannot justify such forbearance as may promote wickedness, and lessen the general confidence and security in which all have an equal interest, and which all are therefore bound to maintain. For this reason the state has not a right to erect a general sanctuary for fugitives, or give protection to such as have forfeited their lives by crimes against the laws of common morality equally acknowledged by all nations, because no people can, without infraction of the universal league of social beings, incite, by prospects of impunity and safety, those practices in another dominion, which they would themselves punish in their own.

One occasion of uncertainty and hesitation, in those by whom this great rule has been com-

mented and dilated, is the confusion of what the exacter casuists are careful to distinguish, *debts of justice*, and *debts of charity*. The immediate and primary intention of this precept is to establish a rule of justice; and I know not whether invention, or sophistry, can start a single difficulty to retard its application, when it is thus expressed and explained, *let every man allow the claim of right in another, which he should think himself entitled to make in the like circumstances.*

The discharge of the *debts of charity*, or duties which we owe to others, not merely as required by justice, but as dictated by benevolence, admits in its own nature greater complication of circumstances, and greater latitude of choice. Justice is indispensably and universally necessary, and what is necessary must always be limited, uniform and distinct. But beneficence, though in general equally enjoined by our religion, and equally needful to the conciliation of the Divine favour, is yet, for the most part, with regard to its single acts, elective and voluntary. We may certainly, without injury to our fellow-beings, allow in the distribution of kindness something to our affections, and change the measure of our liberality, according to our opinions and prospects, our hopes and fears. This rule therefore is not equally determinate and absolute, with respect to offices of kindness, and acts of liberality; because liberality and kindness, absolutely determined, would lose their nature; for how could we be called tender, or charitable, for giving that which we are positively forbidden to withhold?

Yet, even in adjusting the extent of our beneficence, no other measure can be taken than this precept affords us, for we can only know what others suffer for want, by considering how we should be affected in the same state; nor can we proportion our assistance by any other rule than that of doing what we should then expect from others. It indeed generally happens that the giver and receiver differ in their opinions of generosity; the same partiality to his own interest inclines one to large expectations, and the other to sparing distributions. Perhaps the infirmity of human nature will scarcely suffer a man groaning under the pressure of distress, to judge rightly of the kindness of his friends, or think they have done enough till his deliverance is completed; not therefore what we might wish, but what we could demand from others, we are obliged to grant, since, though we can easily know how much we might claim, it is impossible to determine what we should hope.

But in all inquiries concerning the practice of voluntary and occasional virtues, it is safest for minds not oppressed with superstitious fears to determine against their own inclinations, and secure themselves from deficiency, by doing more than they believe strictly necessary. For of this every man may be certain, that if he were to exchange conditions with his dependent, he should expect more than, with the utmost exertion of his ardour, he now will prevail upon himself to perform; and when reason has no settled rule, and our passions are striving to mislead us, it is surely the part of a wise man to err on the side of safety.

No. 82.] SATURDAY, DEC. 29, 1750.

Omnia Castor emit, sic fiet ut omnia vendat.

MART.

Who buys without discretion, buys to sell.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

IT will not be necessary to solicit your good-will by any formal preface, when I have informed you, that I have long been known as the most laborious and zealous virtuoso that the present age has had the honour of producing, and that inconveniences have been brought upon me by an unextinguishable ardour of curiosity, and an unshaken perseverance in the acquisition of the productions of art and nature.

It was observed, from my entrance into the world, that I had something uncommon in my disposition, and that there appeared in me very early tokens of superior genius. I was always an enemy to trifles; the playthings which my mother bestowed upon me I immediately broke, that I might discover the method of their structure, and the causes of their motions: of all the toys with which children are delighted I valued only my coral, and as soon as I could speak, asked like Pieresc, innumerable questions, which the maids about me could not resolve. As I grew older I was more thoughtful and serious, and instead of amusing myself with puerile diversions, made collections of natural rarities, and never walked in the fields without bringing home stones of remarkable forms, or insects of some uncommon species. I never entered an old house, from which I did not take away the painted glass, and often lamented that I was not one of that happy generation who demolished the convents and monasteries, and broke windows by law.

Being thus early possessed by a taste for solid knowledge, I passed my youth with very little disturbance from passions and appetites; and having no pleasure in the company of boys and girls, who talked of plays, politics, fashions, or love, I carried on my inquiries with incessant diligence, and had amassed more stones, mosses and shells, than are to be found in many celebrated collections, at an age in which the greatest part of young men are studying under tutors, or endeavouring to recommend themselv

to notice by their dress, their air, and their levities.

When I was two-and-twenty years old, I became, by the death of my father, possessed of a small estate in land, with a very large sum of money in the public funds, and must confess that I did not much lament him, for he was a man of mean parts, bent rather upon growing rich than wise. He once fretted at the expense of only ten shillings, which he happened to overhear me offering for the sting of a hornet, though it was a cold moist summer, in which very few hornets had been seen. He often recommended to me the study of physic, in which, said he, you may at once gratify your curiosity after natural history, and increase your fortune by benefiting mankind. I heard him, Mr. Rambler, with pity, and, as there was no prospect of elevating a mind formed to grovel, suffered him to please himself with hoping that I should some time follow his advice. For you know that there are men with whom, when they have once settled a notion in their heads, it is to very little purpose to dispute.

Being now left wholly to my own inclinations, I very soon enlarged the bounds of my curiosity, and contented myself no longer with such rarities as required only judgment and industry, and when once found, might be had for nothing. I now turned my thoughts to exotics and antiques, and became so well known for my generous patronage of ingenious men, that my levee was crowded with visitants; some to see my museum, and others to increase its treasures, by selling me whatever they had brought from other countries.

I had always a contempt for that narrowness of conception, which contents itself with cultivating some single corner of the field of science; I took the whole region into my view, and wished it of yet greater extent. But no man's power can be equal to his will. I was forced to proceed by slow degrees, and to purchase what chance or kindness happened to present. I did not however proceed without some design, or imitate the indiscretion of those who begin a thousand collections, and finish none. Having been always a lover of geography, I determined to collect the maps drawn in the rude and barbarous times, before any regular surveys, or just observations; and have, at a great expense, brought together a volume, in which, perhaps, not a single country is laid down according to its true situation, and by which, he that desires to know the errors of the ancient geographers may be amply informed.

But my ruling passion is patriotism: my chief care has been to procure the products of our own country; and as Alfred received the tribute of the Welsh in wolves' heads, I allowed my tenants to pay their rents in butterflies, till I had exhausted the papilionaceous tribe. I then directed them to the pursuit of other animals, and obtained, by this easy method, most of the grubs and insects, which land, air, or water, can supply. I have three species of earth-worms not known to the naturalists, have discovered a new ephemera, and can show four wasps that were taken torpid in their winter quarters. I have, from my own ground, the longest blade of grass upon record, and once accepted, as a half year's rent for a field of wheat, an ear containing more grains than had been seen before upon a single stem.

One of my tenants so much neglected his own interest, as to supply me, in a whole summer, with only two horse-flies, and those of little more than the common size; and I was upon the brink of seizing for arrears, when his good fortune threw a white mole in his way, for which he was not only forgiven, but rewarded.

These, however, were petty acquisitions, and made at small expense; nor should I have ventured to rank myself among the virtuosi without better claims. I have suffered nothing worthy the regard of a wise man to escape my notice: I have ransacked the old and the new world, and been equally attentive to past ages and the present. For the illustration of ancient history, I can show a marble, of which the inscription, though it is not now legible, appears, from some broken remains of the letters, to have been Tuscan, and therefore probably engraved before the foundation of Rome. I have two pieces of porphyry found among the ruins of Ephesus, and three letters broken off by a learned traveller from the monuments of Persepolis; a piece of stone which paved the Areopagus of Athens, and a plate without figures or characters, which was found at Corinth, and which I therefore believe to be that metal which was once valued before gold. I have sand gathered out of the Granicus; a fragment of Trajan's bridge over the Danube; some of the mortar which cemented the watercourse of Tarquin; a horse-shoe broken on the Flaminian way; and a turf with five daisies dug from the field of Pharsalia.

I do not wish to raise the envy of unsuccessful collectors, by too pompous a display of my scientific wealth, but cannot forbear to observe, that there are few regions of the globe which are not honoured with some memorial in my cabinets. The Persian monarchs are said to have boasted the greatness of their empire, by being served at their tables with drink from the Ganges and the Danube; I can show one vial, of which the water was formerly an icicle on the crags of Caucasus, and another that contains what once was snow on the top of Atlas; in a third is dew brushed from a banana in the gardens of Ispahan; and, in another, brine that has rolled in the Pacific ocean. I flatter myself that I am writing to a man who will re

joice at the honour which my labours have procured to my country; and therefore I shall tell you that Britain can, by my care, boast of a snail that has crawled upon the wall of China; a humming bird which an American princess wore in her ear; the tooth of an elephant who carried the Queen of Siam; the skin of an ape that was kept in the palace of the great Mogul; a riband that adorned one of the maids of a Turkish sultana; and a scimitar once wielded by a soldier of Abas the Great.

In collecting antiquities of every country, I have been careful to choose only by intrinsic worth, and real usefulness, without regard to party or opinions. I have therefore a lock of Cromwell's hair in a box turned from a piece of the royal oak; and keep in the same drawers, sand scraped from the coffin of King Richard, and a commission signed by Henry the Seventh. I have equal veneration for the ruff of Elizabeth, and the shoe of Mary of Scotland; and should lose, with like regret, a tobacco-pipe of Raleigh, and a stirrup of King James. I have paid the same price for a glove of Lewis, and a thimble of Queen Mary; for a fur cap of the Czar, and a boot of Charles of Sweden.

You will easily imagine that these accumulations were not made without some diminution of my fortune; for I was so well known to spare no cost, that at every sale some bid against me for hire, some for sport, and some for malice; and if I asked the price of any thing, it was sufficient to double the demand. For curiosity, trafficing thus with avarice, the wealth of India had not been enough; and I, by little and little, transferred all my money from the funds to my closet: here I was inclined to stop, and live upon my estate in literary leisure, but the sale of the Harleian Collection shook my resolution: I mortgaged my land, and purchased thirty medals, which I could never find before. I have at length bought till I can buy no longer, and the cruelty of my creditors has seized my repository; I am therefore condemned to disperse what the labour of an age will not reassemble. I submit to that which cannot be opposed, and shall, in a short time, declare a sale. I have, while it is yet in my power, sent you a pebble, picked up by Tavernier on the banks of the Ganges; for which I desire no other recompense than that you will recommend my catalogue to the public.

QUISQUILIUS.

No. 83.] TUESDAY, JAN. 1, 1751.

Nisi utile est quod facias, stulta est gloria.

PHÆD.

All useless science is an empty boast.

THE publication of the letter in my last paper has naturally led me to the consideration of that thirst after curiosities, which often draws co tempt and ridicule upon itself, but which perhaps no otherwise blameable, than as wants those circumstantial recommendatio which add lustre even to moral excellence and are absolutely necessary to the grace an beauty of indifferent actions.

Learning confers so much superiority o those who possess it, that they might probabl have escaped all censures had they been able t agree among themselves; but as envy and com petition have divided the republic of letters int factions, they have neglected the common in terest; each has called in foreign aid, and en deavoured to strengthen his own cause by th frown of power, the hiss of ignorance, and th clamour of popularity. They have all engage in feuds, till by mutual hostilities they demo lished those outworks which veneration ha raised for their security, and exposed themselve to barbarians, by whom every region of scienc is equally laid waste.

Between men of different studies and profes sions, may be observed a constant reciprocatio of reproaches. The collector of shells and stone derides the folly of him who pastes leaves an flowers upon paper, pleases himself with colour that are perceptibly fading, and amasses wit care what cannot be preserved. The hunter o insects stands amazed that any man can wast his short time upon lifeless matter, while many tribes of animals yet want their history. Every one is inclined not only to promote his own study, but to exclude all others from regard and having heated his imagination with som favourite pursuit, wonders that the rest of man kind are not seized with the same passion.

There are, indeed, many subjects of study which seem but remotely allied to useful knowledge, and of little importance to happiness o virtue; nor is it easy to forbear some sallies o merriment, or expressions of pity, when we see a man wrinkled with attention, and emaciated with solicitude, in the investigation of questions of which, without visible inconvenience, th world may expire in ignorance. Yet it is dan gerous to discourage well-intended labours o innocent curiosity; for he who is employed i searches, which by any deduction of consequences tend to the benefit of life, is surely laudable in comparison of those who spend their time i counteracting happiness, and filling the world with wrong and danger, confusion and remorse. No man can perform so little as not to hav reason to congratulate himself on his merits when he beholds the multitudes that live i total idleness, and have never yet endeavoured to be useful.

It is impossible to determine the limits of in quiry, or to foresee what consequences a new dis covery may produce. He who suffers not hi faculties to lie torpid, has a chance, whatever h

is employment, of doing good to his fellow-reatures. The man that first ranged the woods a search of medicinal springs, or climbed the iountains for salutary plants, has undoubtedly erited the gratitude of posterity, how much ever his frequent miscarriages might excite the orn of his contemporaries. If what appears itle be universally despised, nothing greater can attained; for all that is great was at first lit-, and rose to its present bulk by gradual ac-ssions, and accumulated labours.

Those who lay out time or money in assem-ing matter for contemplation, are doubtless titled to some degree of respect, though in a ght of gayety, it be easy to ridicule their trea-re, or in a fit of sullenness to despise it. A an who thinks only on the particular object fore him, goes not away much illuminated by ving enjoyed the privilege of handling the oth of a shark, or the paw of a white bear; t there is nothing more worthy of admiration a philosophical eye than the structure of ani-als, by which they are qualified to support life the elements or climates to which they are propriated; and of all natural bodies, it must generally confessed that they exhibit evidences infinite wisdom, bear their testimony to the preme reason, and excite in the mind new ptures of gratitude and new incentives to ety.

To collect the productions of art, and exam-es of mechanical science or manual ability, is questionably useful, even when the things mselves are of small importance, because it is ways advantageous to know how far the hu-n powers have proceeded, and how much ex-rience has found to be within the reach of igence. Idleness and timidity often despair thout being overcome, and forbear attempts r fear of being defeated; and we may promote invigoration of faint endeavours, by showing nat has been already performed. It may metimes happen that the greatest efforts of in-uity have been exerted in trifles; yet the ne principles and expedients may be applied more valuable purposes, and the movements, ich put into action machines of no use but to se the wonder of ignorance, may be employed drain fens, or manufacture metals, to assist architect, or preserve the sailor.

For the utensils, arms, or dresses of foreign ions, which make the greatest part of many lections, I have little regard, when they are ued only because they are foreign, and can gest no improvement of our own practice. t they are not all equally useless, nor can it be ways safely determined which should be re-ted or retained: for they may sometimes un-pectedly contribute to the illustration of his-y, and to the knowledge of the natural com-dities of the country, or of the genius and stoms of its inhabitants.

Rarities there are of yet a lower rank, which owe their worth merely to accident, and which can convey no information, nor satisfy any rational desire. Such are many fragments of antiquity, as urns and pieces of pavement; and things held in veneration only for having been once the property of some eminent person, as the armour of King Henry; or for having been used on some remarkable occasion, as the lantern of Guy Faux. The loss or preservation of these seems to be a thing indifferent, nor can I perceive why the possession of them should be coveted. Yet, perhaps, even this curiosity is implanted by nature; and, when I find Tully confessing of himself, that he could not forbear at Athens to visit the walks and houses which the old philosophers had frequented or inhabited, and recollect the reverence which every nation, civil and barbarous, has paid to the ground where merit has been buried,* I am afraid to declare against the general voice of mankind, and am inclined to believe, that this regard, which we involuntarily pay to the meanest relic of a man great and illustrious, is intended as an incitement to labour, and an encouragement to expect the same renown, if it be sought by the same virtues.

The virtuoso, therefore, cannot be said to be wholly useless; but perhaps he may be sometimes culpable, for confining himself to business below his genius, and losing, in petty speculations, those hours by which, if he had spent them in nobler studies, he might have given new light to the intellectual world. It is never without grief that I find a man capable of ratiocination or invention enlisting himself in this secondary class of learning; for when he has once discovered a method of gratifying his desire of eminence by expense rather than by labour, and known the sweets of a life blessed at once with the ease of idleness, and the reputation of knowledge, he will not easily be brought to undergo again the toil of thinking, or leave his toys and trinkets for arguments and principles; arguments which require circumspection and vigilance, and principles which cannot be obtained but by the drudgery of meditation. He will gladly shut himself up for ever with his shells and metals, like the companions of Ulysses, who, having tasted the fruit of Lotos, would not, even by the hope of seeing their own country, be tempted again to the dangers of the sea.

Ἀλλ' αὐτοῦ βούλοντο μιτ' ἄνδρεσι Λωτοφάγοισι,
Λωτὸν ἐριπτόμενοι μένεμεν, νόστου τε λάθεσθαι.

——— Whoso tastes,
Insatiate rio's in the sweet repasts;
Nor other home nor other care intends,
But quits his house, his country, and his friends.
POPE.

* See this sentiment illustrated by a most splendid passage in Dr. Johnson's "Journey to the Western Islands," vol. viii. p. 395-6.—C.

Collections of this kind are of use to the learned, as heaps of stones and piles of timber are necessary to the architect. But to dig the quarry or to search the field, requires not much of any quality beyond stubborn perseverance; and though genius must often lie inactive without this humble assistance, yet this can claim little praise, because every man can afford it.

To mean understandings, it is sufficient honour to be numbered amongst the lowest labourers of learning; but different abilities must find different tasks. To hew stone would have been unworthy of Palladio; and to have rambled in search of shells and flowers, had but ill-suited with the capacity of Newton.

No. 84.] SATURDAY, JAN. 5, 1751.

Cunarum fueras motor, Charideme, mearum,
Et pueri custos, assiduusque comes.
Jam mihi nigrescunt tonsa sudaria barba,——
Sed tibi non crevi: te noster villicus horret:
Te dispensator, te domus ipsa pavet.
Corripis, observas, quereris, suspiria ducis,
Et vix a ferulis abstinet ira manum. MART.

You rock'd my cradle, were my guide
In youth, still tending at my side:
But now, dear Sir, my beard is grown,
Still I'm a child to thee alone
Our steward, butler, cook, and all
You fright, nay even the very wall;
You pry, and frown, and growl, and chide,
And scarce will lay the rod aside. F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

You seem in all your papers to be an enemy to tyranny, and to look with impartiality upon the world; I shall therefore lay my case before you, and hope by your decision to be set free from unreasonable restraints, and enabled to justify myself against the accusations which spite and peevishness produce against me.

At the age of five years I lost my mother, and my father, being not qualified to superintend the education of a girl, committed me to the care of his sister, who instructed me with the authority, and, not to deny her what she may justly claim, with the affection of a parent. She had not very elevated sentiments or extensive views, but her principles were good and her intentions pure; and though some may practise more virtues, scarce any commit fewer faults.

Under this good lady, I learned all the common rules of decent behaviour, and standing maxims of domestic prudence; and might have grown up by degrees to a country gentlewoman, without any thoughts of ranging beyond the neighbourhood, had not Flavia come down, last summer, to visit her relations in the next village. I was taken, of course, to compliment the stranger, and was, at the first sight, surprised at the unconcern with which she sa herself gazed at by the company whom she h never known before; at the carelessness wi which she received compliments, and the read ness with which she returned them. I fou she had something which I perceived myself want, and could not but wish to be like her, once easy and officious, attentive and unemba rassed. I went home, and for four days cou think and talk of nothing but Miss Flavi though my aunt told me that she was a forwar flirt, and thought herself wise before her time

In a little time she repaid my visit, and ral ed in my heart a new confusion of love and a miration. I soon saw her again, and still fou new charms in her air, conversation, and b haviour. You, who have perhaps seen t world, may have observed, that formality soo ceases between young persons. I know n how others are affected on such occasions, bu I found myself irresistibly allured to friendsh and intimacy, by the familiar complaisance a airy gayety of Flavia; so that in a few weeks became her favourite, and all the time was pa sed with me, that she could gain from ceremo and visit.

As she came often to me, she necessari spent some hours with my aunt, to whom s paid great respect by low courtesies, submissi compliance, and soft acquiescence; but as I b came gradually more accustomed to her manne I discovered that her civility was general; th there was a certain degree of deference show by her to circumstances and appearances; th many went away flattered by her humili whom she despised in her heart; that the i fluence of far the greatest part of those wi whom she conversed, ceased with their p sence; and that sometimes she did not reme ber the names of them, whom, without any tentional insincerity or false commendation, h habitual civility had sent away with very hi thoughts of their own importance.

It was not long before I perceived, that aunt's opinion was not of much weight in l via's deliberations, and that she was lool upon by her as a woman of narrow sentimer without knowledge of books, or observati on mankind. I had hitherto considered aunt, as entitled by her wisdom and experie to the highest reverence, and could not forb to wonder that any one so much younger sho venture to suspect her of error, or ignoran but my surprise was without uneasiness, being now accustomed to think Flavia alw in the right, I readily learned from her to tr my own reason, and to believe it possible, they who had lived longer might be mistake

Flavia had read much, and used so often converse on subjects of learning, that she all the men in the country to flight, except old parson, who declared himself much deli

ed with her company, because she gave him opportunities to recollect the studies of his younger years, and, by some mention of ancient story, had made him rub the dust off his Homer, which had lain unregarded in his closet. With Homer, and a thousand other names familiar to Flavia, I had no acquaintance, but began, by comparing her accomplishments with my own, to repine at my education, and wish that I had not been so long confined to the company of those from whom nothing but housewifery was to be learned. I then set myself to peruse such books as Flavia recommended, and heard her opinion of their beauties and defects. I saw new worlds hourly bursting upon my mind, and was enraptured at the prospect of diversifying life with endless entertainment.

The old lady finding that a large screen, which I had undertaken to adorn with Turkey-work against winter, made very slow advances, and that I had added in two months but three leaves to a flowered apron then in the frame, took the alarm, and with all the zeal of honest folly exclaimed against my new acquaintance, who had filled me with idle notions, and turned my head with books. But she had now lost her authority, for I began to find innumerable mistakes in her opinions, and improprieties in her language; and therefore thought myself no longer bound to pay much regard to one who knew little beyond her needle and her dairy, and who professed to think that nothing more is required of a woman than to see that the house is clean, and that the maids go to bed, and rise at a certain hour.

She seemed however to look upon Flavia as seducing me, and to imagine that when her influence was withdrawn, I should return to my allegiance, she therefore contented herself with remote hints, and gentle admonitions, intermixed with sage histories of the miscarriages of wit, and disappointments of pride. But since she has found, that though Flavia is departed, I still persist in my new scheme, she has at length lost her patience, she snatches my book out of my hand, tears my paper if she finds me writing, burns Flavia's letters before my face when she can seize them, and threatens to lock me up, and to complain to my father of my perverseness. If women, she says, would but know their duty and their interest, they would be careful to acquaint themselves with family affairs, and many a penny might be saved; for while the mistress of the house is scribbling and reading, servants are junketing, and linen is wearing out. She then takes me round the rooms, shows me the worked hangings, and chairs of tent-stitch, and asks whether all this was done with a pen and a book?

I cannot deny that I sometimes laugh and sometimes am sullen; but she has not delicacy enough to be much moved either with my mirth or my gloom, if she did not think the interest of the family endangered by this change of my manners. She had for some years marked out young Mr. Surly, an heir in the neighbourhood, remarkable for his love of fighting-cocks, as an advantageous match; and was extremely pleased with the civilities which he used to pay me, till under Flavia's tuition I learned to talk of subjects which he could not understand. This, she says, is the consequence of female study; girls grow too wise to be advised, and too stubborn to be commanded; but she is resolved to try who shall govern, and will thwart my humour till she breaks my spirit.

These menaces, Mr. Rambler, sometimes make me quite angry; for I have been sixteen these ten weeks, and think myself exempted from the dominion of a governess, who has no pretensions to more sense or knowledge than myself. I am resolved, since I am as tall and as wise as other women, to be no longer treated like a girl. Miss Flavia has often told me, that ladies of my age go to assemblies and routes, without their mothers and their aunts; I shall, therefore, from this time, leave asking advice, and refuse to give accounts. I wish you would state the time at which young ladies may judge for themselves, which I am sure you cannot but think ought to begin before sixteen; if you are inclined to delay it longer, I shall have very little regard to your opinion.

My aunt often tells me of the advantages of experience, and of the deference due to seniority; and both she and all the antiquated part of the world, talk of the unreserved obedience which they paid to the commands of their parents, and the undoubting confidence with which they listened to their precepts; of the terrors which they felt at a frown, and the humility with which they supplicated forgiveness whenever they had offended. I cannot but fancy that this boast is too general to be true, and that the young and old were always at variance. I have, however, told my aunt, that I will mend whatever she will prove to be wrong; but she replies that she has reasons of her own, and that she is sorry to live in an age when girls have the impudence to ask for proofs.

I beg once again, Mr. Rambler, to know whether I am not as wise as my aunt, and whether, when she presumes to check me as a baby, I may not pluck up a spirit and return her insolence? I shall not proceed to extremities without your advice, which is therefore impatiently expected by

MYRTILLA.

P. S. Remember I am past sixteen.

No. 85.] TUESDAY, JAN. 8, 1751.

Otia si tollas periere Cupidinis arcus
Contemptæque jacent, et sine luce faces.—OVID.

At busy hearts in vain Love's arrows fly;
Dimm'd, scorn'd, and impotent, his torches lie.

MANY writers of eminence in physic have laid

out their diligence upon the consideration of those distempers to which men are exposed by particular states of life, and very learned treatises have been produced upon the maladies of the camp, the sea, and the mines. There are, indeed, few employments which a man accustomed to anatomical inquiries, and medical refinements, would not find reasons for declining as dangerous to health, did not his learning or experience inform him, that almost every occupation, however inconvenient or formidable, is happier and safer than a life of sloth.

The necessity of action is not only demonstrable from the fabric of the body, but evident from observation of the universal practice of mankind, who, for the preservation of health, in those whose rank or wealth exempts them from the necessity of lucrative labour, have invented sports and diversions, though not of equal use to the world with manual trades, yet of equal fatigue to those who practise them, and differing only from the drudgery of the husbandman or manufacturer, as they are acts of choice, and therefore performed without the painful sense of compulsion. The huntsman rises early, pursues his game through all the dangers and obstructions of the chase, swims rivers, and scales precipices, till he returns home no less harassed than the soldier, and has perhaps sometimes incurred as great hazard of wounds or death; yet he has no motive to incite his ardour; he is neither subject to the commands of a general, nor dreads any penalties for neglect and disobedience; he has neither profit nor honour to expect from his perils and his conquests, but toils without the hope of mural or civic garlands, and must content himself with the praise of his tenants and companions.

But such is the constitution of man, that labour may be styled its own reward; nor will any external incitements be requisite, if it be considered how much happiness is gained, and how much misery escaped, by frequent and violent agitation of the body.

Ease is the utmost that can be hoped from a sedentary, and inactive habit; ease, a neutral state between pain and pleasure. The dance of spirits, the bound of vigour, readiness of enterprise, and defiance of fatigue, are reserved for him that braces his nerves, and hardens his fibres, that keeps his limbs pliant with motion, and by frequent exposure fortifies his frame against the common accidents of cold and heat.

With ease, however, if it could be secured, many would be content; but nothing terrestrial can be kept at a stand. Ease, if it is not rising into pleasure, will be falling towards pain; and whatever hope the dreams of speculation may suggest of observing the proportion between nutriment and labour, and keeping the body in a healthy state by supplies exactly equal to its waste, we know that in effect, the vital power unexcited by motion, grow gradually languid; that, as their vigour fails, obstructions are generated; and that from obstructions proceed most of those pains which wear us away slowly with periodical tortures, and which, though they sometimes suffer life to be long, condemn it to be useless, chain us down to the couch of misery, and mock us with the hopes of death.

Exercise cannot secure us from that dissolution to which we are decreed; but, while the soul and body continue united, it can make the association pleasing, and give probable hopes that they shall be disjoined by an easy separation. It was a principle among the ancients, that acute diseases are from heaven, and chronical from ourselves; the dart of death indeed falls from heaven, but we poison it by our own misconduct: to die is the fate of man, but to die with lingering anguish is generally his folly.*

It is necessary to that perfection of which our present state is capable, that the mind and body should both be kept in action; that neither the faculties of the one nor of the other be suffered to grow lax or torpid for want of use; that neither health be purchased by voluntary submission to ignorance, nor knowledge cultivated at the expense of that health, which must enable it either to give pleasure to its possessor, or assistance to others. It is too frequently the pride of students, to despise those amusements and recreations, which give to the rest of mankind strength of limbs and cheerfulness of heart. Solitude and contemplation are indeed seldom consistent with such skill in common exercises or sports as are necessary to make them practised with delight, and no man is willing to do that of which the necessity is not pressing and immediate, when he knows that his awkwardness must make him ridiculous.

Ludere qui nescit, campestribus abstinet armis
Indoctusque pilæ, discive, trochive, quiescit,
Ne spissæ risum tollant impune coronæ. HOR.

He that's unskilful will not toss a ball,
Nor run, nor wrestle, for he fears the fall;
He justly fears to meet deserved disgrace,
And that the ring will hiss the baffled ass.

CREECH.

Thus the man of learning is often resigned, almost by his own consent, to languor and pain; and while in the prosecution of his studies he suffers the weariness of labour, is subject by his course of life to the maladies of idleness.

It was, perhaps, from the observation of this mischievous omission in those who are employed about intellectual objects, that Locke has, in his "System of Education," urged the necessity of a trade to men of all ranks and professions,

* This passage was once strangely supposed by some readers to recommend suicide, instead of exercise, which is surely the more obvious meaning. See, however, a letter from Dr. Johnson on the subject, in "Boswell's Life," vol. iv. p. 103.—C.

that when the mind is weary with its proper task, it may be relaxed by a slighter attention to some mechanical operation; and that while the vital functions are resuscitated and awakened by vigorous motion, the understanding may be restrained from that vagrance and dissipation by which it relieves itself after a long intenseness of thought, unless some allurement be presented that may engage application without anxiety.

There is so little reason for expecting frequent conformity to Locke's precept, that it is not necessary to inquire whether the practice of mechanical arts might not give occasion to petty emulation, and degenerate ambition; and whether if our divines and physicians were taught the lathe and the chisel, they would not think more of their tools than their books? as Nero neglected the care of his empire for his chariot and his fiddle. It is certainly dangerous to be too much pleased with little things; but what is there which may not be perverted? Let us remember how much worse employment might have been found for those hours, which a manual occupation appears to engross; let us compute the profit with the loss, and when we reflect how often a genius is allured from his studies, consider likewise that perhaps by the same attractions he is sometimes withheld from debauchery, or recalled from malice, from ambition, from envy, and from lust.

I have always admired the wisdom of those by whom our female education was instituted, for having contrived, that every woman, of whatever condition, should be taught some arts of manufacture, by which the vacuities of recluse and domestic leisure may be filled up. These arts are more necessary, as the weakness of their sex and the general system of life debar ladies from many employments which, by diversifying the circumstances of men, preserve them from being cankered by the rust of their own thoughts. I know not how much of the virtue and happiness of the world may be the consequence of this judicious regulation. Perhaps the most powerful fancy might be unable to figure the confusion and slaughter that would be produced by so many piercing eyes and vivid understandings, turned loose upon mankind, with no other business than to sparkle and intrigue, to perplex and to destroy.

For my part, whenever chance brings within my observation a knot of misses busy at their needles, I consider myself as in the school of virtue; and though I have no extraordinary skill in plain work or embroidery, look upon their operations with as much satisfaction as their governess, because I regard them as providing a security against the most dangerous ensnarers of the soul, by enabling themselves to exclude idleness from their solitary moments, and with idleness her attendant train of passions, fancies, and chimeras, fears, sorrows, and desires. Ovid and Cervantes will inform them that love has no power but over those whom he catches unemployed; and Hector in the Iliad, when he sees Andromache overwhelmed with terrors, sends her for consolation to the loom and the distaff.

It is certain that any wild wish or vain imagination never takes such firm possession of the mind, as when it is found empty and unoccupied. The old peripatetic principle, that *Nature abhors a vacuum*, may be properly applied to the intellect, which will embrace any thing, however absurd or criminal, rather than be wholly without an object. Perhaps every man may date the predominance of those desires that disturb his life and contaminate his conscience, from some unhappy hour when too much leisure exposed him to their incursions; for he has lived with little observation either on himself or others, who does not know that to be idle is to be vicious.

No. 86.] SATURDAY, JAN. 12, 1751.

Legitimumque sonum digitis callemus et aure.

HOR.

By fingers, or by ear, we numbers scan.

ELPHINSTON.

ONE of the ancients has observed, that the burden of government is increased upon princes by the virtues of their immediate predecessors. It is, indeed, always dangerous to be placed in a state of unavoidable comparison with excellence, and the danger is still greater when that excellence is consecrated by death; when envy and interest cease to act against it, and those passions by which it was at first vilified and opposed, now stand in its defence, and turn their vehemence against honest emulation.

He that succeeds a celebrated writer has the same difficulties to encounter; he stands under the shade of exalted merit, and is hindered from rising to his natural height, by the interception of those beams which should invigorate and quicken him. He applies to that attention which is already engaged, and unwilling to be drawn off from certain satisfaction; or perhaps to an attention already wearied, and not to be recalled to the same object.

One of the old poets congratulates himself that he has the untrodden regions of Parnassus before him, and that his garland will be gathered from plantations which no writer had yet culled. But the imitator treads a beaten walk, and with all his diligence can only hope to find a few flowers or branches untouched by his predecessor, the refuse of contempt, or the omissions of negligence. The Macedonian conqueror, when he was once invited to hear a man that sung like a nightingale, replied with

contempt, "that he had heard the nightingale herself;" and the same treatment must every man expect, whose praise is, that he imitates another.

Yet, in the midst of these discouraging reflections, I am about to offer to my reader some observations upon "Paradise Lost," and hope, that, however I may fall below the illustrious writer who has so long dictated to the commonwealth of learning, my attempt may not be wholly useless. There are, in every age, new errors to be rectified, and new prejudices to be opposed. False taste is always busy to mislead those that are entering upon the regions of learning; and the traveller, uncertain of his way, and forsaken by the sun, will be pleased to see a fainter orb arise on the horizon, that may rescue him from total darkness, though with weak and borrowed lustre.

Addison, though he has considered this poem under most of the general topics of criticism, has barely touched upon the versification; not probably because he thought the art of numbers unworthy of his notice, for he knew with what minute attention the ancient critics considered the disposition of syllables, and had himself given hopes of some metrical observations upon the great Roman poet; but being the first who undertook to display the beauties, and point out the defects of Milton, he had many objects at once before him, and passed willingly over those which were most barren of ideas, and required labour rather than genius.

Yet versification, or the art of modulating his numbers, is indispensably necessary to a poet. Every other power by which the understanding is enlightened, or the imagination enchanted, may be exercised in prose. But the poet has this peculiar superiority, that to all the powers which the perfection of every other composition can require, he adds the faculty of joining music with reason, and of acting at once upon the senses and the passions. I suppose there are few who do not feel themselves touched by poetical melody, and who will not confess that they are more or less moved by the same thoughts, as they are conveyed by different sounds, and more affected by the same words in one order than in another. The perception of harmony is indeed conferred upon men in degrees very unequal; but there are none who do not perceive it, or to whom a regular series of proportionate sounds cannot give delight.

In treating on the versification of Milton I am desirous to be generally understood, and shall therefore studiously decline the dialect of grammarians; though, indeed, it is always difficult, and sometimes scarcely possible, to deliver the precepts of an art, without the terms by which the peculiar ideas of that art are expressed, and which had not been invented but because the language already in use was insufficient. If, therefore, I shall sometimes seem obscure, it may be imputed to this voluntary interdiction, and to a desire of avoiding that offence which is always given by unusual words.

The heroic measure of the English language may be properly considered as pure or mixed. It is pure when the accent rests upon every second syllable through the whole line.

> Courage uncertain dangers may abate,
> But whó can beár th' appróach of cértain fáte.
>
> DRYDEN.

> Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
> His cónstant lámp, and wáves his púrple wings,
> Reigns here, and revels; not in the bought smile
> Of hárlots, lóveless, jóyless, únendéared.
>
> MILTON.

The accent may be observed, in the second line of Dryden, and the second and fourth of Milton, to repose upon every second syllable.

The repetition of this sound or percussion at equal times, is the most complete harmony of which a single verse is capable, and should therefore be exactly kept in distichs, and generally in the last line of a paragraph, that the ear may rest without any sense of imperfection.

But, to preserve the series of sounds untransposed in a long composition, is not only very difficult, but tiresome and disgusting; for we are soon wearied with the perpetual recurrence of the same cadence. Necessity has therefore enforced the mixed measure, in which some variation of the accents is allowed: this, though it always injures the harmony of the line, considered by itself, yet compensates the loss by relieving us from the continual tyranny of the same sound, and makes us more sensible of the harmony of the pure measure.

Of these mixed numbers every poet affords us innumerable instances, and Milton seldom has two pure lines together, as will appear if any of his paragraphs be read with attention merely to the music.

> Thus at their shady lodge arrived both stood,
> Both turn'd, and under open sky adored
> The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heaven
> Which they beheld; the moon's resplendent globe,
> *And starry pole: thou also mad'st the night,*
> Maker omnipotent! and thou the day,
> Which we in our appointed work employ'd,
> Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help,
> *And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss*
> Ordain'd by thee; and this delicious place,
> For us too large; where thy abundance wants
> Partakers, and uncropp'd falls to the ground;
> But thou hast promised from us two a race
> To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
> Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
> And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.

In this passage it will be at first observed that all the lines are not equally harmonious

d upon a nearer examination it will be found at only the fifth and ninth lines are regular, d the rest are more or less licentious with re- ect to the accent. In some the accent is ually upon two syllables together, and in both rong. As

us at their shady lodge arrived, *both stood*,
th turn'd, and under open sky adored
e God that made both sky, *air*, *earth*, and heaven.

others the accent is equally upon two sylla- s, but upon both weak.

——— a race
To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
Thy goodness in*finite*, both when we wake,
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.

the first pair of syllables the accent may de- te from the rigour of exactness, without any pleasing diminution of harmony, as may be erved in the lines already cited, and more narkably in this,

———Thou also mad'st the night,
Maker omnipotent! and thou the day.

But, excepting in the first pair of syllables, ich may be considered as arbitrary, a poet o, not having the invention or knowledge of lton, has more need to allure his audience musical cadences, should seldom suffer more n one aberration from the rule in any single se.

here are two lines in this passage more re- kably unharmonious:

——— This delicious place,
or us too large; *where thy* abundance wants
artakers, and uncropp'd *falls to* the ground.

re the third pair of syllables in the first, and th pair in the second verse, have their ac- s retrograde or inverted; the first syllable g strong or acute, and the second weak. detriment which the measure suffers by inversion of the accents is sometimes less eptible, when the verses are carried one another, but is remarkably striking in this e, where the vicious verse concludes a pe- , and is yet more offensive in rhyme, when egularly attend to the flow of every single

This will appear by reading a couplet in ch Cowley, an author not sufficiently stud- of harmony, has committed the same fault.

——— his harmless life
es with substan ial blessedness abound,
d the soft wings of peace *cover* him round.

ese the law of metre is very grossly viola- by mingling combinations of sound directly site to each other, as Milton expresses in sonnet, by *committing short and long*, and setting one part of the measure at variance with the rest. The ancients, who had a language more capable of variety than ours, had two kinds of verse, the *Iambic*, consisting of short and long syllables alternately, from which our heroic measure is derived, and the *Trochaic*, consisting in a like alteration of long and short. These were considered as opposites, and conveyed the contrary images of speed and slowness; to confound them, therefore, as in these lines, is to deviate from the established practice. But where the senses are to judge, authority is not necessary, the ear is sufficient to detect dissonance, nor should I have sought auxiliaries on such an occasion against any name but that of Milton.

No. 87.] TUESDAY, JAN. 15, 1751.

Invidus, iracundus, iners, vinosus, amator,
Nemo adeo ferus est, ut non mitescere possit,
Si modo culturæ patientem commodet aurem.

HOR.

The slave to envy, anger, wine, or love,
The wretch of sloth, its excellence shall prove;
Fierceness itself shall hear its rage away,
When listening calmly to th' instructive lay.

FRANCIS.

THAT few things are so liberally bestowed, or squandered with so little effect, as good advice, has been generally observed; and many sage positions have been advanced concerning the reasons of this complaint, and the means of removing it. It is indeed an important and noble inquiry, for little would be wanting to the happiness of life, if every man could conform to the right as soon as he was shown it.

This perverse neglect of the most salutary precepts, and stubborn resistance of the most pathetic persuasion, is usually imputed to him by whom the counsel is received, and we often hear it mentioned as a sign of hopeless depravity, that though good advice was given, it has wrought no reformation.

Others, who imagine themselves to have quicker sagacity and deeper penetration, have found out that the inefficacy of advice is usually the fault of the counsellor, and rules have been laid down, by which this important duty may be successfully performed: we are directed by what tokens to discover the favourable moment at which the heart is disposed for the operation of truth and reason, with what address to administer, and with what vehicles to disguise *the cathartics of the soul.*

But, notwithstanding this specious expedient, we find the world yet in the same state: advice is still given, but still received with disgust; nor has it appeared that the bitterness of the medicine has been yet abated, or its power increased, by any methods of preparing it.

If we consider the manner in which those who assume the office of directing the conduct of others execute their undertaking, it will not be very wonderful that their labours, however zealous or affectionate, are frequently useless. For what is the advice that is commonly given? A few general maxims, enforced with vehemence and inculcated with importunity, but failing for want of particular reference and immediate application.

It is not often that any man can have so much knowledge of another, as is necessary to make instruction useful. We are sometimes not ourselves conscious of the original motives of our actions, and when we know them, our first care is to hide them from the sight of others, and often from those most diligently, whose superiority either of power or understanding may entitle them to inspect our lives; it is therefore very probable that he who endeavours the cure of our intellectual maladies, mistakes their cause; and that his prescriptions avail nothing, because he knows not which of the passions or desires is vitiated.

Advice, as it always gives a temporary appearance of superiority, can never be very grateful, even when it is most necessary or most judicious. But for the same reason every one is eager to instruct his neighbours. To be wise or to be virtuous, is to buy dignity and importance at a high price; but when nothing is necessary to elevation but detection of the follies or the faults of others, no man is so insensible to the voice of fame as to linger on the ground.

——Tentanda via est, qua me quoque possim
Tollere humo, victorque virum volitare per ora.

VIRG.

New ways I must attempt, my grovelling name
To raise aloft, and wing my flight to fame.

DRYDEN.

Vanity is so frequently the apparent motive of advice, that we, for the most part, summon our powers to oppose it without any very accurate inquiry whether it is right. It is sufficient that another is growing great in his own eyes, at our expense, and assumes authority over us without our permission; for many would contentedly suffer the consequences of their own mistakes, rather than the insolence of him who triumphs as their deliverer.

It is, indeed, seldom found that any advantages are enjoyed with that moderation which the uncertainty of all human good so powerfully enforces; and therefore the adviser may justly suspect, that he has inflamed the opposition which he laments by arrogance and supercilliousness. He may suspect, but needs not hastily to condemn himself, for he can rarely be certain that the softest language or most humble diffidence would have escaped resentment; since scarcely any degree of circumspection can prevent or obviate the rage with which the slothful the impotent, and the unsuccessful, vent their discontent upon those that excel them. Modesty itself, if it is praised, will be envied; and there are minds so impatient of inferiority, that the gratitude is a species of revenge, and they return benefits, not because recompense is a pleasure, but because obligation is a pain.

The number of those whom the love of themselves has thus far corrupted, is perhaps not great; but there are few so free from vanity as not to dictate to those who will hear them, instructions with a visible sense of their own beneficence: and few to whom it is not unpleasing to receive documents, however tenderly and cautiously delivered, or who are not willing to raise themselves from pupilage, by disputing the propositions of their teacher.

It was the maxim, I think, of Alphonsus of Arragon, that *dead counsellors are safest*. The grave puts an end to flattery and artifice, and the information that we receive from books is pure from interest, fear, or ambition. Dead counsellors are likewise most instructive; because they are heard with patience and with reverence. We are not unwilling to believe that man wiser than ourselves, from whose abilities we may receive advantage, without any danger of rivalry or opposition, and who affords us the light of his experience, without hurting our eyes by flashes of insolence.

By the consultation of books, whether of dead or living authors, many temptations to petulance and opposition, which occur in oral conference are avoided. An author cannot obtrude his service unasked, nor can be often suspected of any malignant intention to insult his reader with his knowledge or his wit. Yet so prevalent is the habit of comparing ourselves with others, while they remain within the reach of our passions, that books are seldom read with complete impartiality, but by those from whom the writer is placed at such a distance that his life or death is indifferent.

We see that volumes may be perused, and perused with attention, to little effect; and that maxims of prudence, or principles of virtue may be treasured in the memory without influencing the conduct. Of the numbers that read their lives among books, very few read to be made wiser or better, apply any general reproof of vice to themselves, or try their own manners by axioms of justice. They purpose either to consume those hours for which they can find no other amusement, to gain or preserve that respect which learning has always obtained, or to gratify their curiosity with knowledge which, like treasures buried and forgotten, is of no use to others or themselves.

"The preacher (says a French author) spend an hour in explaining and enforcing precept of religion, without feeling any im-

on from his own performance, because he may ve no further design than to fill up his hour." student may easily exhaust his life in com- ring divines and moralists, without any prac- al regard to morality or religion; he may be rning not to live, but to reason; he may re- d only the elegance of style, justness of argu- nt, and accuracy of method; and may enable nself to criticise with judgment, and dispute th subtilty, while the chief use of his volumes mthought of, his mind is unaffected, and his is unreformed.

But though truth and virtue are thus fre- ntly defeated by pride, obstinacy, or folly, are not allowed to desert them; for whoever furnish arms which they hitherto have not ployed, may enable them to gain some hearts ich would have resisted any other method of ck. Every man of genius has some arts of ng the attention peculiar to himself, by ch, honestly exerted, he may benefit man- l; for the arguments for purity of life fail heir due influence, not because they have n considered and confuted, but because they e been passed over without consideration. he position of Tully, that if Virtue could en, she must be loved, may be added, that ruth could be heard, she must be obeyed.

88.] SATURDAY, JAN. 19, 1751.

tabulis animum censoris sumet honesti: bit, quæcunque minus splendoris habebunt, e pondere erunt, et honore indigna ferentur, movere loco, quamvis invita recedant, rsentur adhuc intra penetralia Vestæ. HOR.

e that hath a curious piece design'd, he begins must take a censor's mind, e and honest; and what words appear ght and trivial, or too weak to bear eighty sense, nor worth the reader's care, off; tho' stubborn, they are loath to move, ho' we fancy, dearly tho' we love. CREECH.

ERE is no reputation for genius," says ilian, "to be gained by writing on things, , however necessary, have little splendour w. The height of a building attracts the ut the foundations lie without regard. nce there is not any way to the top of , but from the lowest parts, I shall think g unconnected with the art of oratory, he that wants cannot be an orator."

firmed and animated by this illustrious ent, I shall continue my inquiries into 's art of versification. Since, however the employment may appear, of analys- es into syllables, and whatever ridicule incurred by a solemn deliberation upon s and pauses, it is certain that without etty knowledge no man can be a poet; and that from the proper disposition of single sounds results that harmony that adds force to reason, and gives grace to sublimity; that shackles attention, and governs passions.

That verse may be melodious and pleas- ing, it is necessary, not only that the words be so ranged as that the accent may fall on its proper place, but that the syllables them- selves be so chosen as to flow smoothly into one another. This is to be effected by a proportion- ate mixture of vowels and consonants, and by tempering the mute consonants with liquids and semivowels. The Hebrew grammarians have observed, that it is impossible to pronounce two consonants without the intervention of a vowel, or without some emission of the breath between one and the other; this is longer and more perceptible, as the sounds of the con- sonants are less harmonically conjoined, and, by consequence, the flow of the verse is longer in- terrupted.

It is pronounced by Dryden, that a line of monosyllables is almost always harsh. This, with regard to our language, is evidently true, not because monosyllables cannot compose har- mony, but because our monosyllables being of Teutonic original, or formed by contraction, commonly begin and end with consonants, as,

——Every lower faculty
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste.

The difference of harmony arising principally from the collocation of vowels and consonants, will be sufficiently conceived by attending to the following passages:

Immortal *Amarant*—there grows
And flowers aloft, shading the fount of life,
And where the river of bliss through midst of heaven
Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream;
With these that never fade, the spirits elect
Bind their resplendent locks inwreath'd with beams.

The same comparison that I propose to be made between the fourth and sixth verses of this passage, may be repeated between the last lines of the following quotations

——Under foot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broider'd the ground, more coloured than with stone
Of costliest emblem.

——Here in close recess,
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve first deck'd her nuptial bed;
And heavenly choirs the hymenæan sung.

Milton, whose ear had been accustomed, not only to the music of the ancient tongues, which, however vitiated by our pronunciation, excel all that are now in use, but to the softness of the Italian, the most mellifluous of all modern poetry, seems fully convinced of the unfitness of our language for smooth versification, and is

therefore pleased with an opportunity of calling in a softer word to his assistance: for this reason, and I believe for this only, he sometimes indulges himself in a long series of proper names, and introduces them where they add little but music to his poem.

——The richer sea*
Of Atabalipa, and yet unspoil'd
Guiana, whose great city Gerion's sons
Call El Dorado.——

The moon—The Tuscan artist views
At evening, from the top of Fesole
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands.——

He has indeed been more attentive to his syllables than to his accents, and does not often offend by collisions of consonants, or openings of vowels upon each other, at least not more often than other writers who have had less important or complicated subjects to take off their care from the cadence of their lines.

The great peculiarity of Milton's versification, compared with that of later poets, is the elision of one vowel before another, or the suppression of the last syllable of a word ending with a vowel, when a vowel begins the following word. As

——Knowledge
Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind.

This license, though now disused in English poetry, was practised by our old writers, and is allowed in many other languages ancient and modern, and therefore the critics on "Paradise Lost" have, without much deliberation, commended Milton for continuing it.* But one language cannot communicate its rules to another. We have already tried and rejected the hexameter of the ancients, the double close of the Italians, and the alexandrine of the French; and the elision of vowels, however graceful it may seem to other nations, may be very unsuitable to the genius of the English tongue.

There is reason to believe that we have negligently lost part of our vowels, and that the silent *e*, which our ancestors added to the most of our monosyllables, was once vocal. By this detruncation of our syllables, our language is overstocked with consonants, and it is more necessary to add vowels to the beginning of words, than to cut them off from the end.

Milton therefore seems to have somewhat mistaken the nature of our language, of which the chief defect is ruggedness and asperity, and has left our harsh cadences yet harsher. B his elisions are not all equally to be censure in some syllables they may be allowed, and pe haps in a few may be safely imitated. T abscission of a vowel is undoubtedly vicio when it is strongly sounded, and makes, wi its associate consonant, a full and audible sy lable.

——What he gives,
Spiritual, may to purest spirits be found,
No ingrateful food, and food alike these pure
Intelligential substances require.

Fruits,—Hesperian fables true,
If true, here *only*, and of delicious taste.

——Evening now approach'd,
For we have *also* our evening and our morn.

Of guests he makes them slaves,
Inhospita*bly*, and kills their infant males.

And vital Vir*tue* infused, and vital warmth
Throughout the fluid mass.——

God made *thee* of choice his own, and of his
To serve him.

I believe every reader will agree, that in those passages, though not equally in all, music is injured, and in some the meaning scured. There are other lines in which vowel is cut off, but it is so faintly pronou in common speech, that the loss of it in poet scarcely perceived; and therefore such com ance with the measure may be allowed.

——Nature breeds
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abomina*ble*, inutter*able*; and worse
Than fables yet have feign'd——

——From the shore
They view'd the vast immensura*ble* abyss.
Impenetra*ble*, impal'd with circling fire.
To none communica*ble* in earth or heaven.

Yet even these contractions increase the ro ness of a language too rough already; and th in long poems they may be sometimes suff it never can be faulty to forbear them.

Milton frequently uses in his poems th permetrical or redundant line of eleven syll

—— Thus it shall befal
Him who to worth in woman over-trust*ing*
Lets her will rule.——

I also err'd in over-much admir*ing*.

Verses of this kind occur almost in page; but, though they are not unpleas dissonant, they ought to be admitted into poetry, since the narrow limits of our la allow us no other distinction of epic and measures, than is afforded by the lib changing at will the terminations of the atic lines, and bringing them by that rel of metrical rigour nearer to prose.

* In the original Rambler, in folio, our author's opinion appears different, and is thus expressed:—"This license, though an innovation in English poetry, is yet allowed in many other languages ancient and modern, and therefore the critics on 'Paradise Lost' have, without much deliberation, commended Milton for introducing it."

No. 89.] Tuesday, Jan. 22, 1751.

Dulce est desipere in loco. HOR.

Wisdom at proper times is well forgotten.

LOCKE, whom there is no reason to suspect of being a favourer of idleness or libertinism, has advanced, that whoever hopes to employ any part of his time with efficacy and vigour, must allow some of it to pass in trifles. It is beyond the powers of humanity to spend a whole life in profound study and intense meditation, and the most rigorous exacters of industry and seriousness have appointed hours for relaxation and amusement.

It is certain, that, with or without our consent, many of the few moments allotted us will glide imperceptibly away, and that the mind will break, from confinement to its stated task, into sudden excursions. Severe and connected attention is preserved but for a short time; and when a man shuts himself up in his closet, and bends his thoughts to the discussion of any abstruse question, he will find his faculties continually stealing away to more pleasing entertainments. He often perceives himself transported, he knows not how, to distant tracts of thought, and returns to his first object as from a dream, without knowing when he forsook it, or how long he has been abstracted from it.

It has been observed that the most studious are not always the most learned. There is, indeed, no great difficulty in discovering that this difference of proficiency may arise from the difference of intellectual powers, of the choice of books, or the convenience of information. But I believe it likewise frequently happens that the most recluse are not the most vigorous prosecutors of study. Many impose upon the world, and many upon themselves by an appearance of severe and exemplary diligence, when they, in reality, give themselves up to the luxury of secrecy, please their minds with regulating the past, or planning out the future; place themselves at will in varied situations of happiness, and slumber away their days in voluntary visions. In the journey of life some are left behind because they are naturally feeble and slow: some because they miss the way, and many because they leave it by choice, and, instead of pressing onward with a steady pace, delight themselves with momentary deviations, turn aside to pluck every flower, and repose in every shade.

There is nothing more fatal to a man whose business is to think, than to have learned the art of regaling his mind with those airy gratifications. Other vices or follies are restrained by shame, reformed by admonition, or rejected by the conviction which the comparison of our conduct with that of others may in time produce. But the invisible riot of the mind, this secret prodigality of being, is secure from detection, and fearless of reproach. The dreamer retires to his apartments, shuts out the cares and interruptions of mankind, and abandons himself to his own fancy; new worlds rise up before him, one image is followed by another, and a long succession of delights dances round him. He is at last called back to life by nature, or by custom, and enters peevish into society, because he cannot model it to his own will. He returns from his idle excursions with the asperity, though not with the knowledge, of a student, and hastens again to the same felicity with the eagerness of a man bent upon the advancement of some favourite science. The infatuation strengthens by degrees, and, like the poison of opiates, weakens his powers, without any external symptom of malignity.

It happens, indeed, that these hypocrites of learning are in time detected, and convinced by disgrace and disappointment of the difference between the labour of thought, and the sport of musing. But this discovery is often not made till it is too late to recover the time that has been fooled away. A thousand accidents may, indeed, awaken drones to a more early sense of their danger and their shame. But they who are convinced of the necessity of breaking from this habitual drowsiness, too often relapse in spite of their resolution; for these ideal seducers are always near, and neither any particularity of time nor place is necessary to their influence; they invade the soul without warning, and have often charmed down resistance before their approach is perceived or suspected.

This captivity, however, it is necessary for every man to break, who has any desire to be wise or useful, to pass his life with the esteem of others, or to look back with satisfaction from his old age upon his earlier years. In order to regain liberty, he must find the means of flying from himself; he must, in opposition to the stoic precept, teach his desires to fix upon external things; he must adopt the joys and the pains of others, and excite in his mind the want of social pleasures and amicable communication.

It is, perhaps, not impossible to promote the cure of this mental malady, by close application to some new study, which may pour in fresh ideas, and keep curiosity in perpetual motion. But study requires solitude, and solitude is a state dangerous to those who are too much accustomed to sink into themselves. Active employment or public pleasure is generally a necessary part of this intellectual regimen, without which, though some remission may be obtained, a complete cure will scarcely be effected.

This is a formidable and obstinate disease of the intellect, of which, when it has once become radicated by time, the remedy is one of the

hardest tasks of reason and of virtue. Its slightest attacks, therefore, should be watchfully opposed; and he that finds the frigid and narcotic infection beginning to seize him, should turn his whole attention against it, and check it at the first discovery by proper counteraction.

The great resolution to be formed, when happiness and virtue are thus formidably invaded, is, that no part of life be spent in a state of neutrality or indifference; but that some pleasure be found for every moment that is not devoted to labour; and that, whenever the necessary business of life grows irksome or disgusting, an immediate transition be made to diversion and gayety.

After the exercises which the health of the body requires, and which have themselves a natural tendency to actuate and invigorate the mind, the most eligible amusement of a rational being seems to be that interchange of thoughts which is practised in free and easy conversation; where suspicion is banished by experience, and emulation by benevolence; where every man speaks with no other restraint than unwillingness to offend, and hears with no other disposition than desire to be pleased.

There must be a time in which every man trifles; and the only choice that nature offers us, is, to trifle in company or alone. To join profit with pleasure, has been an old precept among men who have had very different conceptions of profit. All have agreed that our amusements should not terminate wholly in the present moment, but contribute more or less to future advantage. He that amuses himself among well chosen companions, can scarcely fail to receive, from the most careless and obstreperous merriment which virtue can allow, some useful hints; nor can converse on the most familiar topics, without some casual information. The loose sparkles of thoughtless wit may give new light to the mind, and the gay contention for paradoxical positions rectify the opinions.

This is the time in which those friendships that give happiness or consolation, relief or security, are generally formed. A wise and good man is never so amiable as in his unbended and familiar intervals. Heroic generosity, or philosophical discoveries, may compel veneration and respect, but love always implies some kind of natural or voluntary equality, and is only to be excited by that levity and cheerfulness which disencumber all minds from awe and solitude, invite the modest to freedom, and exalt the timorous to confidence. This easy gayety is certain to please, whatever be the character of him that exerts it; if our superiors descend from their elevation, we love them for lessening the distance at which we are placed below them; and inferiors, from whom we can receive no lasting advantage, will always keep our affections while their sprightliness and mirth contribute to our pleasure.

Every man finds himself differently affected by the sight of fortresses of war, and palaces of pleasure; we look on the height and strength of the bulwarks with a kind of gloomy satisfaction, for we cannot think of defence without admitting images of danger; but we range delighted and jocund through the gay apartments of the palace, because nothing is impressed by them on the mind but joy and festivity. Such is the difference between great and amiable characters; with protectors we are safe, with companions we are happy.

No. 90.] SATURDAY, JAN. 26, 1751.

In tenui labor. VIRG.

What toil in slender things!

It is very difficult to write on the minuter parts of literature without failing either to please or instruct. Too much nicety of detail disgusts the greatest part of readers, and to throw a multitude of particulars under general heads and lay down rules of extensive comprehension is to common understandings of little use. They who undertake these subjects are therefore always in danger, as one or other inconvenience arises to their imagination, of frighting us with rugged science, or amusing us with empty sound.

In criticising the work of Milton, there is, indeed, opportunity to intersperse passages that can hardly fail to relieve the languors of attention; and since, in examining the variety and choice of the pauses with which he has diversified his numbers, it will be necessary to exhibit the lines in which they are to be found, perhaps the remarks may be well compensated by the examples, and the irksomeness of grammatical disquisitions somewhat alleviated. Milton formed his scheme of versification by the poets of Greece and Rome, whom he proposed to himself for his models, so far as the difference of his language from theirs would permit of imitation. There are indeed many inconveniences inseparable from our heroic measure compared with that of Homer and Virgil; inconveniences, which it is no reproach to Milton not to have overcome, because they are in their own nature insuperable; but against which he has struggled with so much art and diligence that he may at least be said to have deserved success.

The hexameter of the ancients may be considered as consisting of fifteen syllables, so judiciously disposed, that, as every one knows who has examined the poetical authors, very pleasing and sonorous lyric measures are found from the fragments of the heroic. It is, indeed

carce possible to break them in such a manner, ut that *invenias etiam disjecta membra poetæ*, ome harmony will still remain, and the due roportions of sound will always be discovered. his measure therefore allowed great variety of auses, and great liberties of connecting one erse with another, because wherever the line as interrupted, either part singly was musical. ut the ancients seem to have confined this rivilege to hexameters; for in their other meas-es, though longer than the English heroic, ose who wrote after the refinements of versifi-tion, venture so seldom to change their pauses, at every variation may be supposed rather a mpliance with necessity than the choice of dgment.

Milton was constrained within the narrow nits of a measure not very harmonious in the most perfection; the single parts, therefore, to which it was to be sometimes broken by uses, were in danger of losing the very form verse. This has, perhaps, notwithstanding his care, sometimes happened.

As harmony is the end of poetical measures, part of a verse ought to be so separated from e rest as not to remain still more harmonious an prose, or to show, by the disposition of the nes, that it is part of a verse. This rule in e old hexameter might be easily observed, but English will very frequently be in danger of olation; for the order and regularity of ac-nts cannot well be perceived in a succession fewer than three syllables, which will con-e the English poet to only five pauses; it ng supposed, that when he connects one line th another, he should never make a full se at less distance than that of three sylla-s from the beginning or end of a verse.

That this rule should be universally and in-pensably established, perhaps cannot be nted; something may be allowed to variety, something to the adaptation of the numbers the subject; but it will be found generally essary, and the ear will seldom fail to suffer its neglect.

Thus when a single syllable is cut off from rest, it must either be united to the line h which the sense connects it, or be sounded e. If it be united to the other line, it cor-ts its harmony; if disjoined, it must stand e, and with regard to music be superfluous; there is no harmony in a single sound, be-se it has no proportion to another.

——Hypocrites austerely talk,
ming as impure what God declares
e; and commands to some, leaves free to all.

When two syllables likewise are abscinded the rest, they evidently want some asso-e sounds to make them harmonious.

——Eyes ——
——more wakeful than to drowse,
Charm'd with Arcadian pipe, the past'ral reed
Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. *Meanwhile*
To re-salute the world with sacred light
Leucothea waked.

He ended, and the Son gave signal high
To the bright minister that watch'd: *he blew*
His trumpet.

First in the east his glorious lamp was seen,
Regent of day; and all th' horizon round
Invested with bright rays, jocund to run
His longitude through heaven's high road; *the gray*
Dawn, and the Pleiades, before him danced,
Shedding sweet influence.

The same defect is perceived in the following line, where the pause is at the second syllable from the beginning

——The race
Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
In Rhodope where woods and rocks had ears
To rapture, till the savage clamour drown'd
Both harp and voice; nor could the Muse defend
Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores.

When the pause falls upon the third syllable or the seventh, the harmony is better preserved; but as the third and seventh are weak syllables, the period leaves the ear unsatisfied, and in expectation of the remaining part of the verse.

——He, with his horrid crew,
Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded though immor*tal*. But his doom
Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments *him*.

God,—with frequent intercourse,
Thither will send his winged messengers
On errands of supernal grace. So sung
The glorious train ascendi*ng*.

It may be, I think, established as a rule, that a pause which concludes a period should be made for the most part upon a strong syllable, as the fourth and sixth; but those pauses which only suspend the sense may be placed upon the weaker. Thus the rest in the third line of the first passage satisfies the ear better than in the fourth and the close of the second quotation better than of the third.

——The evil soon
Drawn back, redounded (as a flood) on those
From whom it *sprung*; impossible to mix
With *blessedness*.

——What we by day
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,
One night or two with wanton growth derides,
Tending to *wild*.

The paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands
Will keep from wilderness with ease as wide
As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
Assist *us*.

The rest in the fifth place has the same inconvenience as in the seventh and third, that the syllable is weak.

Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,
And fish with fish, to graze the herb all leaving,
Devour'd each *other*; Nor stood much in awe
Of man, but fled *him*, or with countenance grim,
Glared on him passing.

The noblest and most majestic pauses which our versification admits, are upon the fourth and sixth syllables, which are both strongly sounded in a pure and regular verse, and at either of which the line is so divided, that both members participate of harmony.

But now at last the sacred influence
Of light *appears*, and from the walls of heaven
Shoots far into the bosom of dim night
A glimmering *dawn*: here nature first begins
Her farthest verge, and chaos to retire.

But far above all others, if I can give any credit to my own ear, is the rest upon the sixth syllable, which, taking in a complete compass of sound, such as is sufficient to constitute one of our lyric measures, makes a full and solemn close. Some passages which conclude at this stop, I could never read without some strong emotions of delight or admiration.

Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,
Thou with the eternal wisdom didst converse,
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play
In presence of the almighty Father, pleased
With thy celestial *song*.

Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
Like those Hesperian gardens famed of old,
Fortunate fields, and groves, and flowery vales,
Thrice happy isles! But who dwelt happy there,
He stay'd not to *inquire*.

——— He blew
His trumpet, heard in Oreb since, perhaps
When God descended; and, perhaps, once more
To sound at general *doom*.

If the poetry of Milton be examined, with regard to the pauses and flow of his verses into each other, it will appear that he has performed all that our language would admit; and the comparison of his numbers with those who have cultivated the same manner of writing, will show that he excelled as much in the lower as the higher parts of his art, and that his skill in harmony was not less than his invention or his learning.

No. 91.] TUESDAY, JAN. 29, 1751.

Dulcis inexpertis cultura potentis amici,
Expertus metuit. HOR.

To court the great ones, and to soothe their pride,
Seems a sweet task to those that never tried;
But those that have, know well that danger's near.
CREECH.

THE Sciences having long seen their votaries labouring for the benefit of mankind without reward, put up their petition to Jupiter for a more equitable distribution of riches and ho ours. Jupiter was moved at their complaints, a touched with the approaching miseries of me whom the Sciences, wearied with perpetual i gratitude, were now threatening to forsake, a who would have been reduced by their departu to feed in dens upon the mast of trees, to hu their prey in deserts, and to perish under t paws of animals stronger and fiercer than ther selves.

A synod of the celestials was therefore co vened, in which it was resolved, that Patrona should descend to the assistance of the Science Patronage was the daughter of Astrea, by mortal father, and had been educated in t school of Truth, by the goddesses, whom she w now appointed to protect. She had from h mother that dignity of aspect, which struck t ror into false merit, and from her mistress th reserve, which made her only accessible to the whom the Sciences brought into her presence

She came down with the general acclamati of all the powers that favour learning. Ho danced before her, and Liberality stood at h side, ready to scatter by her direction the gi which Fortune, who followed her, was co manded to supply. As she advanced towar Parnassus, the cloud which had long hung over was immediately dispelled. The shades, bef withered with drought, spread their origi verdure, and the flowers that had languish with chilness brightened their colours, and vigorated their scents; the Muses tuned th harps and exerted their voices; and all the c cert of nature welcomed her arrival.

On Parnassus she fixed her residence, i palace raised by the Sciences, and adorned w whatever could delight the eye, elevate the i gination, or enlarge the understanding. H she dispersed the gifts of Fortune with the partiality of Justice, and the discernment Truth. Her gate stood always open, and H sat at the portal, inviting to entrance, all wh the Sciences numbered in their train. court was therefore thronged with innumer multitudes, of whom, though many retu disappointed, seldom any had confidence to c plain; for Patronage was known to neglect but for want of the due claims to her re Those, therefore, who had solicited her fa without success, generally withdrew from lic notice, and either diverted their attentio meaner employments, or endeavoured to su their deficiences by closer application.

In time, however, the number of those had miscarried in their pretensions gre great, that they became less ashamed of repulses; and, instead of hiding their dis in retirement, began to besiege the gat the palace, and obstruct the entrance of su they thought likely to be more caressed. The sions of Patronage, who was but half a goo

had been sometimes erroneous; and though she always made haste to rectify her mistakes, a few instances of her fallibility encouraged every one to appeal from her judgment to his own and that of his companions, who are always ready to clamour in the common cause, and elate each other with reciprocal applause.

Hope was a steady friend to the disappointed, and Impudence incited them to accept a second invitation, and lay their claim again before Patronage. They were again, for the most part, sent back with ignominy, but found hope not alienated, and Impudence more resolutely zealous; they therefore contrived new expedients, and hoped at last to prevail by their multitudes, which were always increasing, and their perseverance, which Hope and Impudence forbade them to relax.

Patronage having been long a stranger to the heavenly assemblies, began to degenerate towards terrestrial nature, and forgot the precepts of Justice and Truth. Instead of confining her friendship to the Sciences, she suffered herself, by little and little, to contract an acquaintance with Pride the son of Falsehood, by whose embraces she had two daughters, Flattery and Caprice. Flattery was nursed by Liberality, and Caprice by Fortune, without any assistance from the lessons of the Sciences.

Patronage began openly to adopt the sentiments and imitate the manners of her husband, by whose opinions she now directed her decisions with very little heed to the precepts of Truth; and as her daughters continually gained upon her affections, the Sciences lost their influence, till none found much reason to boast of their reception, but those whom Caprice or Flattery conducted to her throne.

The throngs who had so long waited, and so often been dismissed for want of recommendation from the Sciences, were delighted to see the power of those rigorous goddesses tending to its extinction. Their patronesses now renewed their encouragements. Hope smiled at the approach of Caprice, and Impudence was always at hand to introduce her clients to Flattery.

Patronage had now learned to procure herself reverence by ceremonies and formalities, and, instead of admitting her petitioners to an immediate audience, ordered the antechamber to be erected, called among mortals the Hall of Expectation. Into this hall the entrance was easy to those whom Impudence had consigned to Flattery, and it was therefore crowded with a promiscuous throng, assembled from every corner of the earth, pressing forward with the utmost eagerness of desire, and agitated with all the anxieties of competition.

They entered this general receptacle with ardour and alacrity, and made no doubt of speedy access, under the conduct of Flattery, to the presence of Patronage. But it generally happened that they were here left to their destiny, for the inner doors were committed to Caprice, who opened and shut them, as it seemed, by chance, and rejected or admitted without any settled rule of distinction. In the mean time, the miserable attendants were left to wear out their lives in alternate exultation and dejection, delivered up to the sport of Suspicion, who was always whispering into their ear designs against them which were never formed, and of Envy, who diligently pointed out the good fortune of one or other of their competitors. Infamy flew round the hall, and scattered mildews from her wings, with which every one was stained; Reputation followed her with slower flight, and endeavoured to hide the blemishes with paint, which was immediately brushed away, or separated of itself, and left the stains more visible; nor were the spots of Infamy ever effaced, but with limpid water effused by the hand of Time from a well which sprung up beneath the throne of Truth.

It frequently happened that Science, unwilling to lose the ancient prerogative of recommending to Patronage, would lead her followers into the Hall of Expectation; but they were soon discouraged from attending; for not only Envy and Suspicion incessantly tormented them, but Impudence considered them as intruders, and incited Infamy to blacken them. They therefore quickly retired, but seldom without some spots which they could scarcely wash away, and which showed that they had once waited in the Hall of Expectation.

The rest continued to expect the happy moment, at which Caprice should beckon them to approach; and endeavoured to propitiate her, not with Homerical harmony, the representation of great actions, or the recital of noble sentiments, but with soft and voluptuous melody, intermingled with the praises of Patronage and Pride, by whom they were heard at once with pleasure and contempt.

Some were indeed admitted by Caprice, when they least expected it, and heaped by Patronage with the gifts of Fortune; but they were from that time chained to her footstool, and condemned to regulate their lives by her glances and her nods; they seemed proud of their manacles, and seldom complained of any drudgery however servile, or any affront however contemptuous; yet they were often, notwithstanding their obedience, seized on a sudden by Caprice, divested of their ornaments, and thrust back into the Hall of Expectation.

Here they mingled again with the tumult, and all, except a few whom experience had taught to seek happiness in the regions of liberty, continued to spend hours, and days, and years, courting the smile of Caprice by the arts of Flattery; till at length new crowds pressed in upon them, and drove them forth at different outlets into the

habitations of Disease, and Shame, and Poverty, and Despair, where they passed the rest of their lives in narratives of promises and breaches of faith, of joys and sorrows, of hopes and disappointments.

The Sciences, after a thousand indignities, retired from the palace of Patronage, and having long wandered over the world in grief and distress, were led at last to the cottage of Independence, the daughter of Fortitude; where they were taught by Prudence and Parsimony to support themselves in dignity and quiet.

No. 92.] SATURDAY, FEB. 2, 1751.

Jam nunc minaci murmure cornuum
Perstringis aures, jam litui strepunt. HOR.

Lo! now the clarion's voice I hear,
Its threatening murmurs pierce mine ear,
And in thy lines with brazen breath
The trumpet sounds the charge of death.
FRANCIS.

It has been long observed, that the idea of beauty is vague and undefined, different in different minds, and diversified by time or place. It has been a term hitherto used to signify that which pleases us we know not why, and in our approbation of which we can justify ourselves only by the concurrence of numbers, without much power of enforcing our opinion upon others by any argument, but example and authority. It is, indeed, so little subject to the examinations of reason, that Paschal supposes it to end where demonstration begins, and maintains, that without incongruity and absurdity we cannot speak of *geometrical beauty*.

To trace all the sources of that various pleasure which we ascribe to the agency of beauty, or to disentangle all the perceptions involved in its idea, would, perhaps, require a very great part of the life of Aristotle or Plato. It is, however, in many cases apparent that this quality is merely relative and comparative; that we pronounce things beautiful because they have something which we agree, for whatever reason, to call beauty, in a greater degree than we have been accustomed to find it in other things of the same kind; and that we transfer the epithet as our knowledge increases, and appropriate it to higher excellence, when higher excellence comes within our view.

Much of the beauty of writing is of this kind; and therefore Boileau justly remarks, that the books which have stood the test of time, and been admired through all the changes which the mind of man has suffered from the various revolutions of knowledge, and the prevalence of contrary customs, have a better claim to our regard than any modern can boast, because the long continuance of their reputation proves that they are adequate to our faculties, and agreeable to nature.

It is, however, the task of criticism to establish principles; to improve opinion into knowledge; and to distinguish those means of pleasing which depend upon known causes and rational deduction, from the nameless and inexplicable elegancies which appeal only to the fancy, from which we feel delight, but know not how they produce it, and which may well be termed the enchantress of the soul. Criticism reduces those regions of literature under the dominion of science, which have hitherto known only the anarchy of ignorance, the caprices of fancy, and the tyranny of prescription.

There is nothing in the art of versifying so much exposed to the power of imagination as the accommodation of the sound to the sense, or the representation of particular images, by the flow of the verse in which they are expressed. Every student has innumerable passages, in which he, and perhaps he alone, discovers such resemblances; and since the attention of the present race of poetical readers seems particularly turned upon this species of elegance, I shall endeavour to examine how much these conformities have been observed by the poets, or directed by the critics, how far they can be established upon nature and reason, and on what occasions they have been practised by Milton.

Homer, the father of all poetical beauty, has been particularly celebrated by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, as he that, of all the poets, exhibited the greatest variety of sound; "for there are, (says he) innumerable passages, in which length of time, bulk of body, extremity of passion, and stillness of repose; or, in which on the contrary, brevity, speed, and eagerness are evidently marked out by the sound of the syllables. Thus the anguish and slow pace with which the blind Polypheme groped out with his hands the entrance of his cave, are perceived in the cadence of the verses which describe it.

Κύκλωψ δὲ στενάχων τε καὶ ὠδίνων ὀδύνῃσι,
Χερσὶ ψηλαφόων———

Meantime the Cyclop raging with his wound,
Spreads his wide arms, and searches round and round. POPE.

The critic then proceeds to show, that the efforts of Achilles struggling in his armour against the current of a river, sometimes resisting, and sometimes yielding, may be perceived in the elisions of the syllables, the slow succession of the feet, and the strength of the consonants.

Δεῖνον δ' ἀμφ' Ἀχιλῆα κυκώμενον ἵστατο κῦμα.
Ὤθει δ' ἐν σάκεϊ πίπτων ῥόος· οὐδὲ πεδίσσιν
Ἔσκε στηρίξασθαι.———

So oft the surge, in watery mountains spread,
Beats on his back, or bursts upon his head;

Yet, dauntless still, the adverse flood he braves,
And still indignant bounds above the waves,
Tired by the tides, his knees relax with toil;
Wash'd from beneath him, slides the slimy soil.

POPE.

When Homer describes the crush of men dashed against a rock, he collects the most unpleasing and harsh sounds.

Σὺν δὲ δύω μάρψας, ὥστε σκύλακας ποτί γαιῃ
Κόπτ'· ἐκ δ' ἐγκέφαλος χαμάδις ῥέε, δεῦε δὲ γαῖαν.

———His bloody hand
Snatch'd two, unhappy! of my martial band,
And dash'd like dogs against the stony floor;
The pavement swims with brains and mingled gore.

POPE.

And when he would place before the eyes something dreadful and astonishing, he makes choice of the strongest vowels, and the letters of most difficult utterance.

Τῇ δ' ἐπὶ μὲν Γοργὼ βλοσυρῶπις ἐστεφάνωτο
Δεινὸν δερκομένη· περὶ δὲ Δείμος τε φόβος τε.

Tremendous Gorgon frown'd upon its field,
And circling terrors fill'd th' expressive shield.

POPE.

Many other examples Dionysius produces; but these will sufficiently show, that either he was fanciful, or we have lost the genuine pronunciation; for I know not whether, in any one of these instances, such similitude can be discovered. It seems, indeed, probable, that the veneration with which Homer was read, produced many supposititious beauties; for though it is certain, that the sound of many of his verses very justly corresponds with the things expressed, yet, when the force of his imagination, which gave him full possession of every object, is considered, together with the flexibility of his language, of which the syllables might be often contracted or dilated at pleasure, it will seem unlikely that such conformity should happen less frequently even without design.

It is not however to be doubted, that Virgil, who wrote amidst the light of criticism, and who owed so much of his success to art and labour, endeavoured among other excellences, to exhibit this similitude; nor has he been less happy in this than in the other graces of versification. This felicity of his numbers was, at the revival of learning, displayed with great elegance by Vida, in his Art of Poetry.

Quod satis est illis utcunque claudere versum.—
Omnia sed numeris vocum concordibus aptant,
Atque sono quæcunque canunt imitantur, et apta
Verborum facie, et quæsito carminis ore.
Non diversa opus est veluti dare versibus ora,
Ac melior motuque pedum, et pernicibus alis,
Ille viam tacito lapsu per levia radit:
Ille autem membris, ac mole ignavius ingens
Incedit tardo molimine subsidendo.
Ecce aliquis subit egregio pulcherrimus ore,
Cui lætum membris Venus omnibus afflat honorem.
Contra alius rudis, informes ostendit et artus,
Hirsutumque supercilium, ac caudam sinuosam,
Ingratus visu, sonitu illætabilis ipso.———
Ergo ubi jam nautæ spumas salis ære ruentes
Incubuere mari, videas spumare, reductis
Convulsum remis, rostrisque stridentibus æquor.
Tunc longe sale saxa sonant, tunc et freta ventis
Incipiunt agitata tumescere: littore fluctus
Illidunt rauco, atque refracta remurmurat unda
Ad scopulos, cumulo insequitur præruptus aquæ mons.—
Cum vero ex alto speculatus cærula Nereus
Leniit in morem stagni, placidæque paludis,
Labitur uncta vadis abies, natat uncta carina.—
Verba etiam res exiguas angusta sequuntur,
Ingentesque juvant ingentia: cuncta gigantem
Vasta decent, vultus immanes, pectora lata,
Et magni membrorum artus, magna ossa, lacertique.
Atque adeo, siquid geritur molimine magno,
Adde moram, et pariter tecum quoque verba laborent
Segnia; seu quando vi multa gleba coactis
Æternum frangenda bidentibus, æquore seu cum
Cornua velatarum obvertimus antennarum.
At mora si fuerit damno properare jubebo.
Si se forte cava extulerit mala vipera terra,
Tolle moras, cape saxa manu, cape robora, pastor;
Ferte citi flammas, date tela, repellite pestem.
Ipse etiam versus ruat, in præcepsque feratur,
Immenso cum præcipitans ruit Oceano nox,
Aut cum perculsus graviter procumbit humi bos.
Cumque etiam requies rebus datur, ipsa quoque ultro
Carmina paulisper cursu cessare videbis
In medio interrupta: quierunt cum freta ponti,
Postquam auræ posuere, quiescere protinus ipsum
Cernere erit, mediisque incœptis sistere versum.
Quid dicam, senior cum telum imbelle sine ictu
Invalidus jacit, et defectis viribus æger?
Num quoque tum versus segni pariter pede languet:
Sanguis hebet, frigent effœtæ in corpore vires.
Fortem autem juvenem deceat prorumpere in arces,
Evertisse domos, præfractaque quadrupedantum
Pectora pectoribus perrumpere, sternere turres
Ingentes, totoque ferum dare funera campo.

'Tis not enough his verses to complete,
In measure, numbers, or determined feet.
To all, proportion'd terms he must dispense,
And make the sound a picture of the sense;
The correspondent words exactly frame,
The look, the features, and the mien the same.
With rapid feet and wings, without delay,
This swiftly flies, and smoothly skims away:
This blooms with youth and beauty in his face,
And Venus breathes on every limb a grace;
That, of rude form, his uncouth members shows,
Looks horrible, and frowns with his rough brows;
His monstrous tail, in many a fold and wind,
Voluminous and vast, curls up behind;
At once the image and the lines appear
Rude to the eye, and frightful to the ear.
Lo! when the sailors steer the ponderous ships,
And plough, with brazen beaks, the foamy deeps
Incumbent on the main that roars around,
Beneath their labouring oars the waves resound;
The prows wide echoing through the dark profound

To the loud call each distant rock replies;
Toss'd by the storm the towering surges rise;
While the hoarse ocean beats the sounding shore,
Dash'd from the strand, the flying waters roar.
Flash at the shock, and gathering in a heap,
The liquid mountains rise, and overhang the deep.
But when blue Neptune from his car surveys,
And calms at one regard the raging seas,
Stretch'd like a peaceful lake the deep subsides,
And the pitch'd vessel o'er the surface glides.
When things are small, the terms should still be so;
For low words please us, when the theme is low.
But when some giant, horrible and grim,
Enormous in his gait, and vast in every limb,
Stalks towering on; the swelling words must rise
In just proportion to the monster's size.
If some large weight his huge arms strive to shove,
The verse too labours; the throng'd words scarce move,
When each stiff clod beneath the ponderous plough
Crumbles and breaks, th' encumber'd lines march slow.
Nor less, when pilots catch the friendly gales,
Unfurl their shrouds, and hoist the wide-stretch'd sails.
But if the poem suffers from delay,
Let the lines fly precipitate away,
And when the viper issues from the brake,
Be quick; with stones, and brands, and fire, attack
His rising crest, and drive the serpent back.
When night descends, or stunn'd by numerous strokes,
And groaning, to the earth drops the vast ox;
The line too sinks with correspondent sound,
Flat with the steer, and headlong to the ground.
When the wild waves subside, and tempests cease,
And hush the roarings of the sea to peace;
So oft we see the interrupted strain
Stopp'd in the midst—and with the silent main
Paused for a space—at last it glides again.
When Priam strains his aged arm, to throw
His unavailing javelin at the foe;
(His blood congeal'd, and every nerve unstrung)
Then with the theme complies the artful song;
Like him, the solitary numbers flow,
Weak, trembling, melancholy, stiff, and slow.
Not so young Pyrrhus, who with rapid force
Beats down embattled armies in his course.
The raging youth on trembling Ilion falls,
Bursts her strong gates, and shakes her lofty walls;
Provokes his flying courser to his speed,
In full career to charge the warlike steed:
He piles the field with mountains of the slain;
He pours, he storms, he thunders thro' the plain.

PITT.

From the Italian gardens Pope seems to have transplanted this flower, the growth of happier climates, into a soil less adapted to its nature, and less favourable to its increase.

Soft is the strain, when Zephyr gently blows,
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows,
But when loud billows lash the sounding shore,
The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar.
When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line too labours, and the words move slow;
Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o'er th' unbending corn and skims along the main.

From these lines, laboured with great attention, and celebrated by a rival wit, may be judged what can be expected from the most diligent endeavours after this imagery of sound. The verse intended to represent the whisper of the vernal breeze, must be confessed not much to excel in softness or volubility; and the smooth stream runs with a perpetual clash of jarring consonants. The noise and turbulence of the torrent is, indeed, distinctly imaged, for it requires very little skill to make our language rough; but in these lines, which mention the effort of Ajax, there is no particular heaviness, obstruction, or delay. The swifness of Camilla is rather contrasted than exemplified; why the verse should be lengthened to express speed, will not easily be discovered. In the dactyls used for that purpose by the ancients, two short syllables were pronounced with such rapidity, as to be equal only to one long; they, therefore, naturally exhibit the act of passing through a long space in a short time. But the Alexandrine, by its pause in the midst, is a tardy and stately measure; and the word *unbending* one of the most sluggish and slow which our language affords, cannot much accelerate its motion.

These rules and these examples have taught our present critics to inquire very studiously and minutely into sounds and cadences. It is, therefore, useful to examine with what skill they have proceeded; what discoveries they have made; and whether any rules can be established which may guide us hereafter in such researches.

No. 93.] TUESDAY, FEB. 5, 1751.

——Experiar quid concedatur in illos
Quorum Flaminia tegitur cinis, atque Latina.

JUV.

More safely truth to urge her claim presumes,
On names now found alone on books and tombs.

THERE are few books on which more time is spent by young students, than on treatises which deliver the characters of authors; in any which oftener deceive the expectation of the reader, or fill his mind with more opinions which the progress of his studies and the increase of his knowledge oblige him to resign.

Baillet has introduced his collection of decisions of the learned, by an enumeration of the prejudices which mislead the critic, and raise the passions in rebellion against the judgment. His catalogue, though large, is imperfect; and who can hope to complete it? The beauties of writing have been observed to be often such as cannot in the present state of human knowledge be evinced by evidence, or drawn out into demonstrations; they are therefore wholly subject to the imagination, and

ot force their effects upon a mind pre-occupied
y unfavourable sentiments, nor overcome the
ounter-action of a false principle or of stub-
orn partiality.

To convince any man against his will is hard,
ut to please him against his will is justly pro-
ounced by Dryden to be above the reach of hu-
an abilities. Interest and passion will hold
t long against the closest siege of diagrams
nd syllogisms, but they are absolutely impreg-
able to imagery and sentiment; and will for
er bid defiance to the most powerful strains
Virgil or Homer, though they may give way
time to the batteries of Euclid or Archime-
s.

In trusting therefore to the sentence of a
itic, we are in danger not only from that
nity which exalts writers too often to the
gnity of teaching what they are yet to learn,
om that negligence which sometimes steals
on the most vigilant caution, and that falli-
ity to which the condition of nature has sub-
ted every human understanding; but from a
ousand extrinsic and accidental causes, from
ery thing which can excite kindness or male-
lence, veneration or contempt.

Many of those who have determined with
eat boldness upon the various degrees of lite-
y merit, may be justly suspected of having
ssed sentence, as Seneca remarks of Claudius,

Una tantum parte audita,
Sæpe et nulla,

thout much knowledge of the cause before
m: for it will not easily be imagined of
ngbaine, Borrichius, or Rapin, that they had
y accurately perused all the books which they
ise or censure; or that, even if nature and
ning had qualified them for judges, they
ld read for ever with the attention necessary
ust criticism. Such performances, however,
not wholly without their use; for they are
monly just echoes to the voice of fame, and
smit the general suffrage of mankind when
y have no particular motives to suppress it.
ritics, like the rest of mankind, are very
quently misled by interest. The bigotry
h which editors regard the authors whom
y illustrate or correct, has been generally
arked. Dryden was known to have written
t of his critical dissertations only to recom-
d the work upon which he then happened
e employed: and Addison is suspected to
e denied the expediency of poetical justice,
use his own Cato was condemned to perish
good cause.

here are prejudices which authors, not other-
e weak or corrupt, have indulged without
ple; and perhaps some of them are so com-
ated with our natural affections, that they
not easily be disentangled from the heart.
ce any can hear with impartiality a compa-
n between the writers of his own and an-
other country: and though it cannot, I think, be charged equally on all nations, that they are blinded with this literary patriotism, yet there are none that do not look upon their authors with the fondness of affinity, and esteem them as well for the place of their birth, as for their knowledge or their wit. There is, therefore, seldom much respect due to comparative criticism, when the competitors are of different countries, unless the judge is of a nation equally indifferent to both. The Italians could not for a long time believe, that there was any learning beyond the mountains; and the French seem generally persuaded, that there are no wits or reasoners equal to their own. I can scarcely conceive that if Scaliger had not considered himself as allied to Virgil, by being born in the same country, he would have found his works so much superior to those of Homer, or have thought the controversy worthy of so much zeal, vehemence, and acrimony.

There is, indeed, one prejudice, and only one, by which it may be doubted whether it is any dishonour to be sometimes misguided. Criticism has so often given occasion to the envious and ill-natured, of gratifying their malignity, that some have thought it necessary to recommend the virtue of candour without restriction, and to preclude all future liberty of censure. Writers possessed with this opinion are continually enforcing civility and decency, recommending to critics the proper diffidence of themselves, and inculcating the veneration due to celebrated names.

I am not of opinion that these professed enemies of arrogance and severity have much more benevolence or modesty than the rest of mankind; or that they feel in their own hearts, any other intention than to distinguish themselves by their softness and delicacy. Some are modest because they are timorous, and some are lavish of praise because they hope to be repaid.

There is, indeed, some tenderness due to living writers, when they attack none of those truths which are of importance to the happiness of mankind, and have committed no other offence than that of betraying their own ignorance or dulness. I should think it cruelty to crush an insect who had provoked me only by buzzing in my ear; and would not willingly interrupt the dream of harmless stupidity, or destroy the jest which makes its author laugh. Yet I am far from thinking this tenderness universally necessary, for he that writes may be considered as a kind of general challenger, whom every one has a right to attack; since he quits the common rank of life, steps forward beyond the lists, and offers his merit to the public judgment. To commence author is to claim praise, and no man can justly aspire to honour, but at the hazard of disgrace.

But, whatever be decided concerning contemporaries, whom he that knows the treachery of

the human heart, and considers how often we gratify our own pride or envy, under the appearance of contending for elegance and propriety, will find himself not much inclined to disturb; there can surely be no exemptions pleaded to secure them from criticism, who can no longer suffer by reproach, and of whom nothing now remains but their writings and their names. Upon these authors the critic is undoubtedly at full liberty to exercise the strictest severity, since he endangers only his own fame; and, like Æneas, when he drew his sword in the infernal regions, encounters phantoms which cannot be wounded. He may, indeed, pay some regard to established reputation; but he can by that show of reverence consult only his own security, for all other motives are now at an end.

The faults of a writer of acknowledged excellence are more dangerous, because the influence of his example is more extensive; and the interest of learning requires that they should be discovered and stigmatized, before they have the sanction of antiquity conferred upon them, and become precedents of indisputable authority.

It has, indeed, been advanced by Addison, as one of the characteristics of a true critic, that he points out beauties rather than faults. But it is rather natural to a man of learning and genius to apply himself chiefly to the study of writers who have more beauties than faults to be displayed: for the duty of criticism is neither to depreciate, nor dignify by partial representations, but to hold out the light of reason, whatever it may discover; and to promulgate the determinations of truth, whatever she shall dictate.

No. 94.] SATURDAY, FEB. 9, 1751.

——Bonus atque fidus
Judex—per obstantes catervas
Explicuit sua victor arma. HOR.

Perpetual magistrate is he
Who keeps strict justice full in sight:
Who bids the crowd at awful distance gaze,
And virtue's arms victoriously displays.
FRANCIS.

THE resemblance of poetic numbers to the subject which they mention or describe, may be considered as general or particular; as consisting in the flow and structure of a whole passage taken together, or as comprised in the sound of some emphatical and descriptive words, or in the cadence and harmony of single verses.

The general resemblance of the sound to the sense is to be found in every language which admits of poetry, in every author whose force of fancy enables him to impress images strongly on his own mind, and whose choice and variety of language readily supply him with just repre sentations. To such a writer it is natural t change his measure with his subject, even with out any effort of the understanding, or inter vention of the judgment. To revolve jollit and mirth necessarily tunes the voice of a poe to gay and sprightly notes, as it fires his ey with vivacity; and reflection on gloomy situa tions and disastrous events, will sadden hi numbers, as it will cloud his countenance. Bu in such passages there is only the similitude pleasure to pleasure, and o grief to grief, with out any immediate application to particula images. The same flow of joyous versificatio will celebrate the jollity of marriage, and th exultation of triumph; and the same languor melody will suit the complaints of an absen lover, as of a conquered king.

It is scarcely to be doubted, that on many o casions we make the music which we imagin ourselves to hear, that we modulate the poe by our own disposition, and ascribe to the nu bers the effects of the sense. We may obser in life, that it is not easy to deliver a pleasin message in an unpleasing manner, and that w readily associate beauty and deformity wit those whom for any reason we love or hat Yet it would be too daring to declare that t the celebrated adaptations of harmony are ch merical, that Homer had no extraordinary a tention to the melody of his verse when he d scribed a nuptial festivity;

Νύμφας δ' ἐκ θαλάμων, δαΐδων ὑπολαμπομενάων,
Ἡγίνεον ἀνὰ ἄστυ, πολὺς δ' ὑμέναιος ἐφέρτο

Here sacred pomp, and genial feast delight,
And solemn dance, and hymeneal rite;
Along the street the new-made brides are led,
With torches flaming to the nuptial bed;
The youthful dancers in a circle bound
To the soft flute, and cittern's silver sound.
POPE

that Vida was merely fanciful, when he s posed Virgil endeavouring to represent by common sweetness of numbers the adventiti beauty of Æneas:

Os, humerosque Deo similis: namque ipsa decor
Cæsariem nato genitrix, lumenque juventæ
Purpureum, et lætos oculis afflarat honores;

The Trojan chief appear'd in open sight,
August in visage, and serenely bright:
His mother goddess, with her hands Divine,
Had form'd his curling locks, and made his tre shine;
And given his rolling eyes a sparkling grace,
And breath'd a youthful vigour on his face.
[illegible]

or that Milton did not intend to exemplify harmony which he mentions:

Fountains! and ye that warble as ye flow,
Melodious murmurs! warbling tune his praise

That Milton understood the force of sounds well adjusted, and knew the compass and variety of the ancient measures, cannot be doubted; since he was both a musician and a critic; but he seems to have considered these conformities of cadence as either not often attainable in our language, or as petty excellences unworthy of his ambition: for it will not be found that he has always assigned the same rest of numbers to the same subjects. He has even in two passages very minute descriptions of angelic beauty; but though the images are nearly the same, the numbers will be found upon comparison very different:

And now a stripling cherub he appears,
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
Youth smiled celestial, and to every limb
Suitable grace diffused, so well he feign'd;
Under a coronet his flowing hair
In curls on either cheek play'd: wings he wore
Of many a colour'd plume, sprinkled with gold.

Some of the lines of this description are remarkably defective in harmony, and therefore by no means correspondent with that symmetrical elegance and easy grace which they are intended to exhibit. The failure, however, is fully compensated by the representation of Raphael, which equally delights the ear and imagination:

A seraph wing'd: six wings he wore to shade
His lineaments Divine; the pair that clad
Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast
With regal ornament: the middle pair
Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
Skirted his loins and thighs, with downy gold,
And colours dipp'd in heaven: the third his feet
Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,
Sky-tinctured grain! like Maia's son he stood,
And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance fill'd
The circuit wide.——

The adumbration of particular and distinct images by an exact and perceptible resemblance of sound, is sometimes studied, and sometimes casual. Every language has many words formed in imitation of the noises which they signify. Such are Stridor, Balo, and Boatus, of Latin; and in English to growl, to buzz, to hiss, and to jar. Words of this kind give to verse the proper similitude of sound, without much labour of the writer, and such happiness is therefore to be attributed rather to fortune than skill; yet they are sometimes combined with great propriety, and undeniably contribute to enforce the impression of the idea. We hear the passing arrow in this line of Virgil;

Ut fugit *horrendum stridens* elapsa sagitta;

So the impetuous arrow whizzes on the wing.—POPE.

And the creeking of hell-gates, in the description by Milton;

——Open fly
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound
Th' infernal doors; and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder.

But many beauties of this kind, which the moderns, and perhaps the ancients, have observed, seem to be the product of blind reverence acting upon fancy. Dionysius himself tells us that the sound of Homer's verses sometimes exhibits the idea of corporeal bulk: is not this a discovery nearly approaching to that of the blind man, who after long inquiry into the nature of the scarlet colour, found that it represented nothing so much as the clangour of a trumpet? The representative power of poetic harmony consists of sound and measure; of the force of the syllables singly considered, and of the time in which they are pronounced. Sound can resemble nothing but sound, and time can measure nothing but motion and duration.

The critics, however, have struck out other similitudes; nor is there any irregularity of numbers which credulous admiration cannot discover to be eminently beautiful. Thus the propriety of each of these lines has been celebrated by writers whose opinion the world has reason to regard;

Vertitur interea cælum, et ruit oceano nox.——

Meantime the rapid heavens roll'd down the light,
And on the shaded ocean rush'd the night.
DRYDEN.

Sternitur, exanimisque tremens procumbit humi bos.——

Down drops the beast, nor needs a second wound;
But sprawls in pangs of death, and spurns the ground. DRYDEN

Parturiunt montes, nascitur ridiculus mus.

The mountains labour, and a mouse is born.
ROSCOMMON.

If all these observations are just, there must be some remarkable conformity between the sudden succession of night to day, the fall of an ox under a blow, and the birth of a mouse from a mountain; since we are told of all these images, that they are very strongly impressed by the same form and termination of the verse.

We may, however, without giving way to enthusiasm, admit that some beauties of this kind may be produced. A sudden stop at an unusual syllable may image the cessation of action, or the pause of discourse; and Milton has very happily imitated the repetitions of an echo:

——I fled and cried out *death:*
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
From all her caves, and back resounded *death.*

The measure of time in pronouncing may be varied so as very strongly to represent, not only modes of external motion, but the quick or slow succession of ideas, and consequently the passions of the mind. This at least was the power of the spondaic and dactylic harmony, but our language can reach no eminent diversities of sound. We can indeed sometimes, by encumbering and retarding the line, show the difficulty of a progress made by strong efforts and with frequent interruptions, or mark a slow and heavy motion. Thus Milton has imaged the toil of Satan struggling through chaos;

So he with difficulty and labour hard
Moved on: with difficulty and labour he—

thus he has described the leviathans or whales!

Wallowing, unwieldy, enormous in their gait.

But he has at other times neglected such representations, as may be observed in the volubility and levity of these lines, which express an action tardy and reluctant.

—— Descent and fall
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
Insulting, and pursued us through the deep,
With what confusion and laborious flight
We sunk thus low? Th' ascent is easy then.

In another place, he describes the gentle glide of ebbing waters in a line remarkably rough and halting.

——Tripping ebb; that stole
With soft foot tow'rds the deep who now had stopp'd
His sluices.

It is not, indeed, to be expected, that the sound should always assist the meaning, but it ought never to counteract it; and therefore Milton has here certainly committed a fault like that of the player, who looked on the earth when he implored the heavens, and to the heavens when he addressed the earth.

Those who are determined to find in Milton an assemblage of all the excellences which have ennobled all other poets, will perhaps be offended that I do not celebrate his versification in higher terms; for there are readers who discover that in this passage,

So stretch'd out huge in length the arch fiend lay,

a *long* form is described in a *long* line; but the truth is, that length of body is only mentioned in a *slow* line, to which it has only the resemblance of time to space, of an hour to a maypole.

The same turn of ingenuity might perform wonders upon the description of the ark:

Then from the mountain hewing timber tall,
Began to build a vessel of huge bulk;
Measured by cubit, length and breadth, and height.

In these lines the poet apparently designs to fix the attention upon bulk; but this is effected by the enumeration, not by the measure; for what analogy can there be between modulations of sound, and corporeal dimensions?

Milton, indeed, seems only to have regarded this species of embellishment so far as not to reject it when it came unsought; which would often happen to a mind so vigorous, employed upon a subject so various and extensive. He had, indeed, a greater and a nobler work to perform; a single sentiment of moral or religious truth, a single image of life or nature, would have been cheaply lost for a thousand echoes of the cadence to the sense; and he who had undertaken to *vindicate the ways of God to man*, might have been accused of neglecting his cause, had he lavished much of his attention upon syllables and sounds.

No. 95.] TUESDAY, FEB. 12, 1751.

Parcus Deorum cultor, et infrequens,
Insanientis dum sapientiæ
Consultus erro; nunc retrorsum
Vela dare, atque iterare cursus
Cogor relictos. HOR.

A fugitive from Heaven and prayer,
I mock'd at all religious fear,
Deep scienced in the mazy lore
Of mad philosophy; but now
Hoist sail, and back my voyage plow
To that blest harbour, which I left before.
FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THERE are many diseases both of the body and mind, which it is far easier to prevent than to cure, and therefore I hope you will think me employed in an office not useless either to learning or virtue, if I describe the symptoms of an intellectual malady, which, though at first it seizes only the passions, will, if not speedily remedied, infect the reason, and, from blasting the blossoms of knowledge, proceed in time to canker the root.

I was born in the house of discord. My parents were of unsuitable ages, contrary temper and different religions, and therefore employed the spirit and acuteness which nature had very liberally bestowed upon both in hourly disputes and incessant contrivances to detect each other in the wrong; so that from the first exertion of reason I was bred a disputant, trained up in all the arts of domestic sophistry, initiated in a thousand low stratagems, nimble shifts, and sly concealments; versed in all the terms of altercation, and acquainted with the whole discipline of *fending* and *proving*.

It was necessarily my care to preserve the kindness of both the controvertists, and there-

re I had very early formed the habit of sus-nding my judgment, of hearing arguments ith indifference, inclining as occasion required either side, and of holding myself undeter-ined between them till I knew for what inion I might conveniently declare.

Thus, Sir, I acquired very early the skill of sputation; and as we naturally love the arts which we believe ourselves to excel, I did t let my abilities lie useless, nor suffer my xterity to be lost for want of practice. I en-ged in perpetual wrangles with my school-llows, and was never to be convinced or re-ssed by any other arguments than blows, by hich my antagonists commonly determined e controversy, as I was, like the Roman ora-r, much more eminent for eloquence than urage.

At the university I found my predominant hibition completely gratified by the study of gic. I impressed upon my memory a thou-nd axioms, and ten thousand distinctions, actised every form of syllogism, passed all my ys in the schools of disputation, and slept ery night with Smiglecius* on my pillow.

You will not doubt but such a genius was on raised to eminence by such application: I as celebrated in my third year for the most ful opponent that the university could boast, d became the terror and envy of all the can-lates for philosophical reputation.

My renown, indeed, was not purchased but the price of all my time and all my studies. ever spoke but to contradict, nor declaimed t in defence of a position universally acknow-ged to be false, and therefore worthy, in my nion, to be adorned with all the colours of se representation, and strengthened with all the arts of fallacious subtilty.

My father, who had no other wish than to his son richer than himself, easily concluded t I should distinguish myself among the pro-ors of the law; and, therefore, when I had en my first degree, despatched me to the mple with a paternal admonition, that I uld never suffer myself to feel shame, for thing but modesty could retard my fortune.

Vitiated, ignorant, and heady, as I was, I d not yet lost my reverence for virtue, and refore could not receive such dictates with-horror; but however, was pleased with his rmination of my course of life, because he ced me in the way that leads soonest from prescribed walks of discipline and education, he open fields of liberty and choice.

was now in the place where every one hes the contagion of vanity, and soon began istinguish myself by sophisms and paradoxes.

I declared war against all received opinions and established rules, and levelled my batteries particularly against those universal principles which had stood unshaken in all the vicissitudes of literature, and are considered as the inviolable temples of truth, or the impregnable bulwarks of science.

I applied myself chiefly to those parts of learning which have filled the world with doubt and perplexity, and could readily produce all the arguments relating to matter and motion, time and space, identity and infinity.

I was equally able and equally willing to maintain the system of Newton or Descartes, and favoured occasionally the hypothesis of Ptolemy, or that of Copernicus. I sometimes exalted vegetables to sense, and sometimes degraded animals to mechanism.

Nor was I less inclined to weaken the credit of history, or perplex the doctrines of polity. I was always of the party which I heard the company condemn.

Among the zealots of liberty I could harangue with great copiousness upon the advantages of absolute monarchy, the secrecy of its counsels, and the expedition of its measures; and often celebrated the blessings produced by the extinction of parties, and preclusion of debates.

Among the assertors of regal authority, I never failed to declaim with republican warmth upon the original charter of universal liberty, the corruption of courts, and the folly of voluntary submission to those whom nature has levelled with ourselves.

I knew the defects of every scheme of government, and the inconveniences of every law. I sometimes showed how much the condition of mankind would be improved, by breaking the world into petty sovereignties, and sometimes displayed the felicity and peace which universal monarchy would diffuse over the earth.

To every acknowledged fact I found innumerable objections; for it was my rule, to judge of history only by abstracted probability, and therefore I made no scruple of bidding defiance to testimony. I have more than once questioned the existence of Alexander the Great; and having demonstrated the folly of erecting edifices like the pyramids of Egypt, I frequently hinted my suspicion that the world had been long deceived, and that they were to be found only in the narratives of travellers.

It had been happy for me could I have confined my scepticism to historical controversies, and philosophical disquisitions; but having now violated my reason, and accustomed myself to inquire not after proofs but objections, I had perplexed truth with falsehood, till my ideas were confused, my judgment embarrassed, and my intellects distorted. The habit of considering every proposition as alike uncertain, left me no test by which any tenet could be tried; every

* A Polish writer, whose "Logic" was formerly in great estimation in this country, as well as the continent.

opinion presented both sides with equal evidence, and my fallacies began to operate upon my own mind in more important inquiries. It was at last the sport of my vanity to weaken the obligations of moral duty, and efface the distinctions of good and evil, till I had deadened the sense of conviction, and abandoned my heart to the fluctuations of uncertainty, without anchor and without compass, without satisfaction of curiosity, or peace of conscience, without principles of reason, or motives of action.

Such is the hazard of repressing the first perceptions of truth, of spreading for diversion the snares of sophistry, and engaging reason against its own determinations.

The disproportions of absurdity grow less and less visible, as we are reconciled by degrees to the deformity of a mistress; and falsehood by long use is assimilated to the mind, as poison to the body.

I had soon the mortification of seeing my conversation courted only by the ignorant or wicked, by either boys who were enchanted by novelty, or wretches, who, having long disobeyed virtue and reason, were now desirous of my assistance to dethrone them.

Thus alarmed, I shuddered at my own corruption, and that pride by which I had been seduced, contributed to reclaim me. I was weary of continual irresolution, and a perpetual equipoise of the mind; and ashamed of being the favourite of those who were scorned and shunned by the rest of mankind.

I therefore retired from all temptation to dispute, prescribed a new regimen to my understanding, and resolved, instead of rejecting all established opinions which I could not prove, to tolerate though not adopt all which I could not confute. I forbore to heat my imagination with needless controversies, to discuss questions confessedly uncertain, and refrained steadily from gratifying my vanity by the support of falsehood.

By this method I am at length recovered from argumental delirium, and find myself in the state of one awakened from the confusion and tumult of a feverish dream. I rejoice in the new possession of evidence and reality, and step on from truth to truth with confidence and quiet.

I am, Sir, &c.

PERTINAX.

No. 96.] SATURDAY, FEB. 16, 1751.

Quod si Platonis musa personat verum,
Quod quisque discit, immemor recordatur.

BOETHIUS.

Truth in Platonic ornaments bedeck'd
Inforced we love, unheeding recollect.

IT is reported of the Persians, by an ancient writer, that the sum of their education consis
ed in teaching youth *to ride, to shoot with the bo*
and to speak truth.

The bow and the horse were easily master
but it would have been happy if we had be
informed by what arts veracity was cultivate
and by what preservatives a Persian mi
was secured against the temptations to fals
hood.

There are, indeed, in the present corruption
mankind, many incitements to forsake trut
the need of palliating our own faults, and t
convenience of imposing on the ignorance
credulity of others, so frequently occur;
many immediate evils are to be avoided, and
many present gratifications obtained, by or
and delusion, that very few of those who a
much entangled in life, have spirit and co
stancy sufficient to support them in the stea
practice of open veracity.

In order that all men may be taught to spe
truth, it is necessary that all likewise shou
learn to hear it; for no species of falsehood
more frequent than flattery, to which t
coward is betrayed by fear, the dependant
interest, and the friend by tenderness. Tho
who are neither servile nor timorous, are y
desirous to bestow pleasure; and while unju
demands of praise continue to be made, the
will always be some whom hope, fear, or kin
ness, will dispose to pay them.

The guilt of falsehood is very widely exten
ed, and many whom their conscience
scarcely charge with stooping to a lie, have
tiated the morals of others by their vanity, a
patronised the vice which they believe the
selves to abhor.

Truth is, indeed, not often welcome for
own sake; it is generally unpleasing becau
contrary to our wishes and opposite to o
practice: and as our attention naturally follo
our interests, we hear unwillingly what we a
afraid to know, and soon forget what we ha
no inclination to impress upon our memories

For this reason many arts of instruction ha
been invented, by which the reluctance again
truth may be overcome; and as physic is giv
to children in confections, precepts have be
hidden under a thousand appearances, that ma
kind may be bribed by pleasure to escape d
truction.

While the world was yet in its infan
Truth came among mortals from above, a
Falsehood from below. Truth was the daug
ter of Jupiter and Wisdom; Falsehood was
progeny of Folly impregnated by the wi
They advanced with equal confidence to se
the dominion of the new creation: and, as th
enmity and their force were well known to
celestials, all the eyes of heaven were turn
upon the contest.

Truth seemed conscious of superior pow

id juster claim, and therefore came on tower-
g and majestic, unassisted and alone; Reason
deed always attended her, but appeared her
llower, rather than companion. Her march
as slow and stately, but her motion was per-
tually progressive, and when once she had
ounded her foot, neither gods nor men could
rce her to retire.

Falsehood always endeavoured to copy the
ien and attitudes of Truth, and was very suc-
ssful in the arts of mimicry. She was sur-
unded, animated, and supported, by innu-
erable legions of appetites and passions; but,
e other feeble commanders, was obliged often
receive law from her allies. Her motions
re sudden, irregular, and violent; for she
d no steadiness nor constancy. She often
ined conquests by hasty incursions, which
e never hoped to keep by her own strength,
t maintained by the help of the passions,
om she generally found resolute and faith-

It sometimes happened that the antagonists
t in full opposition. In these encounters,
lsehood always invested her head with clouds,
l commanded Fraud to place ambushes about
. In her left hand she bore the shield of Im-
dence, and the quiver of Sophistry rattled on
shoulder. All the passions attended at her
l; Vanity clapped her wings before, and Ob-
acy supported her behind. Thus guarded
l assisted, she sometimes advanced against
uth, and sometimes waited the attack; but
ays endeavoured to skirmish at a distance,
petually shifted her ground, and let fly her
ows in different directions; for she certainly
nd that her strength failed, whenever the
of Truth darted full upon her.

Truth had the awful aspect though not the
ider of her father, and when the long con-
ance of the contest brought them near to
another, Falsehood let the arms of Sophis-
fall from her grasp, and holding up the
ld of Impudence with both her hands, shel-
d herself amongst the passions.

Truth, though she was often wounded, al-
ys recovered in a short time; but it was
mon for the slightest hurt, received by
sehood, to spread its malignity to the neigh-
ring parts, and to burst open again when it
ned to have been cured.

Falsehood, in a short time, found by experi-
e that her superiority consisted only in the
rity of her course, and the changes of her
ure. She therefore ordered Suspicion to
the ground before her, and avoided with
t care to cross the way of Truth, who as
never varied her point but moved constantly
the same line, was easily escaped by the
ique and desultory movements, the quick re-
ts, and active doubles which Falsehood al-
ways practised, when the enemy began to raise terror by her approach.

By this procedure Falsehood every hour encroached upon the world, and extended her empire through all climes and regions. Wherever she carried her victories she left the Passions in full authority behind her; who were so well pleased with command, that they held out with great obstinacy when Truth came to seize their posts, and never failed to retard her progress, though they could not always stop it: they yielded at last with great reluctance, frequent rallies, and sullen submission; and always inclined to revolt when Truth ceased to awe them by her immediate presence.

Truth, who, when she first descended from the heavenly palaces, expected to have been received by universal acclamation, cherished with kindness, heard with obedience, and invited to spread her influence from province to province, now found, that, wherever she came, she must force her passage. Every intellect was precluded by Prejudice, and every heart preoccupied by passion. She indeed advanced, but she advanced slowly; and often lost the conquests which she left behind her, by sudden insurrections of the appetites, that shook off their allegiance, and ranged themselves again under the banner of her enemy.

Truth, however, did not grow weaker by the struggle, for her vigour was unconquerable; yet she was provoked to see herself thus baffled and impeded by an enemy, whom she looked on with contempt, and who had no advantage but such as she owed to inconstancy, weakness and artifice. She, therefore, in the anger of disappointment, called upon her father Jupiter to re-establish her in the skies, and leave mankind to the disorder and misery which they deserved, by submitting willingly to the usurpation of Falsehood.

Jupiter compassionated the world too much to grant her request, yet was willing to ease her labours and mitigate her vexation. He commanded her to consult the Muses by what methods she might obtain an easier reception, and reign without the toil of incessant war. It was then discovered that she obstructed her own progress by the severity of her aspect, and the solemnity of her dictates; and that men would never willingly admit her, till they ceased to fear her, since, by giving themselves up to Falsehood, they seldom made any sacrifice of their ease or pleasure, because she took the shape that was most engaging, and always suffered herself to be dressed and painted by Desire. The Muses wove, in the loom of Pallas, a loose and changeable robe, like that in which Falsehood captivated her admirers; with this they invested Truth, and named her Fiction. She now went out again to conquer with more

success; for when she demanded entrance of the Passions, they often mistook her for Falsehood, and delivered up their charge: but when she had once taken possession, she was soon disrobed by Reason, and shone out, in her original form, with native effulgence and resistless dignity.

No. 97.] TUESDAY, FEB. 19, 1751.

Fœcunda culpæ secula nuptias
Primum inquinavere, et genus, et domos.
Hoc fonte derivata clades
In patriam populumque fluxit. HOR.

Fruitful of crimes, this age first stain'd
Their hapless offspring, and profaned
The nuptial bed; from whence the woes,
Which various and unnumber'd rose
From this polluted fountain head,
O'er Rome and o'er the nations spread.
FRANCIS.

THE reader is indebted for this day's entertainment to an author from whom the age has received greater favours, who has enlarged the knowledge of human nature, and taught the passions to move at the command of virtue.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

WHEN the "Spectator" was first published in single papers, it gave me so much pleasure, that it is one of my favourite amusements of my age to recollect it; and when I reflect on the foibles of those times, as described in that useful work, and compare them with the vices now reigning among us, I cannot but wish that you would oftener take cognizance of the manners of the better half of the human species, that if your precepts and observations be carried down to posterity, the Spectators may show to the rising generation what were the fashionable follies of their grandmothers, the "Rambler" of their mothers, and that from both they may draw instruction and warning.

When I read those Spectators which took notice of the misbehaviour of young women at church, by which they vainly hope to attract admirers, I used to pronounce such forward young women Seekers, in order to distinguish them by a mark of infamy from those who had patience and decency to stay till they were sought.

But I have lived to see such a change in the manners of women, that I would now be willing to compound with them for that name, although I then thought it disgraceful enough, if they would deserve no worse; since now they are too generally given up to negligence of domestic business, to idle amusements, and to wicked rackets, without any settled view at all but of squandering time.

In the time of the "Spectator," exceptin sometimes in appearance in the ring, sometime at a good and chosen play, sometimes on a visi at the house of a grave relation, the young ladie contented themselves to be found employed i domestic duties; for then routs, drums, balls assemblies, and such-like markets for women were not known.

Modesty and diffidence, gentleness and meek ness, were looked upon as the appropriate vir tues and characteristic graces of the sex. An if a forward spirit pushed itself into notice, i was exposed in print as it deserved.

The churches were almost the only place where single women were to be seen by stran gers. Men went thither expecting to see them and perhaps too much for that only purpose.

But some good often resulted, however im proper might be their motives. Both sexes wer in the way of their duty. The man must b abandoned, indeed, who loves not goodness i another; nor were the young fellows of the age so wholly lost to a sense of right, as prid and conceit have since made them affect to be When therefore they saw a fair-one, whose de cent behaviour and cheerful piety showed he earnest in her first duties, they had the les doubt, judging politically only, that she would have a conscientious regard to her second.

With what ardour have I seen watched fo the rising of a kneeling beauty; and what addi tional charms has devotion given to her recon municated features!

The men were often the better for what the heard. Even a Saul was once found prophes ing among the prophets whom he had set out destroy. To a man thus put into good humou by a pleasing object, religion itself looked mo amiable. The Men Seekers of the Spectator time loved the holy place for the object's sake and loved the object for her suitable behavio in it.

Reverence mingled with their love, and th thought that a young lady of such good princ ples must be addressed only by the man who least made a show of good principles, wheth his heart was yet quite right or not.

Nor did the young lady's behaviour, at a time of the service, lessen this reverence. H eyes were her own, her ears the preacher Women are always most observed when th seem themselves least to observe, or to lay o for observation. The eye of a respectful lo loves rather to receive confidence from the wi drawn eye of the fair-one, than to find itself o liged to retreat.

When a young gentleman's affection was th laudably engaged, he pursued its natural i tates; keeping then was a rare, at least a se and scandalous vice, and a wife was the sum of his wishes. Rejection was now dreaded, a pre-engagement apprehended. A woman wh

loved, he was ready to think must be admir-
by all the world. His fears, his uncertainties,
reased his love.

Every inquiry he made into the lady's domes-
excellence, which, when a wife is to be cho-
, will surely not be neglected, confirmed him
his choice. He opens his heart to a common
nd, and honestly discovers the state of his
tune. His friend applies to those of the young
y, whose parents, if they approve his propo-
, disclose them to their daughter.

he perhaps is not an absolute stranger to the
ion of the young gentleman. His eyes, his
duities, his constant attendance at a church,
ither, till of late, he used seldom to come, and
ousand little observances that he paid her,
very probably first forced her to regard, and
n inclined her to favour him.

That a young lady should be in love, and the
of the young gentleman undeclared, is a
rodoxy which prudence, and even policy,
t not allow. But, thus applied to, she is all
gnation to her parents. Charming resigna-
, which inclination opposes not.

er relations applaud her for her duty; friends
; points are adjusted; delightful perturba-
s, and hopes, and a few lover's fears, fill up
edious space till an interview is granted;
he young lady had not made herself cheap
ublic places.

he time of interview arrives. She is mod-
reserved; he is not confident. He declares
assion; the consciousness of her own worth,
his application to her parents, take from her
doubt of his sincerity; and she owns herself
ed to him for his good opinion. The in-
es of her friends into his character, have
t her that his good opinion deserves to be
d.

e tacitly allows of his future visits; he re-
them; the regard of each for the other is
med; and when he presses for the favour
hand, he receives a declaration of an en-
quiescence with her duty, and a modest
owledgment of esteem for him.

applies to her parents therefore for a near
and thinks himself under obligation to
for the cheerful and affectionate manner
which they receive his agreeable applica-

th this prospect of future happiness, the
age is celebrated. Gratulations pour in
every quarter. Parents and relations on
ides, brought acquainted in the course of
urtship, can receive the happy couple with
nances illumined, and joyful hearts.

brothers, the sisters, the friends of one
, are the brothers, the sisters, the friends
other. Their two families, thus made
re the world to the young couple.

ir home is the place of their principal de-
nor do they ever occasionally quit it but
they find the pleasure of returning to it aug-
mented in proportion to the time of their absence
from it.

Oh, Mr. Rambler! forgive the talkativeness
of an old man! When I courted and married
my Lætitia, then a blooming beauty, every thing
passed just so! But how is the case now? The
ladies, maidens, wives, and widows, are engross-
ed by places of open resort and general entertain-
ment, which fill every quarter of the metropolis,
and being constantly frequented, make home
irksome. Breakfasting-places, dining-places,
routs, drums, concerts, balls, plays, operas,
masquerade for the evening, and even for all
night; and lately, public sales of the goods of
broken housekeepers, which the general disso-
luteness of manners has contributed to make very
frequent, come in as another seasonable relief to
these modern time-killers.

In the summer there are in every country-
town assemblies; Tunbridge, Bath, Chelten-
ham, Scarborough! What expense of dress and
equipage is required to qualify the frequenters
for such emulous appearance!

By the natural infection of example, the low-
est people have places of sixpenny resort, and
gaming-tables for pence. Thus servants are now
induced to fraud and dishonesty, to support ex-
travagance, and supply their losses.

As to the ladies who frequent those public
places, they are not ashamed to show their faces
wherever men dare go, nor blush to try who
shall stare most impudently, or who shall laugh
loudest on the public walks.

The men who would make good husbands, if
they visit those places, are frighted at wedlock,
and resolved to live single, except they are
bought at a very high price. They can be spec-
tators of all that passes, and if they please, more
than spectators, at the expense of others. The
companion of an evening, and the companion for
life, require very different qualifications.

Two thousand pounds in the last age, with a
domestic wife, would go farther than ten thou-
sand in this. Yet settlements are expected, that
often, to a mercantile man especially, sink a for-
tune into uselessness: and pin-money is stipu-
lated for, which makes a wife independent, and
destroys love, by putting it out of a man's power
to lay any obligation upon her, that might en-
gage gratitude, and kindle affection. When to
all this the card-tables are added, how can a pru-
dent man think of marrying?

And when the worthy men know not where
to find wives, must not the sex be left to the
foplings, the coxcombs, the libertines of the age,
whom they help to make such? And need even
these wretches marry to enjoy the conversation
of those who render their company so cheap?

And what, after all, is the benefit which the
gay coquette obtains by her flutters? As she is
approachable by every man without requiring,

I will not say incense or adoration, but even common complaisance, every fop treats her as upon the level, looks upon her light airs as invitations, and is on the watch to take the advantage: she has companions, indeed, but no lovers; for love is respectful, and timorous; and where among all her followers will she find a husband?

Set, dear Sir, before the youthful, the gay, the inconsiderate, the contempt as well as the danger to which they are exposed. At one time or other, women not utterly thoughtless, will be convinced of the justice of your censure, and the charity of your instruction.

But should your expostulations and reproofs have no effect upon those who are far gone in fashionable folly, they may be retailed from their mouths to their nieces, (marriage will not often have entitled these to daughters,) when they, the meteors of a day, find themselves elbowed off the stage of vanity by other flutterers; for the most admired women cannot have many Tunbridge, many Bath seasons to blaze in; since even fine faces, often seen, are less regarded than new faces, the proper punishment of showy girls, for rendering themselves so impoliticly cheap.

I am, Sir,
Your sincere admirer, &c.*

No. 98.] SATURDAY, FEB. 23, 1751.

Quæ nec Sarmentus iniquas
Cæsaris ad mensas, nec vilis Galba tulisset.
JUV.

Which not Sarmentus brook'd at Cæsar's board,
Nor grov'ling Galba from his haughty lord.
ELPHINSTON.

TO THE AUTHOR OF THE RAMBLER.

MR. RAMBLER,

You have often endeavoured to impress upon your readers an observation of more truth than novelty, that life passes for the most part, in petty transactions; that our hours glide away in trifling amusements and slight gratifications; and that there very seldom emerges any occasion that can call forth great virtue or great abilities.

It very commonly happens that speculation has no influence on conduct. Just conclusions, and cogent arguments, formed by laborious study, and diligent inquiry, are often reposited in the treasuries of memory, as gold in t miser's chest, useless alike to others and hi self. As some are not richer for the extent their possessions, others are not wiser for t multitude of their ideas.

You have truly described the state of hum beings, but it may be doubted whether you ha accommodated your precepts to your descr tion; whether you have not generally con ded your readers as influenced by the tra passions, and susceptible of pain or pleasu only from powerful agents, and from gr events.

To an author who writes not for the impro ment of a single art, or the establishment o controverted doctrine, but equally intends advantage, and equally courts the perusal of the classes of mankind, nothing can justly se unworthy of regard, by which the pleasure conversation may be increased, and the du satisfaction of familiar life secured from int ruption and disgust.

For this reason you would not have inju your reputation, if you had sometimes descen ed to the minuter duties of social beings, r enforced the observance of those little civili and ceremonious delicacies, which, inconsid able as they may appear to the man of scie and difficult as they may prove to be dete with dignity, yet contribute to the regulat of the world, by facilitating the intercou between one man and another, and of which French have sufficiently testified their este by terming the knowledge and practice of th *Sçavoir vivre, the art of living.*

Politeness is one of those advantages which never estimate rightly but by the inconvenie of its loss. Its influence upon the manner constant and uniform, so that, like an equal m tion, it escapes perception. The circumstance every action are so adjusted to each other, we do not see where any error could have committed, and rather acquiesce in its propr than admire its exactness.

But as sickness shows us the value of eas little familiarity with those who were n taught to endeavour the gratification of oth but regulate their behaviour merely by t own will, will soon evince the necessity of blished modes and formalities to the happi and quiet of common life.

Wisdom and virtue are by no means suffic without the supplemental laws of good-breed to secure freedom from degenerating to r ness, or self-esteem from swelling into i lence; a thousand incivilities may be commi and a thousand offices neglected, without remorse of conscience, or reproach from re

The true effect of genuine politeness seem be rather ease than pleasure. The powe delighting must be conferred by nature, cannot be delivered by precept, or obtain

* This paper was written by Richardson, the author of "Clarissa," "Pamela," &c. and although mean and hackneyed in style and sentiment, was the only paper which had a great sale during the publication of the "Rambler," in its original form.

tation: but though it be the privilege of a
y small number to ravage and to charm,
ry man may hope by rules and caution
to give pain, and may, therefore, by the
p of good-breeding, enjoy the kindness of
nkind, though he should have no claim to
her distinctions.

The universal axiom in which all complai-
ce is included, and from which flow all the
malities which custom has established in
lized nations is, *That no man shall give any
ference to himself.* A rule so comprehensive
certain, that, perhaps, it is not easy for the
id to image an incivility, without supposing
be broken.

There are, indeed, in every place, some parti-
ar modes of the ceremonial part of good-
eding, which being arbritrary and acciden-
can be learned only by habitude and conver-
on; such are the forms of salutation, the
erent gradations of reverence, and all the
istments of place and precedence. These,
vever, may be often violated without offence,
be sufficiently evident, that neither malice
pride contributed to the failure; but will
atone, however rigidly observed, for the tu-
r of insolence, or petulance of contempt.

have, indeed, not found among any part of
kind, less real and rational complaisance,
among those who have passed their time
aying and receiving visits, in frequenting
ic entertainments, in studying the exact
sures of ceremony, and in watching all the
ations of fashionable courtesy.

hey know, indeed, at what hour they may
the door of an acquaintance, how many
they must attend him towards the gate,
what interval should pass before his visit is
rned; but seldom extend their care beyond
exterior and unessential parts of civility,
refuse their own vanity any gratification,
ever expensive to the quiet of another.

rypherus is a man remarkable for splendour
expense; a man, that having been origin-
placed by his fortune and rank in the first
of the community, has acquired that air of
ty, and that readiness in the exchange of
liments, which courts, balls, and levees,
confer.

t Trypherus, without any settled purposes
lignity, partly by his ignorance of human
e, and partly by the habit of contemplat-
with great satisfaction his own grandeur
riches, is hourly giving disgust to those
chance or expectation subject to his vanity.

a man whose fortune confines him to a
house, he declaims upon the pleasure of
ous apartments, and the convenience of
ging his lodging-room in different parts of
ear; tells him that he hates confinement;
oncludes, that if his chamber was less, he
d never wake without thinking of a prison.

To Eucretas, a man of birth equal to himself, but of much less estate he showed his services of plate, and remarked that such things were, indeed, nothing better than costly trifles, but that no man must pretend to the rank of a gentleman without them; and that, for his part, if his estate was smaller, he should not think of enjoying but increasing it, and would inquire out a trade for his eldest son.

He has, in imitation of some more acute observer than himself, collected a great many shifts and artifices by which poverty is concealed; and among the ladies of small fortune, never fails to talk of frippery and slight silks, and the convenience of a general mourning.

I have been insulted a thousand times with a catalogue of his pictures, his jewels, and his rarities, which, though he knows the humble neatness of my habitation, he seldom fails to conclude by a declaration, that wherever he sees a house meanly furnished, he despises the owner's taste, or pities his poverty.

This, Mr. Rambler, is the practice of Trypherus, by which he is become the terror of all who are less wealthy than himself, and has raised innumerable enemies without rivalry, and without malevolence.

Yet though all are not equally culpable with Trypherus, it is scarcely possible to find any man who does not frequently, like him, indulge his own pride by forcing others into a comparison with himself when he knows the advantage is on his side, without considering that unnecessarily to obtrude unpleasing ideas, is a species of oppression; and that it is little more criminal to deprive another of some real advantage, than to interrupt that forgetfulness of its absence which is the next happiness to actual possession.

I am, &c.
EUTROPIUS.

No. 99.] TUESDAY, FEB. 26, 1751.

Scilicet ingeniis aliqua est concordia junctis,
Et servat studii fœdera quisque sui,
Rusticus agricolam, miles fera bella gerentem,
Rectorem dubiæ navita puppis amat. OVID.

Congenial passions souls together bind,
And every calling mingles with its kind;
Soldier unites with soldier, swain with swain,
The mariner with him that roves the main.
F. LEWIS.

IT has been ordained by Providence, for the conservation of order in the immense variety of nature, and for the regular propagation of the several classes of life with which the elements are peopled, that every creature should be drawn by some secret attraction to those of his own kind; and that not only the gentle and domestic animals which naturally unite into com-

panies, or cohabit by pairs, should continue faithful to their species; but even those ravenous and ferocious savages which Aristotle observes never to be gregarious, should range mountains and deserts in search of one another, rather than pollute the world with a monstrous birth.

As the perpetuity and distinction of the lower tribes of the creation require that they should be determined to proper mates by some uniform motive of choice, or some cogent principle of instinct; it is necessary, likewise, that man, whose wider capacity demands more gratifications, and who feels in himself innumerable wants, which a life of solitude cannot supply, and innumerable powers to which it cannot give employment, should be led to suitable companions by particular influence; and, among many beings of the same nature with himself, he may select some for intimacy and tenderness, and improve the condition of his existence, by superadding friendship to humanity, and the love of individuals to that of the species.

Other animals are so formed that they seem to contribute very little to the happiness of each other, and know neither joy, nor grief, nor love, nor hatred, but as they are urged by some desire immediately subservient either to the support of their own lives, or to the continuation of their race; they therefore seldom appear to regard any of the minuter discriminations which distinguish creatures of the same kind from one another.

But if man were to feel no incentives to kindness, more than his general tendency to congenial nature, Babylon or London, with all their multitudes, would have to him the desolation of a wilderness, his affections, not compressed into a narrower compass, would vanish like elemental fire in boundless evaporation; he would languish in perpetual insensibility; and though he might, perhaps, in the first vigour of youth, amuse himself with the fresh enjoyments of life, yet, when curiosity should cease, and alacrity subside, he would abandon himself to the fluctuations of chance, without expecting help against any calamity, or feeling any wish for the happiness of others.

To love all men is our duty, so far as it includes a general habit of benevolence, and readiness of occasional kindness; but to love all equally is impossible; at least impossible without the extinction of those passions which now produce all our pains and all our pleasures; without the disuse, if not the abolition, of some of our faculties, and the suppression of all our hopes and fears in apathy and indifference.

The necessities of our condition require a thousand offices of tenderness, which mere regard for the species will never dictate. Every man has frequent grievances which only the solicitude of friendship will discover and remedy, and which would remain for ever unheeded in the mighty heap of human calamity were it only surveyed by the eye of general benevolence, equally attentive to every misery.

The great community of mankind is, therefore necessarily broken into smaller independent societies; these form distinct interests which are too frequently opposed to each other, and which they who have entered into the league of particular governments falsely think it virtue to promote, however destructive to the happiness of the rest of the world.

Such unions are again separated into subordinate classes and combinations, and social life is perpetually branched out into minuter subdivisions, till it terminates in the last ramifications of private friendship.

That friendship may at once be fond and lasting, it has been already observed in these papers, that a conformity of inclinations is necessary. No man can have much kindness for him by whom he does not believe himself esteemed, and nothing so evidently proves esteem as imitation.

That benevolence is always strongest which arises from participation of the same pleasures, since we are naturally most willing to revive in our minds the memory of persons, with whom the idea of enjoyment is connected.

It is commonly, therefore, to little purpose that any one endeavours to ingratiate himself with such as he cannot accompany in the amusements and diversions. Men have been known to rise to favour and to fortune, only by being skilful in the sports with which the patron happened to be delighted, by concurring with his taste for some particular species of curiosities, by relishing the same wine, or applauding the same cookery.

Even those whom wisdom or virtue has placed above regard to such petty recommendations, must nevertheless be gained by similitude of manners. The highest and noblest enjoyment of familiar life, the communication of knowledge and reciprocation of sentiment, must always presuppose a disposition to the same inquiry, and delight in the same diseries.

With what satisfaction could the politician lay his schemes for the reformation of laws, his comparison of different forms of government before the chemist, who has never accustomed his thoughts to any other object than salt or sulphur? or how could the astronomer, in explaining his calculations and conjectures, endure the coldness of a grammarian, who would sell the sight of Jupiter and all his satellites, for a happy etymology of an obscure word, or a better explication of a controverted line?

Every man loves merit of the same kind with his own, when it is not likely to hinder his advancement or his reputation; for he not

best understands the worth of those qualities which he labours to cultivate, or the usefulness of the art which he practises with success, but always feels a reflected pleasure from the praises which, though given to another, belong equally to himself.

There is indeed no need of research and refinement to discover that men must generally select their companions from their own state of life, since there are not many minds furnished for great variety of conversation, or adapted to multiplicity of intellectual entertainments.

The sailor, the academic, the lawyer, the mechanic, and the courtier, have all a cast or look peculiar to their own fraternity, have fixed their attention upon the same events, have been engaged in affairs of the same sort, and make use of allusions and illustrations which themselves only can understand.

To be infected with the jargon of a particular profession, and to know only the language of a single rank of mortals, is indeed sufficiently despicable. But as limits must be always set to the excursions of the human mind, there will be some study which every man more zealously prosecutes, some darling subject on which he is principally pleased to converse; and he that can most inform or best understand him, will certainly be welcomed with particular regard.

Such partiality is not wholly to be avoided, nor is it culpable, unless suffered so far to predominate as to produce aversion from every other kind of excellence, and to shade the lustre of dissimilar virtues. Those, therefore, whom the lot of life has conjoined, should endeavour constantly to approach towards the inclination of each other, invigorate every motion of concurrent desire, and fan every spark of kindred curiosity.

It has been justly observed, that discord generally operates in little things; it is inflamed to its utmost vehemence by contrariety of taste, oftener than of principles; and might therefore commonly be avoided by innocent conformity, which, if it was not at first the motive, ought always to be the consequence, of indissoluble union.

No. 100.] SATURDAY, MARCH 2, 1751.

Omne vafer vitium ridenti Flaccus amico
Tangit, et admissus circum præcordia ludit.

PERSIUS.

Horace, with sly insinuating grace,
Laugh'd at his friend, and look'd him in the face;
Would raise a blush where secret vice he found,
And tickle while he gently probed the wound.
With seeming innocence the crowd beguiled;
But made the desperate passes when he smiled.

DRYDEN.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As very many well-disposed persons, by the unavoidable necessity of their affairs, are so unfortunate as to be totally buried in the country, where they labour under the most deplorable ignorance of what is transacting among the polite part of mankind, I cannot help thinking, that, as a public writer, you should take the case of these truly compassionable objects under your consideration.

These unhappy languishers in obscurity should be furnished with such accounts of the employments of people of the world, as may engage them in their several remote corners to a laudable imitation; or, at least so far inform and prepare them, that if by any joyful change of situation they should be suddenly transported into the gay scene, they may not gape, and wonder, and stare, and be utterly at a loss how to behave and make a proper appearance in it.

It is inconceivable how much the welfare of all the country towns in the kingdom might be promoted, if you would use your charitable endeavours to raise in them a noble emulation of the manners and customs of higher life.

For this purpose you should give a very clear and ample description of the whole set of polite acquirements; a complete history of forms, fashions, frolics, of routs, drums, hurricanes, balls, assemblies, ridottos, masquerades, auctions, plays, operas, puppet-shows, and bear-gardens; of all those delights which profitably engage the attention of the most sublime characters, and by which they have brought to such amazing perfection the whole art and mystery of passing day after day, week after week, and year after year, without the heavy assistance of any one thing that formal creatures are pleased to call useful and necessary.

In giving due instructions through what steps to attain this summit of human excellence, you may add such irresistible arguments in its favour, as must convince numbers, who in other instances do not seem to want natural understanding, of the unaccountable error of supposing they were sent into the world for any other purpose but to flutter, sport, and shine. For, after all, nothing can be clearer than that an everlasting round of diversion, and the more lively and hurrying the better, is the most important end of human life.

It is really prodigious, so much as the world is improved, that there should in these days be persons so ignorant and stupid as to think it necessary to mispend their time, and trouble their heads about any thing else than pursuing the present fancy; for what else is worth living for?

It is time enough surely to think of consequences when they come; and as for the antiquated notions of duty, they are not to be met with in any French Novel, or any book one ever looks into, but derived almost wholly from the writings of authors, who lived a vast many ages ago; and who, as they were totally without any

Idea of those accomplishments, which now characterise people of distinction, have been for some time sinking apace into utter contempt. It does not appear that even their most zealous admirers, for some partizans of his own sort every writer will have, can pretend to say they were ever at one ridotto.

In the important article of diversions, the ceremonial of visits, the ecstatic delight of unfriendly intimacies, and unmeaning civilities, they are absolutely silent. Blunt truth, and downright honesty, plain clothes, staying at home, hard work few words, and those unenlivened with censure or double meaning, are what they recommend as the ornaments and pleasures of life. Little oaths, polite dissimulation, tea-table scandal, delightful indolence, the glitter of finery, the triumph of precedence, the enchantments of flattery, they seem to have had no notion of, and I cannot but laugh to think what a figure they would have made in a drawing-room, and how frighted they would have looked at a gaming-table.

The noble zeal of patriotism that disdains authority, and tramples on laws for sport, was absolutely the aversion of these tame wretches.

Indeed, one cannot discover any one thing they pretend to teach people, but to be wise and good; acquirements infinitely below the consideration of persons of taste and spirit, who know how to spend their time to so much better purpose.

Among other admirable improvements, pray, Mr. Rambler, do not forget to enlarge on the very extensive benefit of playing at cards on Sundays; a practice of such infinite use, that we may modestly expect to see it prevail universally in all parts of this kingdom.

To persons of fashion, the advantage is obvious; because, as for some strange reason or other, which no fine gentleman or fine lady has yet been able to penetrate, there is neither play, nor masquerade, nor bottled conjurer, nor any other thing worth living for, to be had on a Sunday; if it were not for the charitable assistance of whist or bragg, the genteel part of mankind must, one day in seven, necessarily suffer a total extinction of being.

Nor are the persons of high rank the only gainers by so salutary a custom, which extends its good influence, in some degree, to the lower orders of people; but were it quite general, how much better and happier would the world be than it is even now?

It is hard upon poor creatures, be they ever so mean, to deny them those enjoyments and liberties which are equally open for all. Yet if servants were taught to go to church on this day, spend some part of it in reading or receiving instruction in a family way, and the rest in mere friendly conversation, the poor wretches would infallibly take it into their heads, that they were obliged to be sober, modest, diligent, and faithful to their masters and mistresses.

Now surely no one of common prudence or humanity would wish their domestics infected with such strange and primitive notions, or laid under such unmerciful restraints: all which may, in a great measure, be prevented by the prevalence of the good-humoured fashion, that I would have you recommend. For when the lower kind of people see their betters, with a truly laudable spirit, insulting and flying in the face of those rude, ill-bred dictators, piety and the laws, they are thereby excited and admonished, as far as actions can admonish and excite, and taught that they too have an equal right of setting them at defiance in such instances as their particular necessities and inclinations may require; and thus is the liberty of the whole human species mightily improved and enlarged.

In short, Mr. Rambler, by a faithful representation of the numberless benefits of a modish life, you will have done your part in promoting what every body seems to confess the true purpose of human existence, perpetual dissipation.

By encouraging people to employ their whole attention on trifles, and make amusement their sole study, you will teach them how to avoid many very uneasy reflections.

All the soft feelings of humanity, the sympathies of friendship, all natural temptations to the care of a family, and solicitude about the good or ill of others, with the whole train of domestic and social affections, which create such daily anxieties and embarrassments, will be happily stifled and suppressed in a round of perpetual delights; and all serious thoughts, but particularly that of *hereafter*, be banished out of the world; a most perplexing apprehension, but luckily a most groundless one too, as it is so very clear a case, that nobody ever dies.

I am, &c.

CHARIESSA.*

No. 101.] TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 1751.

Mella Jubes Hyblæa tibi vel Hymettia nasci,
Et thyma Cecropiæ Corsica ponis api. MART.

Alas! dear Sir, you try in vain,
Impossibilities to gain;
No bee from Corsica's rank juice
Hyblæan honey can produce. F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

HAVING by several years of continual study treasured in my mind a great number of prin-

* Written by Mrs. Carter of Deal, the only survivor of the writers of that age.—C.

ciples and ideas, and obtained by frequent exercise the power of applying them with propriety, and combining them with readiness, I resolved to quit the university, where I considered myself as a gem hidden in the mine, and to mingle in the crowd of public life. I was naturally attracted by the company of those who were of the same age with myself; and, finding that my academical gravity contributed very little to my reputation, applied my faculties to ocularity and burlesque. Thus, in a short time, I had heated my imagination to such a state of activity and ebullition, that upon every occasion it fumed away in bursts of wit, and evaporations of gayety. I became on a sudden the idol of the coffee-house, was in one winter solicited to accept the presidentship of five clubs, was dragged by violence to every new play, and quoted in every controversy upon theatrical merit; was in every public place surrounded by a multitude of humble auditors, who retailed in other places of resort my maxims and my jests, and was boasted as their intimate and companion by many, who had no other pretensions to my acquaintance, than that they had drank chocolate in the same room.

You will not wonder, Mr. Rambler, that I mention my success with some appearance of triumph and elevation. Perhaps no kind of superiority is more flattering or alluring than that which is conferred by the powers of conversation, by extemporaneous sprightliness of fancy, copiousness of language, and fertility of sentiment. In other exertions of genius, the greater part of the praise is unknown and unenjoyed; the writer, indeed, spreads his reputation to a wider extent, but receives little pleasure or advantage from the diffusion of his name, and only obtains a kind of nominal sovereignty over regions which pay no tribute. The colloquial wit has always his own radiance reflected on himself, and enjoys all the pleasure which he bestows; he finds his power confessed by every one that approaches him, sees friendship kindling with rapture, and attention swelling into praise.

The desire which every man feels of importance and esteem, is so much gratified by finding an assembly, at his entrance, brightened with gladness and hushed with expectation, that the collection of such distinctions can scarcely fail to be pleasing whensoever it is innocent. And my conscience does not reproach me with any mean or criminal effects of vanity; since I always employed my influence on the side of virtue, and never sacrificed my understanding or my religion to the pleasure of applause.

There were many whom either the desire of enjoying my pleasantry, or the pride of being thought to enjoy it, brought often into my company: but I was caressed in a particular manner by Demochares, a gentleman of large estate, and a liberal disposition. My fortune being by no means exuberant, inclined me to be pleased with a friend who was willing to be entertained at his own charge. I became by daily invitations habituated to his table, and, as he believed my acquaintance necessary to the character of elegance, which he was desirous of establishing, I lived in all the luxury of affluence, without expense, or dependance, and passed my life in a perpetual reciprocation of pleasure, with men brought together by similitude of accomplishments, or desire of improvement.

But all power has its sphere of activity, beyond which it produces no effect. Demochares being called by his affairs into the country, imagined that he should increase his popularity by coming among his neighbours accompanied by a man whose abilities were so generally allowed. The report presently spread through half the country that Demochares was arrived, and had brought with him the celebrated Hilarius, by whom such merriment would be excited, as had never been enjoyed or conceived before. I knew, indeed, the purpose for which I was invited, and, as men do not look diligently out for possible miscarriages, was pleased to find myself courted upon principles of interest, and considered as capable of reconciling factions, composing feuds, and uniting a whole province in social happiness.

After a few days spent in adjusting his domestic regulations, Demochares invited all the gentlemen of his neighbourhood to dinner, and did not forget to hint how much my presence was expected to heighten the pleasure of the feast. He informed me what prejudices my reputation had raised in my favour, and represented the satisfaction with which he should see me kindle up the blaze of merriment, and should remark the various effects that my fire would have upon such diversity of matter.

This declaration, by which he intended to quicken my vivacity, filled me with solicitude. I felt an ambition of shining which I never knew before; and was therefore embarrassed with an unusual fear of disgrace. I passed the night in planning out to myself the conversation of the coming day; recollected all my topics of raillery, proposed proper subjects of ridicule, prepared smart replies to a thousand questions, accommodated answers to imaginary repartees, and formed a magazine of remarks, apophthegms, tales, and illustrations.

The morning broke at last in the midst of these busy meditations. I rose with the palpitations of a champion on the day of combat; and, notwithstanding all my efforts, found my spirits sunk under the weight of expectation. The company soon after began to drop in, and every one, at his entrance, was introduced to Hilarius. What conception the inhabitants of this region had formed of a wit, I cannot yet

discover; but observed that they all seemed, after the regular exchange of compliments, to turn away disappointed; and that while we waited for dinner, they cast their eyes first upon me and then upon each other, like a theatrical assembly waiting for a show.

From the uneasiness of this situation, I was relieved by the dinner; and as every attention was taken up by the business of the hour, I sunk quietly to a level with the rest of the company. But no sooner were the dishes removed, than, instead of cheerful confidence and familiar prattle, a universal silence again showed their expectation of some unusual performance. My friend endeavoured to rouse them by healths and questions, but they answered him with great brevity, and immediately relapsed into their former taciturnity.

I had waited in hope of some opportunity to divert them, but could find no pass opened for a single sally; and who can be merry without an object of mirth? After a few faint efforts, which produced neither applause nor opposition, I was content to mingle with the mass, to put round the glass in silence, and solace myself with my own contemplations.

My friend looked round him: the guests stared at one another; and if now and then a few syllables were uttered with timidity and hesitation, there was none ready to make any reply. All our faculties were frozen, and every minute took away from our capacity of pleasing, and disposition to be pleased. Thus passed the hours to which so much happiness was decreed; the hours which had, by a kind of open proclamation, been devoted to wit, to mirth, and to Hilarius.

At last the night came on, and the necessity of parting freed us from the persecutions of each other. I heard them as they walked along the court, murmuring at the loss of the day, and inquiring whether any man would pay a second visit to a house haunted by a wit?

Demochares, whose benevolence is greater than his penetration, having flattered his hopes with the secondary honour which he was to gain by my sprightliness and elegance, and the affection with which he should be followed for a perpetual banquet of gayety, was not able to conceal his vexation and resentment, nor would easily be convinced, that I had not sacrificed his interest to sullenness and caprice, and studiously endeavoured to disgust his guests, and suppressed my powers of delighting, in obstinate and premeditated silence. I am informed that the reproach of their ill reception is divided by the gentlemen of the country between us; some being of opinion that my friend is deluded by an impostor, who, though he has found some art of gaining his favour, is afraid to speak before men of more penetration; and others concluding, that I think only London the proper theatre of my abilities, and disdain to exert my genius for the praise of rustics.

I believe, Mr. Rambler, that it has sometimes happened to others, who have the good or ill fortune to be celebrated for wits, to fall under the same censures upon the like occasions. I hope, therefore, that you will prevent any misrepresentations of such failures, by remarking, that invention is not wholly at the command of its possessor; that the power of pleasing is very often obstructed by the desire; that all expectation lessens surprise, yet some surprise is necessary to gayety; and that those who desire to partake of the pleasure of wit must contribute to its production, since the mind stagnates without external ventilation, and that effervescence of the fancy, which flashes into transport, can be raised only by the infusion of dissimilar ideas.

No. 102.] SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 1751.

Ipsa quoque assiduo labuntur tempora motu
Non secus ac flumen: neque enim consistere flumen,
Nec levis hora potest; sed ut unda impellitur unda,
Urgeturque prior veniente, urgetque priorem,
Tempora sic fugiunt pariter, pariterque sequuntur. OVID.

With constant motion as the moments glide,
Beho'd in running life the rolling tide,
For none can stem by art, or stop by power,
The flowing ocean, or the flee ing hour;
But wave by wave pursu'd arrives on shore,
And each impell'd behind impels before:
So time on time revolving we descry;
So minutes follow, and so minutes fly.

ELPHINSTON.

"LIFE," says Seneca, "is a voyage, in the progress of which we are perpetually changing our scenes: we first leave childhood behind us, then youth, then the years of ripened manhood, then the better and more pleasing part of old age." The perusal of this passage having excited in me a train of reflections on the state of man, the incessant fluctuation of his wishes, the gradual change of his disposition to all external objects, and the thoughtlessness with which he floats along the stream of time, I sunk into a slumber amidst my meditations, and, on a sudden, found my ears filled with the tumult of labour, the shouts of alacrity, the shrieks of alarm, the whistle of winds, and the dash of waters.

My astonishment for a time repressed my curiosity; but soon recovering myself so far as to inquire whither we were going, and what was the cause of such clamour and confusion, I was told that we were launching out into the *ocean of life*; that we had already passed the streights of infancy, in which multitudes had

erished, some by the weakness and fragility of
heir vessels, and more by the folly, perverse-
ess, or negligence, of those who undertook to
eer them; and that we were now on the
ain sea, abandoned to the winds and billows,
ithout any other means of security than the
re of the pilot, whom it was always in our
wer to choose among great numbers that
fered their direction and assistance.

I then looked round with anxious eagerness;
id first turning my eyes behind me, saw a
ream flowing through flowery islands, which
ery one that sailed along seemed to behold
ith pleasure: but no sooner touched, than the
rrent, which, though not noisy or turbulent,
as yet irresistible, bore him away. Beyond
ese islands all was darkness, nor could any of
e passengers describe the shore at which he
st embarked.

Before me, and on each side, was an expanse
waters violently agitated, and covered with
thick a mist, that the most perspicacious eye
uld see but a little way. It appeared to be
ll of rocks and whirlpools, for many sunk un-
pectedly while they were courting the gale
ith full sails, and insulting those whom they
d left behind. So numerous, indeed, were
e dangers, and so thick the darkness, that no
ution could confer security. Yet there were
any, who, by false intelligence, betrayed their
llowers into whirlpools, or by violence pushed
ose whom they found in their way against
e rocks.

The current was invariable and insurmount-
le; but though it was impossible to sail
ainst it, or to return to the place that was
ce passed, yet it was not so violent as to
ow no opportunities for dexterity or courage,
ce, though none could retreat back from
nger, yet they might often avoid it by oblique
rection.

It was, however, not very common to steer
th much care or prudence; for by some uni-
rsal infatuation, every man appeared to think
mself safe, though he saw his consorts every
ment sinking round him; and no sooner had
e waves closed over them, than their fate and
eir misconduct were forgotten: the voyage
as pursued with the same jocund confidence;
ery man congratulated himself upon the
undness of his vessel, and believed himself able
stem the whirlpool in which his friend was
allowed, or glide over the rocks on which he
s dashed: nor was it often observed that the
ht of a wreck made any man change his
rse: if he turned aside for a moment, he
n forgot the rudder, and left himself again
the disposal of chance.

This negligence did not proceed from indif-
ence or from weariness of their present con-
ion; for not one of those, who thus rushed
on destruction, failed, when he was sinking,
to call loudly upon his associates for that help
which could not now be given him; and many
spent their last moments in cautioning others
against the folly by which they were intercepted
in the midst of their course. Their benevolence
was sometimes praised, but their admonitions
were unregarded.

The vessels in which we had embarked being
confessedly unequal to the turbulence of the
stream of life, were visibly impaired in the
course of the voyage; so that every passenger
was certain, that how long soever he might,
by favourable accidents, or by incessant vigi-
lance, be preserved, he must sink at last.

This necessity of perishing might have been
expected to sadden the gay, and intimidate the
daring, at least to keep the melancholy and
timorous in perpetual torments, and hinder
them from any enjoyment of the varieties and
gratifications which nature offered them as the
solace of their labours: yet in effect, none
seemed less to expect destruction than those to
whom it was most dreadful; they all had the
art of concealing their danger from themselves;
and those who knew their inability to bear the
sight of the terrors that embarrassed their
way, took care never to look forward, but
found some amusement for the present moment,
and generally entertained themselves by playing
with Hope, who was the constant associate of
the voyage of life.

Yet all that Hope ventured to promise, even
to those whom she favoured most, was, not
that they should escape, but that they should
sink last; and with this promise every one was
satisfied, though he laughed at the rest for
seeming to believe it. Hope, indeed, apparently
mocked the credulity of her companions; for,
in proportion as their vessels grew leaky, she
redoubled her assurances of safety; and none
were more busy in making provisions for a
long voyage, than they whom all but themselves
saw likely to perish soon by irreparable decay.

In the midst of the current of life was the
gulf of Intemperance, a dreadful whirlpool, in-
terspersed with rocks, of which the pointed
crags were concealed under water, and the tops
covered with herbage, on which Ease spread
couches of repose, and with shades, where
Pleasure warbled the song of invitation. With-
in sight of these rocks all who sailed on the
ocean of life must necessarily pass. Reason,
indeed, was always at hand to steer the passen-
gers through a narrow outlet by which they
might escape; but very few could, by her in-
treaties or remonstrances, be induced to put the
rudder into her hand, without stipulating that
she should approach so near unto the rocks of
Pleasure, that they might solace themselves
with a short enjoyment of that delicious region,
after which they always determined to pursue
their course without any other deviation.

Reason was too often prevailed upon so far by these promises, as to venture her charge within the eddy of the gulph of Intemperance, where, indeed, the circumvolution was weak, but yet interrupted the course of the vessel, and drew it, by insensible rotations, towards the centre. She then repented her temerity, and with all her force endeavoured to retreat; but the draught of the gulf was generally too strong to be overcome; and the passenger, having danced in circles with a pleasing and giddy velocity, was at last overwhelmed and lost. Those few whom Reason was able to extricate, generally suffered so many shocks upon the points which shot out from the rocks of Pleasure, that they were unable to continue their course with the same strength and facility as before, but floated along timorously and feebly, endangered by every breeze, and shattered by every ruffle of the water, till they sunk, by slow degrees, after long struggles, and innumerable expedients, always repining at their own folly, and warning others against the first approach of the gulf of Intemperance.

There were artists who professed to repair the breaches and stop the leaks of the vessels which had been shattered on the rocks of Pleasure. Many appeared to have great confidence in their skill, and some, indeed, were preserved by it from sinking, who had received only a single blow: but I remarked that few vessels lasted long which had been much repaired, nor was it found that the artists themselves continued afloat longer than those who had least of their assistance.

The only advantage which, in the voyage of life, the cautious had above the negligent, was, that they sunk later, and more suddenly! for they passed forward till they had sometimes seen all those in whose company they had issued from the streights of infancy, perish in the way, and at last were overset by a cross breeze, without the toil of resistance, or the anguish of expectation. But such as had often fallen against the rocks of Pleasure, commonly subsided by sensible degrees, contended long with the encroaching waters, and harassed themselves by labours that scarce Hope herself could flatter with success.

As I was looking upon the various fate of the multitude about me, I was suddenly alarmed with an admonition from some unknown Power: "Gaze not idly upon others when thou thyself art sinking. Whence is this thoughtless tranquillity, when thou and they are equally endangered?" I looked, and seeing the gulf of Intemperance before me, started and awaked.

No. 103.] TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 1751.

Scire volunt secreta domus, atque inde timeri. JU

They search the secrets of the house, and so
Are worshipp'd there, and fear'd for what they know

DRYDEN.

CURIOSITY is one of the permanent and certai characteristics of a vigorous intellect. Ever advance into knowledge opens new prospect and produces new incitements to further pro gress. All the attainments possible in our pre sent state are evidently inadequate to our capa cities of enjoyment; conquest serves no purpos but that of kindling ambition, discovery has n effect but of raising expectation; the gratifica tion of one desire encourages another; and, aft all our labours, studies, and inquiries, we ar continually at the same distance from the com pletion of our schemes, have still some wish im portunate to be satisfied, and some faculty rest less and turbulent for want of its enjoyment.

The desire of knowledge, though often ani mated by extrinsic and adventitious motives seems on many occasions to operate without subordination to any other principle; we ar eager to see and hear, without intention of re ferring our observations to a further end; w climb a mountain for a prospect of the plain we run to the strand in a storm, that we ma contemplate the agitation of the water; w range from city to city, though we profess ne ther architecture nor fortification; we cross sea only to view nature in nakedness, or magnifi cence in ruins; we are equally allured by no velty of every kind, by a desert or a palace, cataract or a cavern, by every thing rude an every thing polished, every thing great an every thing little; we do not see a thicket bu with some temptation to enter it, nor remar an insect flying before us but with an inclina tion to pursue it.

This passion is, perhaps, regularly heighten ed in proportion as the powers of the mind ar elevated and enlarged. Lucan therefore intro duces Cæsar speaking with dignity suitable t the grandeur of his designs and the extent o his capacity, when he declares to the high-prie of Egypt, that he has no desire equally powe ful with that of finding the origin of the Nil and that he would quit all the projects of th civil war for a sight of those fountains whi had been so long concealed. And Homer, wh he would furnish the Sirens with a temptatio to which his hero, renowned for wisdom, migh yield without disgrace, makes them decla that none ever departed from them but with i crease of knowledge.

There is, indeed, scarce any kind of ideal a quirement which may not be applied to som use, or which may not at least gratify pri with occasional superiority; but whoever a

nds the motions of his own mind will find, nat upon the first appearance of an object, or he first start of a question, his inclination to a earer view, or more accurate discussion, pre- des all thoughts of profit, or of competition; nd that his desires take wing by instantaneous npulse, though their flight may be invigorat- d, or their efforts renewed, by subsequent con- iderations. The gratification of curiosity ra- ier frees us from uneasiness than confers plea- ure; we are more pained by ignorance than elighted by instruction. Curiosity is the thirst f the soul; it inflames and torments us, and akes us taste every thing with joy, however herwise insipid, by which it may be quenched.

It is evident that the earliest searchers after nowledge must have proposed knowledge only s their reward; and that science, though per- aps the nursling of interest, was the daughter curiosity: for who can believe that they who rst watched the course of the stars, foresaw the se of their discoveries to the facilitation of com- erce, or the mensuration of time? They were elighted with the splendour of the nocturnal ies, they found that the lights changed their aces; what they admired they were anxious to derstand, and in time traced their revolutions.

There are, indeed, beings in the form of men, ho appear satisfied with their intellectual pos- ssions, and seem to live without desire of en- rging their conceptions; before whom the orld passes without notice, and who are equally moved by nature or by art.

This negligence is sometimes only the tempo- ry effect of a predominant passion; a lover ds no inclination to travel any path, but that hich leads to the habitation of his mistress; a ader can pay little attention to common occur- nces, when his fortune is endangered by a rm. It is frequently the consequence of a tal immersion in sensuality; corporeal pleas- es may be indulged till the memory of every her kind of happiness is obliterated; the mind, ng habituated to a lethargic and quiescent state, unwilling to wake to the toil of thinking; and ough she may sometimes be disturbed by the trusion of new ideas, shrinks back again to norance and rest.

But, indeed, if we except them to whom the ntinual task of procuring the supports of life nies all opportunities of deviation from their n narrow track, the number of such as live thout the ardour of inquiry is very small, ough many content themselves with cheap nusements, and waste their lives in researches no importance.

There is no snare more dangerous to busy and cursive minds, than the cobwebs of petty in- isitiveness, which entangle them in trivial nployments and minute studies, and detain em in a middle state, between the tediousness total inactivity, and the fatigue of laborious efforts, enchant them at once with ease and nov- elty, and vitiate them with the luxury of learn- ing. The necessity of doing something, and the fear of undertaking much, sinks the historian to a genealogist, the philosopher to a journalist of the weather, and the mathematician to a con- structor of dials.

It is happy when those who cannot content themselves to be idle, nor resolve to be industri- ous, are at least employed without injury to others; but it seldom happens that we can con- tain ourselves long in a neutral state, or forbear to sink into vice, when we are no longer soaring towards virtue.

Nugaculus was distinguished in his earlier years by an uncommon liveliness of imagination, quickness of sagacity, and extent of knowledge. When he entered into life, he applied himself with particular inquisitiveness to examine the various motives of human actions, the compli- cated influence of mingled affections, the differ- ent modifications of interest and ambition, and the various causes of miscarriage and success both in public and private affairs.

Though his friends did not discover to what purpose all these observations were collected, or how Nugaculus would much improve his virtue or his fortune by an incessant attention to changes of countenance, bursts of inconsideration, sallies of passion, and all the other casualties by which he used to trace a character, yet they could not deny the study of human nature to be worthy of a wise man; they therefore flattered his vanity, applauded his discoveries, and listened with sub- missive modesty to his lectures on the uncertain- ty of inclination, the weakness of resolves, and the instability of temper, to his account of the various motives which agitate the mind, and his ridicule of the modern dream of a ruling passion.

Such was the first incitement of Nugaculus to a close inspection into the conduct of mankind. He had no interest in view, and therefore no design of supplantation; he had no malevolence, and therefore detected faults without any inten- tion to expose them; but having once found the art of engaging his attention upon others, he had no inclination to call it back to himself, but has passed his time in keeping a watchful eye upon every rising character, and lived upon a small estate without any thought of increasing it.

He is, by continual application, become a gen- eral master of secret history, and can give an ac- count of the intrigues, private marriages, com- petitions, and stratagems of half a century. He knows the mortgages upon every man's estate, the terms upon which every spendthrift raises his money, the real and reputed fortune of every lady, the jointure stipulated by every contract, and the expectations of every family from maid- en aunts and childless acquaintances. He can relate the economy of every house, knows how much one man's cellar is robbed by his butler,

and the land of another underlet by his steward; he can tell where the manor-house is falling, though large sums are yearly paid for repairs; and where the tenants are felling woods without the consent of the owner.

To obtain all this intelligence, he is inadvertently guilty of a thousand acts of treachery. He sees no man's servant without draining him of his trust; he enters no family without flattering the children into discoveries; he is a perpetual spy upon the doors of his neighbours; and knows, by long experience, at whatever distance, the looks of a creditor, a borrower, a lover, and a pimp.

Nugaculus is not ill-natured, and therefore his industry has not hitherto been very mischievous to others, or dangerous to himself: but since he cannot enjoy this knowledge but by discovering it, and, if he had no other motive to loquacity, is obliged to traffic like the chymists, and purchase one secret with another; he is every day more hated as he is more known; for he is considered by great numbers as one that has their fame and their happiness in his power, and no man can much love him of whom he lives in fear.

Thus has an intention, innocent at first, if not laudable, the intention of regulating his own behaviour by the experience of others, by an accidental declension to minuteness, betrayed Nugaculus, not only to a foolish, but vicious waste of a life which might have been honourably passed in public services, or domestic virtues. He has lost his original intention, and given up his mind to employments that engross, but do not improve it.

No. 104.] Saturday, March 16, 1751.

——*Nihil est quod credere de se*
Non possit—— JUV.

None e'er rejects hyperboles of praise.

The apparent insufficiency of every individual to his own happiness or safety, compels us to seek from one another assistance and support. The necessity of joint efforts for the execution of any great or extensive design, the variety of powers disseminated in the species, and the proportion between the defects and excellences of different persons, demand an interchange of help, and communication of intelligence, and by frequent reciprocations of beneficence unite mankind in society and friendship.

If it can be imagined that there ever was a time when the inhabitants of any country were in a state of equality, without distinction of rank, or peculiarity of possessions, it is reasonable to believe that every man was then loved in proportion as he could contribute by his strength, or his skill to the supply of natural wants; there was then little room for peevish dislike, or capricious favour; the affection admitted into the heart was rather esteem than tenderness; and kindness was only purchased by benefits. But when by force or policy, by wisdom or by fortune, property and superiority were introduced and established, so that many were condemned to labour for the support of a few, then they whose passions swelled above their wants, naturally laid out their superfluities upon pleasure; and those who could not gain friendship by necessary offices, endeavoured to promote their interest by luxurious gratifications, and to create needs, which they might be courted to supply.

The desires of mankind are much more numerous than their attainments, and the capacity of imagination much larger than actual enjoyment. Multitudes are therefore unsatisfied with their allotment; and he that hopes to improve his condition by the favour of another, and either finds no room for the exertion of great qualities, or perceives himself excelled by his rivals, will, by other expedients, endeavour to become agreeable where he cannot be important, and learn, by degrees, to number the art of pleasing among the most useful studies, and most valuable acquisitions.

This art, like others, is cultivated in proportion to its usefulness, and will always flourish most where it is most rewarded; for this reason we find it practised with great assiduity under absolute governments, where honours and riches are in the hands of one man, whom all endeavour to propitiate, and who soon becomes so much accustomed to compliance and officiousness, as not easily to find, in the most delicate address, that novelty which is necessary to procure attention.

It is discovered by a very few experiments that no man is much pleased with a companion who does not increase, in some respect, his fondness of himself; and therefore, he that wishes rather to be led forward to prosperity by the gentle hand of favour, than to force his way by labour and merit, must consider with more care how to display his patron's excellences than his own; that whenever he approaches, he may fill the imagination with pleasing dreams, and chase away disgust and weariness by a perpetual succession of delightful images.

This may, indeed, sometimes be effected by turning the attention upon advantages which are really possessed, or upon prospects which reason spreads before hope: for whoever can deserve or require to be courted, has generally either from nature or from fortune, gifts, which he may review with satisfaction, and of which when he is artfully recalled to the contemplation, he will seldom be displeased.

But those who have once degraded their understanding to an application only to the pas-

ions, and who have learned to derive hope from ny other sources than industry and virtue, sel- om retain dignity and magnanimity sufficient o defend them against the constant recurrence f temptation to falsehood. He that is too de- irous to be loved, will soon learn to flatter, and hen he has exhausted all the variations of onest praise, and can delight no longer with ie civility of truth, he will invent new topics f panegyric, and break out into raptures at vir- ues and beauties conferred by himself.

The drudgeries of dependence would, indeed, e aggravated by hopelessness of success, if no ndulgence was allowed to adulation. He that ill obstinately confine his patron to hear only ie commendations which he deserves, will soon e forced to give way to others that regale him ith more compass of music. The greatest man virtue bears no proportion to human nity. We always think ourselves better than e are, and are generally desirous that others ould think us still better than we think our- lves. To praise us for actions or dispositions hich deserve praise, is not to confer a benefit, t to pay a tribute. We have always preten- ons to fame, which, in our own hearts, we ow to be disputable, and which we are desi- us to strengthen by a new suffrage; we have ways hopes which we suspect to be fallacious, d of which we eagerly snatch at every con- mation.

It may, indeed, be proper to make the first proaches under the conduct of truth, and to ure credit to future encomiums, by such praise may be ratified by the conscience; but the nd once habituated to the lusciousness of eu- y, becomes, in a short time, nice and fastidi- s, and like a vitiated palate, is incessantly ling for higher gratifications.

It is scarcely credible to what degree discern- nt may be dazzled by the mist of pride, and sdom infatuated by the intoxication of flat- y; or how low the genius may descend by ccessive gradations of servility, and how swift- it may fall down the precipice of falsehood. man can, indeed, observe, without indigna- n, on what names, both of ancient and mo- n times, the utmost exuberance of praise has n lavished, and by what hands it has been towed. It has never yet been found, that the ant, the plunderer, the oppressor, the most eful of the hateful, the most profligate of the fligate, have been denied any celebrations ich they were willing to purchase, or that kedness and folly have not found correspond- flatterers through all their subordinations, rpt when they have been associated with rice or poverty, and have wanted either in- ation or ability to hire a panegyrist.

s there is no character so deformed as to ht away from it the prostitutes of praise, e is no degree of encomiastic veneration which pride has refused. The emperors of Rome suffered themselves to be worshipped in their lives with altars and sacrifices; and in an age more enlightened, the terms peculiar to the praise and worship of the Supreme Being, have been applied to wretches whom it was the reproach of humanity to number among men; and whom nothing but riches or power hindered those that read or wrote their deification, from hunting into the toils of justice, as disturbers of the peace of nature.

There are, indeed, many among the poetical flatterers, who must be resigned to infamy without vindications, and whom we must confess to have deserted the cause of virtue for pay: they have committed, against full conviction, the crime of obliterating the distinctions between good and evil, and, instead of opposing the encroachments of vice, have incited her progress, and celebrated her conquests. But there is a lower class of sycophants, whose understanding has not made them capable of equal guilt. Every man of high rank is surrounded with numbers, who have no other rule of thought or action, than his maxims and his conduct; whom the honour of being numbered among his acquaintance reconciles to all his vices, and all his absurdities; and who easily persuade themselves to esteem him, by whose regard they consider themselves as distinguised and exalted.

It is dangerous for mean minds to venture themselves within the sphere of greatness. Stupidity is soon blinded by the splendour of wealth, and cowardice is easily fettered in the shackles of dependance. To solicit patronage, is, at least, in the event, to set virtue to sale. None can be pleased without praise, and few can be praised without falsehood; few can be assiduous without servility, and none can be servile without corruption.

No. 105.] TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 1751.

——— *Animorum*
Impulsu, et cæca magnaque cupidine ducti. JUV.

Vain man runs headlong, to caprice resigned;
Impell'd by passion, and with folly blind.

I WAS lately considering, among other objects of speculation, the new attempt of a *universal register*, an office in which every man may lodge an account of his superfluities and wants, of whatever he desires to purchase or to sell. My imagination soon presented to me the latitude to which this design may be extended by integrity and industry, and the advantages which may be justly hoped from a general mart of intelligence, when once its reputation shall be so established, that neither reproach nor fraud shall be feared from it; when an application to it shall not be censured as the last resource of desperation, nor its informations suspected as the

fortuitous suggestions of men obliged not to appear ignorant. A place where every exuberance may be discharged, and every deficiency supplied; where every lawful passion may find its gratifications, and every honest curiosity receive satisfaction; where the stock of a nation, pecuniary and intellectual, may be brought together, and where all conditions of humanity may hope to find relief, pleasure, and accommodation; must equally deserve the attention of the merchant and philosopher, of him who mingles in the tumult of business, and him who only lives to amuse himself with the various employments and pursuits of others. Nor will it be an uninstructing school to the greatest masters of method and despatch, if such multiplicity can be preserved from embarrassment, and such tumult from inaccuracy.

While I was concerting this splendid project, and filling my thoughts with its regulations, its conveniences, its variety, and its consequences, I sunk gradually into slumber: but the same images, though less distinct, still continued to float upon my fancy. I perceived myself at the gate of an immense edifice, where innumerable multitudes were passing without confusion: every face on which I fixed my eyes, seemed settled in the contemplation of some important purpose, and every foot was hastened by eagerness and expectation. I followed the crowd without knowing whither I should be drawn, and remained a while in the unpleasing state of an idler, where all other beings were busy, giving place every moment to those who had more importance in their looks. Ashamed to stand ignorant, and afraid to ask questions, at last I saw a lady sweeping by me, whom, by the quickness of her eyes, the agility of her steps, and a mixture of levity and impatience, I knew to be my long-loved protectress, Curiosity. "Great goddess," said I, "may thy votary be permitted to implore thy favour; if thou hast been my directress from the first dawn of reason; if I have followed thee through the maze of life with invariable fidelity; if I have turned to every new call, and quitted at thy nod one pursuit for another; if I have never stopped at the invitations of fortune, nor forgotten thy authority in the bowers of pleasure; inform me now whither Chance has conducted me."

"Thou art now," replied the smiling power, "in the presence of Justice and of Truth, whom the father of gods and men has sent down to register the demands and pretensions of mankind, that the world may at last be reduced to order, and that none may complain hereafter of being doomed to tasks for which they are unqualified, of possessing faculties for which they cannot find employment, or virtues that languish unobserved for want of opportunities to exert them, of being encumbered with superfluities which they would willingly resign, or of wasting away in desires which ought to be satisfied. Justice is now to examine every man's wishes, and Truth is to record them; let us approach, and observe the progress of this great transaction."

She then moved forward, and Truth, who knew her among the most faithful of her followers, beckoned her to advance, till we were placed near the seat of Justice. The first who required the assistance of the office, came forward with a slow pace, and tumour of dignity, and shaking a weighty purse in his hand, demanded to be registered by Truth, as the Mæcenas of the present age, the chief encourager of literary merit, to whom men of learning and wit might apply in any exigence or distress with certainty of succour. Justice very mildly inquired, whether he had calculated the expense of such a declaration? Whether he had been informed what number of petitioners would swarm about him? Whether he could distinguish idleness and negligence from calamity, ostentation from knowledge, or vivacity from wit? To these questions he seemed not well provided with a reply, but repeated his desire to be recorded a patron. Justice then offered to register his proposal on these conditions, that he should never suffer himself to be flattered, that he should never delay an audience when he had nothing to do; and that he should never encourage followers without intending to reward them. These terms were too hard to be accepted; for what, said he, is the end of patronage, but the pleasure of reading dedications, holding multitudes in suspense, and enjoying their hopes, their fears, and their anxiety, flattering them to assiduity, and, at last, dismissing them for impatience? Justice heard his confession, and ordered his name to be posted upon the gate among cheats and robbers, and publick nuisances, which all were by that notice warned to avoid.

Another required to be made known as the discoverer of a new art of education, by which languages and sciences might be taught to all capacities, and all inclinations, without fear of punishment, pain of confinement, loss of any part of the gay mien of ignorance, or any obstruction of the necessary progress in dress, dancing, or cards.

Justice and Truth did not trouble this great adept with many inquiries; but finding his address awkward and his speech barbarous, ordered him to be registered as a tall fellow who wanted employment, and might serve in any post where the knowledge of reading and writing was not required.

A man of a very grave and philosophic aspect required notice to be given of his intention to set out, a certain day, on a submarine voyage, and of his willingness to take in passengers for no more than double the price at which the

ight sail above water. His desire was grant-
, and he retired to a convenient stand, in ex-
ctation of filling his ship, and growing rich in
short time by the secrecy, safety, and expedi-
n of the passage

Another desired to advertise the curious, that
had, for the advancement of true knowledge,
ntrived an optical instrument, by which those
ho laid out their industry on memorials of the
anges of the wind, might observe the direc-
n of the weathercocks on the hitherside of
e lunar world.

Another wished to be known as the author of
invention, by which cities or kingdoms
ght be made warm in winter by a single fire,
ettle, and pipe. Another had a vehicle by
ich a man might bid defiance to floods, and
ntinue floating in an inundation, without
y inconvenience, till the water should sub-
e. Justice considered these projects as of no
portance but to their authors, and therefore
rcely condescended to examine them; but
uth refused to admit them into the register.

Twenty different pretenders came in one hour
ive notice of a universal medicine, by which
diseases might be cured or prevented, and life
tracted beyond the age of Nestor. But Jus-
informed them, that one universal medicine
s sufficient, and she should delay the notifica-
n till she saw who could longest preserve his
n life.

A thousand other claims and offers were exhi-
d and examined. I remarked, among this
ghty multitude, that, of intellectual advan-
es, many had great exuberance, and few con-
ed any want; of every art there were a hun-
d professors for a single pupil; but of other
inments, such as riches, honours, and prefer-
nts, I found none that had too much, but
usands and ten thousands that thought them-
es entitled to a larger dividend.

t often happened, that old misers, and women
ried at the close of life, advertised their want
hildren; nor was it uncommon for those who
a numerous offspring, to give notice of a son
laughter to be spared; but, though appear-
es promised well on both sides, the bargain
om succeeded; for they soon lost their incli-
ion to adopted children, and proclaimed their
intions to promote some scheme of public cha-
: a thousand proposals were immediately
le, among which they hesitated till death
cluded the decision.

s I stood looking on this scene of confusion,
ith condescended to ask me, what was my
ness at her office? I was struck with the
xpected question, and awaked by my efforts
nswer it.

No. 106.] SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 1751.

Opinionum commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat. CIC.

Time obliterates the fictions of opinion, and confirms the decisions of nature.

IT is necessary to the success of flattery, that it be accommodated to particular circumstances or characters, and enter the heart on that side where the passions stand ready to receive it. A lady seldom listens with attention to any praise but that of her beauty; a merchant always expects to hear of his influence at the bank, his importance on the exchange, the height of his credit, and the extent of his traffic: and the author will scarcely be pleased without lamentations of the neglect of learning, the conspiracies against genius, and the slow progress of merit, or some praises of the magnanimity of those who encounter poverty and contempt in the cause of knowledge, and trust for the reward of their labours to the judgment and gratitude of posterity.

An assurance of unfading laurels, and immortal reputation, is the settled reciprocation of civility between amicable writers. To raise *monuments more durable than brass, and more conspicuous than pyramids*, has been long the common boast of literature; but among the innumerable architects that erect columns to themselves, far the greater part, either for want of durable materials, or of art to dispose them, see their edifices perish as they are towering to completion, and those few that for a while attract the eye of mankind, are generally weak in the foundation, and soon sink by the saps of time.

No place affords a more striking conviction of the vanity of human hopes, than a public library; for who can see the wall crowded on every side by mighty volumes, the works of laborious meditation and accurate inquiry, now scarcely known but by the catalogue, and preserved only to increase the pomp of learning, without considering how many hours have been wasted in vain endeavours, how often imagination has anticipated the praises of futurity, how many statues have risen to the eye of vanity, how many ideal converts have elevated zeal, how often wit has exulted in the eternal infamy of his antagonists, and dogmatism has delighted in the gradual advances of his authority, the immutability of his decrees, and the perpetuity of his power?

——— *Non unquam dedit*
Documenta fors majora, quam fragili loco
Starent superbi.

Insulting chance ne'er call'd with louder voice,
On swelling mortals to be proud no more.

Of the innumerable authors whose performances are thus treasured up in magnificent obscurity, most are forgotten, because they never deserved to be remembered, and owed the honours which they once obtained, not to judgment

or to genius, to labour or to art, but to the prejudice of faction, the stratagem of intrigue, or the servility of adulation.

Nothing is more common than to find men whose works are now totally neglected, mentioned with praises by their contemporaries, as the oracles of their age, and the legislators of science. Curiosity is naturally excited, their volumes after long inquiry are found, but seldom reward the labour of the search. Every period of time has produced these bubbles of artificial fame, which are kept up awhile by the breath of fashion, and then break at once, and are annihilated. The learned often bewail the loss of ancient writers whose characters have survived their works; but, perhaps, if we could now retrieve them, we should find them only the Granvilles, Montagues, Stepneys, and Sheffields of their time, and wonder by what infatuation or caprice they could be raised to notice.

It cannot, however, be denied that many have sunk into oblivion, whom it were unjust to number with this despicable class. Various kinds of literary fame seem destined to various measures of duration. Some spread into exuberance with a very speedy growth, but soon wither and decay; some rise more slowly, but last long. Parnassus has its flowers of transient fragrance, as well as its oaks of towering height, and its laurels of eternal verdure.

Among those whose reputation is exhausted in a short time by its own luxuriance, are the writers who take advantage of present incidents or characters which strongly interest the passions, and engage universal attention. It is not difficult to obtain readers, when we discuss a question which every one is desirous to understand, which is debated in every assembly, and has divided the nation into parties; or when we display the faults or virtues of him whose public conduct has made almost every man his enemy or his friend. To the quick circulation of such productions all the motives of interest and vanity concur; the disputant enlarges his knowledge, the zealot animates his passion, and every man is desirous to inform himself concerning affairs so vehemently agitated and variously represented.

It is scarcely to be imagined, through how many subordinations of interest the ardour of party is diffused; and what multitudes fancy themselves affected by every satire or panegyric on a man of eminence. Whoever has, at any time, taken occasion to mention him with praise or blame, whoever happens to love or hate any of his adherents, as he wishes to confirm his opinion, and to strengthen his party, will diligently peruse every paper from which he can hope for sentiments like his own. An object, however small in itself, if placed near to the eye, will engross all the rays of light; and a transaction, however trivial, swells into importance when it presses immediately on our attention. He that shall peruse the political pamphlets of any past reign, will wonder why they were so eagerly read, or so loudly praised. Many of the performances which had power to inflame factions, and fill a kingdom with confusion, have now very little effect upon a frigid critic; and the time is coming, when the compositions of later hirelings shall lie equally despised. In proportion as those who write on temporary subjects are exalted above their merit at first, they are afterwards depressed below it; nor can the brightest elegance of diction, or most artful subtility of reasoning, hope for much esteem from those whose regard is no longer quickened by curiosity or pride.

It is, indeed, the fate of controvertists, even when they contend for philosophical or theological truth, to be soon laid aside and slighted. Either the question is decided, and there is no more place for doubt and opposition: or mankind despair of understanding it, and grow weary of disturbance, content themselves with quiet ignorance, and refuse to be harassed with labours which they have no hopes of recompensing with knowledge.

The authors of new discoveries may surely expect to be reckoned among those whose writings are secure of veneration: yet it often happens that the general reception of a doctrine obscures the books in which it was delivered. When any tenet is generally received and adopted as an incontrovertible principle, we seldom look back to the arguments upon which it was first established, or can bear that tediousness of deduction, and multiplicity of evidence by which its author was forced to reconcile it to prejudice, and fortify it in the weakness of novelty against obstinacy and envy.

It is well known how much of our philosophy is derived from Boyle's discovery of the qualities of the air; yet of those who now adopt or enlarge his theory, very few have read the detail of his experiments. His name is, indeed, reverenced; but his works are neglected: we are contented to know, that he conquered his opponents, without inquiring what cavils were produced against him, or by what proofs they were confuted.

Some writers apply themselves to studies boundless and inexhaustible, as experiments and natural philosophy. These are always lost in successive compilations, as new advances are made, and former observations become more familiar. Others spend their lives in remarks on language, or explanations of antiquities, and only afford materials for lexicographers and commentators, who are themselves overwhelmed by subsequent collectors, that equally destroy the memory of their predecessors by amplification, transposition, or contraction. Every new system of nature gives birth to a swarm of expositors,

hose business is to explain and illustrate it, and ho can hope to exist no longer than the foun- r of their sect preserves his reputation.

There are, indeed, few kinds of composition om which an author, however learned or in- nious, can hope a long continuance of fame. e who has carefully studied human nature, id can well describe it, may with most reason itter his ambition. Bacon, among all his pre- nsions to the regard of posterity, seems to ave pleased himself chiefly with his Essays, *hich come home to men's business and bosoms*, id of which, therefore, he declares his expecta- on, that they *will live as long as books last*. It ay, however, satisfy an honest and benevo- nt mind to have been useful, though less con- icuous; nor will he that extends his hope higher rewards be so much anxious to obtain raise, as to discharge the duty which Provi- nce assigns him.

o. 107.] TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 1751.

Alternis igitur contendere versibus ambo
Cœpere: alternos Musæ meminisse volebant.

VIRG.

On themes alternate now the swains recite;
The Muses in alternate themes delight.

ELPHINSTON.

MONG the various censures, which the un- oidable comparison of my performances with ose of my predecessors has produced, there is ne more general than that of uniformity. any of my readers remark the want of those anges of colours, which formerly fed the at- ntion with unexhausted novelty, and of that termixture of subjects, or alternation of man- r, by which other writers relieved weariness, d awakened expectation.

I have, indeed, hitherto avoided the practice uniting gay and solemn subjects in the same per, because it seems absurd for an author to unteract himself, to press at once with equal rce upon both parts of the intellectual balance, give medicines, which, like the double poison Dryden, destroy the force of one another. I ve endeavoured sometimes to divert, and metimes to elevate; but have imagined it a eless attempt to disturb merriment by solem- ty, or interrupt seriousness by drollery. Yet shall this day publish two letters of very dif- rent tendency, which I hope, like tragi-come- , may chance to please even when they are t critically approved.

TO THE RAMBLER.

DEAR SIR,

THOUGH, as my mamma tells me, I am too ung to talk at the table, I have great pleasure in listening to the conversation of learned men, especially when they discourse of things which I do not understand; and have, therefore, been of late particularly delighted with many disputes about the *alteration of the style*, which, they say, is to be made by act of parliament.

One day when my mamma was gone out of the room, I asked a very great scholar what the style was? He told me, he was afraid I should hardly understand him when he informed me, that it was the stated and established method of computing time. It was, not, indeed, likely that I should understand him; for I never yet knew time computed in my life, nor can imagine why we should be at so much trouble to count what we cannot keep. He did not tell me whether we are to count the time past, or the time to come; but I have considered them both by myself, and think it as foolish to count time that is gone, as money that is spent; and as for the time which is to come, it only seems farther off by counting; and, therefore, when any pleasure is promised me, I always think of the time as little as I can.

I have since listened very attentively to every one that talked upon this subject, of whom the greater part seem not to understand it better than myself; for though they often hint how much the nation has been mistaken, and rejoice that we are at last growing wiser than our ancestors, I have never been able to discover from them, that any body has died sooner or been married later for counting time wrong; and, therefore, I began to fancy that there was a great bustle with little consequence.

At last two friends of my papa, Mr. Cycle and Mr. Starlight, being, it seems, both of high learning, and able to make an almanack, began to talk about the new style. Sweet Mr. Starlight—I am sure I shall love his name as long as I live; for he told Cycle roundly, with a fierce look, that we should never be right without a *year of confusion*. Dear Mr. Rambler, did you ever hear any thing so charming? a whole year of confusion! When there has been a rout at mamma's, I have thought one night of confusion worth a thousand nights of rest; and if I can but see a year of confusion, a whole year, of cards in one room, and dancings in another, here a feast, and there a masquerade, and plays, and coaches, and hurries, and messages, and milliners, and raps at the door, and visits, and frolics, and new fashions, I shall not care what they do with the rest of the time, nor whether they count it by the old style or the new; for I am resolved to break loose from the nursery in the tumult, and play my part among the rest; and it will be strange if I cannot get a husband and a chariot in the year of confusion.

Cycle, who is neither so young nor so handsome as Starlight, very gravely maintained, that all the perplexity may be avoided by leaping

over eleven days in the reckoning: and, indeed, if it should come only to this, I think the new style is a delightful thing; for my mamma says I shall go to court when I am sixteen, and if they can but contrive often to leap over eleven days together, the months of restraint will soon be at an end. It is strange, that with all the plots that have been laid against time, they could never kill it by act of parliament before. Dear Sir, if you have any vote or interest, get them but for once to destroy eleven months, and then I shall be as old as some married ladies. But this is desired only if you think they will not comply with Mr. Starlight's scheme; for nothing surely could please me like a year of confusion, when I shall no longer be fixed this hour to my pen, and the next to my needle, or wait at home for the dancing-master one day, and the next for the music-master, but run from ball to ball, and from drum to drum; and spend all my time without tasks, and without account, and go out without telling whither, and come home without regard to prescribed hours, or family-rules.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

PROPERANTIA.

MR. RAMBLER,

I WAS seized this morning with an unusual pensiveness, and finding that books only served to heighten it, took a ramble into the fields, in hopes of relief and invigoration from the keenness of the air and brightness of the sun.

As I wandered wrapt up in thought, my eyes were struck with the hospital for the reception of deserted infants, which I surveyed with pleasure, till, by a natural train of sentiment, I began to reflect on the fate of the mothers. For to what shelter can they fly? Only to the arms of their betrayer, which perhaps are now no longer open to receive them; and then how quick must be the transition from deluded virtue to shameless guilt, and from shameless guilt to hopeless wretchedness!

The anguish that I felt left me no rest till I had, by your means, addressed myself to the public on behalf of those forlorn creatures, the women of the town, whose misery here might satisfy the most rigorous censor, and whose participation of our common nature might surely induce us to endeavour, at least, their preservation from eternal punishment.

These were all once, if not virtuous, at least innocent; and might still have continued blameless and easy, but for the arts and insinuations of those whose rank, fortune, or education, furnished them with means to corrupt or to delude them. Let the libertine reflect a moment on the situation of that woman, who, being forsaken by her betrayer, is reduced to the necessity of turning prostitute for bread, and judge of the enormity of his guilt by the evils which it pr duces.

It cannot be doubted but that numbers follo this dreadful course of life, with shame, horro and regret; but where can they hope for refuge "*The world is not their friend, nor the world law.*" Their sighs, and tears, and groans, a criminal in the eye of their tyrants, the bull and the bawd, who fatten on their misery, a threaten them with want or a gaol, if they sho the least design of escaping from their bondag

"To wipe all tears from off all faces," is task too hard for mortals; but to alleviate mi fortunes is often within the most limite power: yet the opportunities which every d affords of relieving the most wretched of huma beings are overlooked and neglected, with equ disregard of policy and goodness.

There are places, indeed, set apart, to whi these unhappy creatures may resort, when t diseases of incontinence seize upon them; b if they obtain a cure, to what are they reduce Either to return with the small remains beauty to their former guilt, or perish in t streets with nakedness and hunger.

How frequently have the gay and though less, in their evening frolics, seen a band these miserable females, covered with ra shivering with cold, and pining with hunge and without either pitying their calamities, reflecting upon the cruelty of those who p haps first seduced them by caresses of fondne or magnificence of promises, go on to redu others to the same wretchedness by the sa means?

To stop the increase of this deplorable mul tude, is undoubtedly the first and most pressi consideration. To prevent evil is the great e of government, the end for which vigilance a severity are properly employed. But sur those whom passion or interest have already p praved, have some claim to compassion, fr beings equally frail and fallible with themselv Nor will they long groan in their present aff tions, if none were to refuse them relief, those that owe their exemption from the sa distress only to their wisdom and their virt

I am, &c.

AMIC

No. 108.] SATURDAY, MARCH 30, 1751.

——*Sapere aude,*
Incipe. Vivendi recte qui prorogat horam,
Rusticus exspectat dum defluat amnis: at ille
Labitur, et labetur in omne volubilis ævum.

HOR

Begin, be bold, and venture to be wise;
He who defers this work from day to day,
Does on a river's bank expecting stay,

Till the whole stream, which stopp'd him, should be gone,
That runs, and as it runs, for ever will run on.
COWLEY.

AN ancient poet unreasonably discontented at he present state of things, which the system of pinions obliged him to represent in its worst orm, has observed of the earth, "that its greater art is covered by the uninhabitable ocean; that f the rest some is encumbered with naked ountains, and some lost under barren sands; ome scorched with unintermitted heat, and ome petrified with perpetual frost; so that only few regions remain for the production of fruits, ne pasture of cattle, and the accommodation of an."

The same observation may be transferred to ne time allotted us in our present state. When 'e have deducted all that is absorbed in sleep, ll that is inevitably appropriated to the demands f nature, or irresistibly engrossed by the tyran- y of custom; all that passes in regulating the perficial decorations of life, or is given up in ne reciprocations of civility to the disposal of thers; all that is torn from us by the violence f disease, or stolen imperceptibly away by lassi- ude and languor; we shall find that part of our uration very small of which we can truly call urselves masters, or which we can spend wholly our own choice. Many of our hours are lost a rotation of petty cares, in a constant recur- ence of the same employments; many of our rovisions for ease or happiness are always ex- austed by the present day; and a great part of ir existence serves no other purpose, than that enabling us to enjoy the rest.

Of the few moments which are left in our dis- osal, it may reasonably be expected, that we ould be so frugal, as to let none of them slip om us without some equivalent: and perhaps might be found, that as the earth, however raitened by rocks and waters, is capable of oducing more than all its inhabitants are able consume, our lives, though much contracted incidental distraction, would yet afford us a rge space vacant to the exercise of reason and rtue; that we want not time, but diligence, r great performances; and that we squander uch of our allowance, even while we think it oring and insufficient.

This natural and necessary comminution of ir lives, perhaps, often makes us insensible of e negligence with which we suffer them to ide away. We never consider ourselves as ssessed at once of time sufficient for any great sign, and therefore indulge ourselves in fortui- us amusements. We think it unnecessary to ke an account of a few supernumerary mo- nts, which, however employed, could have oduced little advantage, and which were ex- sed to a thousand chances of disturbance and terruption.

It is observable that, either by nature or by habit, our faculties are fitted to images of a certain extent, to which we adjust great things by division, and little things by accumulation. Of extensive surfaces we can only take a survey, as the parts succeed one another; and atoms we cannot perceive till they are united into mases. Thus we break the vast periods of time into centuries and years; and thus, if we would know the amount of moments, we must agglomerate them into days and weeks.

The proverbial oracles of our parsimonious ancestors have informed us, that the fatal waste of fortune is by small expenses, by the profusions of sums too little singly to alarm our caution, and which we never suffer ourselves to consider together. Of the same kind is the prodigality of life; he that hopes to look back hereafter with satisfaction upon past years, must learn to know the present value of single minutes, and endeavour to let no particle of time fall useless to the ground.

It is usual for those who are advised to the attainment of any new qualification, to look upon themselves as required to change the general course of their conduct, to dismiss business, and exclude pleasure, and to devote their days and nights to a particular attention. But all common degrees of excellence are attainable at a lower price; he that should steadily and resolutely assign to any science or language those interstitial vacancies which intervene in the most crowded variety of diversion or employment, would find every day new irradiations of knowledge, and discover how much more is to be hoped from frequency and perseverance, than from violent efforts and sudden desires; efforts which are soon remitted when they encounter difficulty, and desires, which if they are indulged too often, will shake off the authority of reason, and range capriciously from one object to another.

The disposition to defer every important design to a time of leisure, and a state of settled uniformity, proceeds generally from a false estimate of the human powers. If we except those gigantic and stupendous intelligences who are said to grasp a system by intuition, and bound forward from one series of conclusions to another, without regular steps through intermediate propositions, the most successful students make their advances in knowledge by short flights, between each of which the mind may lie at rest. For every single act of progression a short time is sufficient; and it is only necessary, that whenever that time is afforded, it be well employed.

Few minds will be long confined to severe laborious meditation; and when a successful attack on knowledge has been made, the student recreates himself with the contemplation of his conquests, and forbears another incursion, till

the new-acquired truth has become familiar, and his curiosity calls upon him for fresh gratifications. Whether the time of intermission is spent in company, or in solitude, in necessary business, or in voluntary levities, the understanding is equally abstracted from the object of inquiry; but perhaps if it be detained by occupations less pleasing, it returns again to study with greater alacrity, than when it is glutted with ideal pleasures, and surfeited with intemperance of application. He that will not suffer himself to be discouraged by fancied impossibilities, may sometimes find his abilities invigorated by the necessity of exerting them in short intervals, as the force of a current is increased by the contraction of its channel.

From some cause like this it has probably proceeded, that among those who have contributed to the advancement of learning, many have risen to eminence in opposition to all the obstacles which external circumstances could place in their way, amidst the tumult of business, the distresses of poverty, or the dissipations of a wandering and unsettled state. A great part of the life of Erasmus was one continual peregrination; ill supplied with the gifts of fortune, and led from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom, by the hopes of patrons and preferment, hopes which always flattered and always deceived him; he yet found means, by unshaken constancy, and a vigilant improvement of those hours, which, in the midst of the most restless activity, will remain unengaged, to write more than another in the same condition would have hoped to read. Compelled by want to attendance and solicitation, and so much versed in common life, that he has transmitted to us the most perfect delineation of the manners of his age, he joined to his knowledge of the world, such application to books, that he will stand for ever in the first rank of literary heroes. How this proficiency was obtained he sufficiently discovers, by informing us, that the "Praise of Folly," one of his most celebrated performances, was composed by him on his road to Italy; *ne totum illud tempus quo equo fuit insidendum, illiteratis fabulis tereretur*, lest the hours which he was obliged to spend on horseback should be tattled away without regard to literature.

An Italian philosopher expressed in his motto, that *time was his estate;* an estate, indeed, which will produce nothing without cultivation, but will always abundantly repay the labours of industry, and satisfy the most extensive desires, if no part of it be suffered to lie waste by negligence, to be overrun with noxious plants, or laid out for show rather than for use.

No. 109.] TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 1751.

Gratum est, quod patriæ civem populoque dedisti
Si facis, ut patriæ sit idoneus, utilis agris,
Utilis et bellorum, et pacis rebus agendis.
Plurimum enim intererit quibus artibus, et quibus hunc tu
Moribus instituas. JUV.

Grateful the gift! a member to the state,
If you that member useful shall create;
Train'd both to war, and, when the war shall cease,
As fond, as fit t' improve the arts of peace.
For much it boots which way you train your boy,
The hopeful object of your future joy.
ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH you seem to have taken a view sufficiently extensive of the miseries of life, and have employed much of your speculation on mournful subjects, you have not yet exhausted the whole stock of human infelicity. There is still a species of wretchedness which escapes your observation, though it might supply you with many sage remarks, and salutary cautions.

I cannot but imagine the start of attention awakened by this welcome hint; and at this instant see the Rambler snuffing his candle, rubbing his spectacles, stirring his fire, locking out interruption, and settling himself in his easy chair, that he may enjoy a new calamity without disturbance. For, whether it be that continued sickness or misfortune has acquainted you only with the bitterness of being; or that you imagine none but yourself able to discover what I suppose has been seen and felt by all the inhabitants of the world; whether you intend your writings as antidotal to the levity and merriment with which your rivals endeavour to attract the favour of the public; or fancy that you have some particular powers of dolorous declamation, and *warble out your groans* with uncommon elegance or energy; it is certain that, whatever be your subject, melancholy for the most part bursts in upon your speculations, your gayety is quickly overcast, and, though your readers may be flattered with hopes of pleasantry, they are seldom dismissed but with heavy hearts.

That I may therefore gratify you with an imitation of your own syllables of sadness, I will inform you, that I was condemned by some disastrous influence to be an only son, born to the apparent prospect of a large fortune, and allotted to my parents at that time of life, when satiety of common diversions allows the mind to indulge parental affection with greater intenseness. My birth was celebrated by the tenants with feasts, and dances, and bagpipes: congratulations were sent from every family within ten miles round; and my parents discovered in my first cries such tokens of future virtue and un-

standing, that they declared themselves ermined to devote the remaining part of to my happiness and the increase of their ate.

The abilities of my father and mother were perceptibly unequal, and education had en neither much advantage over the other. ey had both kept good company, rattled in riots, glittered in playhouses, and danced at rt, and were both expert in the games that re in their time called in as auxiliaries inst the intrusion of thought.

When there is such a parity between sons associated for life, the dejection which husband, if he be not completely stupid, st always suffer for want of superiority, sinks to submissiveness. My mamma therefore erned the family without control; and ex- t that my father still retained some authority he stables, and now and then, after a super- nerary bottle, broke a looking-glass or China to prove his sovereignty, the whole course he year was regulated by her direction, the rants received from her all their orders, and tenants were continued or dismissed at her retion.

She therefore thought herself entitled to the lerintendance of her son's education; and en my father, at the instigation of the par- , faintly proposed that I should be sent to ool, very positively told him, that she should suffer so fine a child to be ruined; that she er knew any boys at a grammar-school that d come into a room without blushing, or at the table without some awkward uneasi- ; that they were always putting themselves danger by boisterous plays, or vitiating their aviour with mean company; and that, for part, she would rather follow me to the e, than see me tear my clothes, and hang n my head, and sneak about with dirty s and blotted fingers, my hair unpowdered, my hat uncocked.

y father, who had no other end in his pro- l than to appear wise and manly, soon ac- sced, since I was not to live by my learn- for indeed he had known very few stu- s that had not some stiffness in their man- They therefore agreed that a domestic should be procured, and hired an honest leman of mean conversation and narrow ments, but whom, having passed the com- forms of literary education, they implicitly luded qualified to teach all that was to be ed from a scholar. He thought himself iently exalted by being placed at the same with his pupil, and had no other view to perpetuate his felicity by the utmost ility of submission to all my mother's ons and caprices. He frequently took my book, lest I should mope with too application, charged me never to write without turning up my ruffles, and generally brushed my coat before he dismissed me into the parlour.

He had no occasion to complain of too burdensome an employment; for my mother very judiciously considered, that I was not likely to grow politer in his company, and suffered me not to pass any more time in his apartment than my lesson required. When I was summoned to my task, she enjoined me not to get any of my tutor's ways, who was seldom mentioned before me but for practices to be avoided. I was every moment admonished not to lean on my chair, cross my legs, or swing my hands like my tutor; and once my mother very seriously deliberated upon his total dismission, because I began, she said, to learn his manner of sticking on my hat, and had his bend in my shoulders, and his totter in my gait.

Such, however, was her care, that I escaped all these depravities; and when I was only twelve years old, had rid myself of every appearance of childish diffidence. I was celebrated round the country for the petulance of my remarks, and the quickness of my replies; and many a scholar, five years older than myself, have I dashed into confusion by the steadiness of my countenance, silenced by my readiness of repartee, and tortured with envy by the address with which I picked up a fan, presented a snuff box, or received an empty tea-cup.

At fourteen I was completely skilled in all the niceties of dress, and I could not only enumerate all the variety of silks, and distinguish the product of a French loom, but dart my eye through a numerous company, and observe every deviation from the reigning mode. I was universally skilful in all the changes of expensive finery; but as every one, they say, has something to which he is particularly born, was eminently knowing in Brussels lace.

The next year saw me advanced to the trust and power of adjusting the ceremonial of an assembly. All received their partners from my hand, and to me every stranger applied for introduction. My heart now disdained the instructions of a tutor, who was rewarded with a small annuity for life, and left me qualified, in my own opinion, to govern myself.

In a short time I came to London, and as my father was well known among the higher classes of life, soon obtained admission to the most splendid assemblies and most crowded card-tables. Here I found myself universally caressed and applauded: the ladies praised the fancy of my clothes, the beauty of my form, and the softness of my voice; endeavoured in every place to force themselves to my notice; and invited by a thousand oblique solicitations, my attendance to the playhouse, and my salutations in the park. I was now happy to the utmost extent of my conception; I passed every morning in dress, every

afternoon in visits, and every night in some select assemblies, where neither care nor knowledge were suffered to molest us.

After a few years, however, these delights became familiar, and I had leisure to look round me with more attention. I then found that my flatterers had very little power to relieve the languor of satiety, or recreate weariness, by varied amusement; and therefore endeavoured to enlarge the sphere of my pleasures, and to try what satisfaction might be found in the society of men. I will not deny the mortification with which I perceived, that every man whose name I had heard mentioned with respect, received me with a kind of tenderness, nearly bordering on compassion; and that those whose reputation was not well established, thought it necessary to justify their understandings, by treating me with contempt. One of these witlings elevated his crest, by asking me in a full coffee-house the price of patches; and another whispered that he wondered why Miss Frisk did not keep me that afternoon to watch her squirrel.

When I found myself thus hunted from all masculine conversation by those who were themselves barely admitted, I returned to the ladies, and resolved to dedicate my life to their service and their pleasure. But I find that I have now lost my charms. Of those with whom I entered the gay world, some are married, some have retired, and some have so much changed their opinion, that they scarcely pay any regard to my civilities, if there is any other man in the place. The new flight of beauties to whom I have made my addresses, suffer me to pay the treat, and then titter with boys. So that I now find myself welcome only to a few grave ladies, who unacquainted with all that gives either use or dignity to life, are content to pass their hours between their bed and their cards, without esteem from the old, or reverence from the young.

I cannot but think, Mr. Rambler, that I have reason to complain; for surely the females ought to pay some regard to the age of him whose youth was passed in endeavours to please them. They that encourage folly in the boy, have no right to punish it in the man. Yet I find that, though they lavish their first fondness upon pertness and gayety, they soon transfer their regard to other qualities, and ungratefully abandon their adorers to dream out their last years in stupidity and contempt.

I am, &c.

FLORENTULUS.

No. 110.] SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 1751.

At nobis vitæ dominum quærentibus unum
Lux iter est, et clara dies, et gratia simplex.
Spem sequimur, gradimurque fide, fruimurque futuris.

Ad quæ non veniunt præsentis gaudia vitæ,
Hæc currunt pariter capta, et capienda voluptas.

PRUDENTIUS.

We through this maze of life one Lord obey;
Whose light and grace unerring, lead the way.
By hope and faith secure of future bliss,
Gladly the joys of present life we miss:
For baffled mortals still attempt in vain,
Present and future bliss at once to gain.

F. LEWIS.

THAT to please the Lord and father of the universe, is the supreme interest of created and dependent beings, as it is easily proved, has been universally confessed; and since all rational agents are conscious of having neglected or violated the duties prescribed to them, the fear of being rejected, or punished by God, has always burdened the human mind. The expiation of crimes, and renovation of the forfeited hopes of Divine favour, therefore constitute a large part of every religion.

The various methods of propitiation and atonement which fear and folly have dictated, or art fice and interest tolerated in the different parts of the world, however they may sometimes reproach or degrade humanity, at least show the general consent of all ages and nations in the opinion of the placability of the Divine nature That God will forgive, may, indeed, be established as the first and fundamental truth of religion for, though the knowledge of his existence is the origin of philosophy, yet, without the belief of his mercy, it would have little influence upon our moral conduct. There could be no prospect of enjoying the protection or regard of him whom the least deviation from rectitude made inexorable for ever; and every man would naturally withdraw his thoughts from the contemplation of a Creator, whom he must consider as a governor too pure to be pleased, and too severe to be pacified; as an enemy infinitely wise, and infinitely powerful, whom he could neither deceive, escape, nor resist.

Where there is no hope, there can be no endeavour. A constant and unfailing obedience is above the reach of terrestrial diligence; and therefore the progress of life could only have been the natural descent of negligent despair from crime to crime, had not the universal persuasion of forgiveness, to be obtained by proper means of reconciliation, recalled those to the paths of virtue whom their passions had solicited aside; and animated to new attempts, and firmer perseverance, those whom difficulty had discouraged, or negligence surprised.

In times and regions so disjoined from each other, that there can scarcely be imagined any communication of sentiments either by commerce or tradition, has prevailed a general and uniform expectation of propitiating God by corporal austerities, of anticipating his vengeance by voluntary inflictions, and appeasing his jus-

ce by a speedy and cheerful submission to a less enalty, when a greater is incurred.

Incorporated minds will always feel some in- ination towards exterior acts and ritual ob- rvances. Ideas not represented by sensible jects are fleeting, variable, and evanescent. 'e are not able to judge of the degree of con- ction which operated at any particular time pon our own thoughts, but as it is recorded by me certain and definite effect. He that re- ews his life in order to determine the proba- lity of his acceptance with God, if he could ce establish the necessary proportion between imes and sufferings, might securely rest upon s performance of the expiation; but, while fety remains the reward only of mental purity, is always afraid lest he should decide too n in his own favour, lest he should not have t the pangs of true contrition; lest he should stake satiety for detestation, or imagine that passions are subdued when they are only eping.

From this natural and reasonable diffidence ose, in humble and timorous piety, a disposi- n to confound penance with repentance, to ose on human determinations, and to receive m some judicial sentence the stated and re- ar assignment of reconciliatory pain. We never willing to be without resource: we k in the knowledge of others a succour for r own ignorance, and are ready to trust any t will undertake to direct us when we have confidence in ourselves.

This desire to ascertain by some outward rks the state of the soul, and this willingness alm the conscience by some settled method, ve produced, as they are diversified in their cts by various tempers and principles, most the disquisitions and rules, the doubts and itions, that have embarrassed the doctrine of entance, and perplexed tender and flexible nds with innumerable scruples concerning necessary measures of sorrow, and adequate rees of self-abhorrence; and these rules, cor- ted by fraud, or debased by credulity, have, the common resiliency of the mind from one eme to another, incited others to an open empt of all subsidiary ordinances, all pru- ial caution, and the whole discipline of re- ted piety.

epentance, however difficult to be practised, if it be explained without superstition, easily erstood. *Repentance is the relinquishment of practice, from the conviction that it has offended* .. Sorrow, and fear, and anxiety, are pro- y not parts, but adjuncts of repentance; yet are too closely connected with it to be easi- eparated; for they not only mark its sin- y, but promote its efficacy.

o man commits any act of negligence or inacy, by which his safety or happiness in world is endangered, without feeling the pungency of remorse. He who is fully convinced that he suffers by his own failure, can never forbear to trace back his miscarriage to its first cause, to image to himself a contrary behaviour, and to form involuntary resolutions against the like fault, even when he knows that he shall never again have the power of committing it. Danger, considered as imminent, naturally produces such trepidations of impatience as leave all human means of safety behind them: he that has once caught an alarm of terror, is every moment seized with useless anxieties, adding one security to another, trembling with sudden doubts, and distracted by the perpetual occurrence of new expedients. If, therefore, he whose crimes have deprived him of the favour of God, can reflect upon his conduct without disturbance, or can at will banish the reflection; if he who considers himself as suspended over the abyss of eternal perdition only by the thread of life, which must soon part by its own weakness, and which the wing of every minute may divide, can cast his eyes round him without shuddering with horror, or panting with security; what can he judge of himself, but that he is not yet awakened to sufficient conviction, since every loss is more lamented than the loss of the Divine favour, and every danger more dreaded than the danger of final condemnation?

Retirement from the cares and pleasures of the world has been often recommended as useful to repentance. This at least is evidence, that every one retires, whenever ratiocination and recollection are required on other occasions; and surely the retrospect of life, the disentanglement of actions complicated with innumerable circumstances, and diffused in various relations, the discovery of the primary movements of the heart, and the extirpation of lusts and appetites deeply rooted and widely spread, may be allowed to demand some secession from sport and noise, and business and folly. Some suspension of common affairs, some pause of temporal pain and pleasure, is doubtless necessary to him that deliberates for eternity, who is forming the only plan in which miscarriage cannot be repaired, and examining the only question in which mistake cannot be rectified.

Austerities and mortifications are means by which the mind is invigorated and roused, by which the attractions of pleasure are interrupted, and the chains of sensuality are broken. It is observed by one of the fathers, that *he who restrains himself in the use of things lawful, will never encroach upon things forbidden.* Abstinence, if nothing more, is, at least, a cautious retreat from the utmost verge of permission, and confers that security which cannot be reasonably hoped by him that dares always to hover over the precipice of destruction, or delights to approach the pleasures which he knows it fatal to

partake. Austerity is the proper antidote to indulgence; the diseases of mind as well as body are cured by contraries, and to contraries we should readily have recourse, if we dreaded guilt as we dread pain.

The completion and sum of repentance is a change of life. That sorrow which dictates no caution, that fear which does not quicken our escape, that austerity which fails to rectify our affections, are vain and unavailing. But sorrow and terror must naturally precede reformation; for what other cause can produce it? He, therefore, that feels himself alarmed by his conscience, anxious for the attainment of a better state, and afflicted by the memory of his past faults, may justly conclude, that the great work of repentance is begun, and hope by retirement and prayer, the natural and religious means of strengthening his conviction, to impress upon his mind such a sense of the Divine presence, as may overpower the blandishments of secular delights, and enable him to advance from one degree of holiness to another, till death shall set him free from doubt and contest, misery and temptation.

What better can we do, than prostrate fall
Before him reverent; and there confess
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears
Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek?

No. 111.] TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 1751.

Φρονῶν γὰρ ὁ ταχὺς οὐκ ἀσφαλής. SOPHOC.

Disaster always waits on early wit.

IT has been observed by long experience, that late springs produce the greatest plenty. The delay of blooms and fragrance, of verdure and breezes, is for the most part liberally recompensed by the exuberance and fecundity of the ensuing seasons; the blossoms which lie concealed till the year is advanced, and the sun is high, escape those chilling blasts, and nocturnal frosts, which are often fatal to early luxuriance, prey upon the first smiles of vernal beauty, destroy the feeble principles of vegetable life, intercept the fruit in the germ, and beat down the flowers unopened to the ground.

I am afraid there is little hope of persuading the young and sprightly part of my readers, upon whom the spring naturally forces my attention, to learn, from the great process of nature, the difference between diligence and hurry, between speed and precipitation; to prosecute their designs with calmness, to watch the concurrence of ὀpportunity, and endeavour to find the lucky moment which they cannot make. Youth is the time of enterprise and hope: having yet no occasion of comparing our force with any opposing power, we naturally form presumptions in our own favour, and imagine that obstruction and impediment will give way before us. The first repulses rather inflame vehemence than teach prudence; a brave and generous mind is long before it suspects its own weakness, or submits to sap the difficulties which it expected to subdue by storm. Before disappointments have enforced the dictates of philosophy, we believe it in our power to shorten the interval between the first cause and the last effect; we laugh at the timorous delays of plodding industry, and fancy that, by increasing the fire, we can at pleasure accelerate the projection.

At our entrance into the world, when health and vigour give us fair promises of time sufficient for the regular maturation of our schemes, and a long enjoyment of our acquisitions, we are eager to seize the present moment; we pluck every gratification within our reach, without suffering it to ripen into perfection, and crowd all the varieties of delight into a narrow compass; but age seldom fails to change our conduct; we grow negligent of time in proportion as we have less remaining, and suffer the last part of life to steal from us in languid preparations for future undertakings, or slow approaches to remote advantages, in weak hope of some fortuitous occurrence, or drowsy equilibrations of undetermined counsel: whether it be that the aged, having tasted the pleasures of man's condition and found them delusive, become less anxious for their attainment; or that frequent miscarriages have depressed them to despair, and frozen them to inactivity; or that death shocks them more as it advances upon them, and they are afraid to remind themselves of their decay, or to discover to their own hearts that the time of trifling is past.

A perpetual conflict with natural desire seems to be the lot of our present state. In youth we require something of the tardiness and frigidity of age; and in age we must labour to recal the fire and impetuosity of youth; for youth we must learn to expect, and in age to enjoy.

The torment of expectation is, indeed, not easily to be borne at a time when every idea of gratification fires the blood, and flashes on the fancy; when the heart is vacant to every fresh form of delight, and has no rival engagement to withdraw it from the importunities of a new desire. Yet, since the fear of missing what we seek, must always be proportionable to the happiness expected from possessing it, the passions even in this tempestuous state, might be somewhat moderated by frequent inculcation of the mischief of temerity, and the hazard of losing that which we endeavour to seize before our time.

He that too early aspires to honours, must

solve to encounter not only the opposition of terest, but the malignity of envy. He that is o eager to be rich, generally endangers his fore in wild adventures and uncertain projects; id he that hastens too speedily to reputation, ten raises his character by artifices and fallaes, decks himself in colours which quickly de, or in plumes which accident may shake , or competition pluck away.

The danger of early eminence has been extend- by some, even to the gifts of nature; and an inion has been long conceived, that quickness invention, accuracy of judgment, or extent of owledge, appearing before the usual time, pre- e a short life. Even those who are less in- ned to form general conclusions, from instan- which by their own nature must be rare, ve yet been inclined to prognosticate no suit- le progress from the first sallies of rapid wits; t have observed, that after a short effort they her loiter or faint, and suffer themselves to be passed by the even and regular perseverance slower understandings.

It frequently happens that applause abates igence. Whoever finds himself to have per- med more than was demanded, will be con- ted to spare the labour of unnecessary per- mances, and sit down to enjoy at ease his perfluities of honour. He whom success has de confident of his abilities, quickly claims privilege of negligence, and looks contemptu- ly on the gradual advances of a rival, whom imagines himself able to leave behind when- r he shall again summon his force to the con- t. But long intervals of pleasure dissipate ention, and weaken constancy; nor is it easy him that has sunk from diligence into sloth, rouse out of his lethargy, to recollect his no- ns, rekindle his curiosity, and engage with his mer ardour in the toils of study.

Even that friendship which intends the re- rd of genius too often tends to obstruct it. e pleasure of being caressed, distinguished, admired, easily seduces the student from rary solitude. He is ready to follow the call ich summons him to hear his own praise, and ich, perhaps, at once flatters his appetite with iainty of pleasures, and his ambition with es of patronage; pleasures which he con- es inexhaustible, and hopes which he has yet learned to distrust.

These evils, indeed, are by no means to be uted to nature, or considered as inseparable n an early display of uncommon abilities. y may be certainly escaped by prudence and blution, and must therefore be recounted ra- as consolations to those who are less liber- endowed, than as discouragements to such re born with uncommon qualities. Beauty ell known to draw after it the persecutions mpertinence, to incite the artifices of envy, to raise the flames of unlawful love; yet among the ladies whom prudence or modesty have made most eminent, who has ever complained of the inconveniences of an amiable form? or would have purchased safety by the loss of charms?

Neither grace of person, nor vigour of understanding, are to be regarded otherwise than as blessings, as means of happiness indulged by the Supreme Benefactor; but the advantages of either may be lost by too much eagerness to obtain them. A thousand beauties in their first blossom, by an imprudent exposure to the open world, have suddenly withered at the blast of infamy; and men who might have subjected new regions to the empire of learning, have been lured by the praise of their first productions from academical retirement, and wasted their days in vice and dependance. The virgin who too soon aspires to celebrity and conquest, perishes by childish vanity, ignorant credulity, or guiltless indiscretion. The genius who catches at laurels and preferment before his time, mocks the hopes that he had excited, and loses those years which might have been most usefully employed, the years of youth, of spirit, and vivacity.

It is one of the innumerable absurdities of pride, that we are never more impatient of direction, than in that part of life when we need it most; we are in haste to meet enemies whom we have not strength to overcome, and to undertake tasks which we cannot perform: and as he that once miscarries does not easily persuade mankind to favour another attempt, an ineffectual struggle for fame is often followed by perpetual obscurity.

No. 112.] SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 1751.

In mea vesanas habui dispendia vires,
Et valui pœnas fortis in ipse meas. OVID.

Of strength pernicious to myself I boast;
The powers I have were given me to my cost.
F. LEWIS.

WE are taught by Celsus, that health is best preserved by avoiding settled habits of life, and deviating sometimes into slight aberrations from the laws of medicine; by varying the proportions of food and exercise, interrupting the successions of rest and labour, and mingling hardships with indulgence. The body, long accustomed to stated quantities and uniform periods, is disordered by the smallest irregularity; and since we cannot adjust every day by the balance or barometer, it is fit sometimes to depart from rigid accuracy, that we may be able to comply with necessary affairs, or strong inclinations. He that too long observes nice punctualities, condemns himself to voluntary imbecility, and will not long escape the miseries of disease.

The same laxity of regimen is equally necessary to intellectual health, and to a perpetual

susceptibility of occasional pleasure. Long confinement to the same company, which perhaps similitude of taste brought first together, quickly contracts his faculties, and makes a thousand things offensive that are in themselves indifferent; a man accustomed to hear only the echo of his own sentiments, soon bars all the common avenues of delight, and has no part in the general gratification of mankind.

In things which are not immediately subject to religious or moral consideration, it is dangerous to be too long or too rigidly in the right. Sensibility may by an incessant attention to elegance and propriety, be quickened to a tenderness inconsistent with the condition of humanity, irritable by the smallest asperity, and vulnerable by the gentlest touch. He that pleases himself too much with minute exactness, and submits to endure nothing in accommodations, attendance, or address, below the point of perfection, will, whenever he enters the crowd of life, be harassed with innumerable distresses, from which those who have not in the same manner increased their sensations find no disturbance. His exotic softness will shrink at the coarseness of vulgar felicity, like a plant transplanted to northern nurseries, from the dews and sunshine of the tropical regions.

There will always be a wide interval between practical and ideal excellence; and therefore, if we allow not ourselves to be satisfied while we can perceive any error or defect, we must refer our hopes of ease to some other period of existence. It is well known, that exposed to a microscope, the smoothest polish of the most solid bodies discovers cavities and prominences; and that the softest bloom of roseate virginity repels the eye with excrescences and discolourations. The perceptions as well as the senses may be improved to our own disquiet, and we may, by diligent cultivation of the powers of dislike, raise in time an artificial fastidiousness, which shall fill the imagination with phantoms of turpitude, show us the naked skeleton of every delight, and present us only with the pains of pleasure, and the deformities of beauty.

Peevishness, indeed, would perhaps very little disturb the peace of mankind, were it always the consequence of superfluous delicacy: for it is the privilege only of deep reflection or lively fancy, to destroy happiness by art and refinement. But by continual indulgence of a particular humour, or by long enjoyment of undisputed superiority, the dull and thoughtless may likewise acquire the power of tormenting themselves and others, and become sufficiently ridiculous or hateful to those who are within sight of their conduct, or reach of their influence.

They that have grown old in a single state are generally found to be morose, fretful and captious; tenacious of their own practices and maxims; soon offended by contradiction or negligence; and impatient of any association, but with those that will watch their nod, and submit themselves to unlimited authority. Such is the effect of having lived without the necessity of consulting any inclination but their own.

The irascibility of this class of tyrants is generally exerted upon petty provocations, such as are incident to understandings not far extended beyond the instincts of animal life; but, unhappily, he that fixes his attention on things always before him, will never have long cessation of anger. There are many veterans of luxury upon whom every noon brings a paroxysm of violence, fury, and execration; they never sit down to their dinner without finding the meat so injudiciously bought, or so unskilfully dressed, such blunders in the seasoning, or such improprieties in the sauce, as can scarcely be expiated without blood; and in the transports of resentment, make very little distinction between guilt and innocence, but let fly their menaces, or growl out their discontent, upon all whom fortune exposes to the storm.

It is not easy to imagine a more unhappy condition than that of dependance on a peevish man. In every other state of inferiority the certainty of pleasing is perpetually increased by a fuller knowledge of our duty; and kindness and confidence are strengthened by every new act of trust, and proof of fidelity. But peevishness sacrifices to a momentary offence the obsequiousness or usefulness of half a life, and as more is performed, increases her exactions.

Chrysalus gained a fortune by trade, and retired into the country; and, having a brother burdened by the number of his children, adopted one of his sons. The boy was dismissed with many prudent admonitions; informed of his father's inability to maintain him in his native rank; cautioned against all opposition to the opinions or precepts of his uncle; and animated to perseverance by the hopes of supporting the honour of the family, and overtopping his elder brother. He had a natural ductility of mind, without much warmth of affection, or elevation of sentiment; and therefore readily complied with every variety of caprice; patiently endured contradictory reproofs; heard false accusations without pain, and opprobrious reproaches without reply; laughed obstreperously at the ninetieth repetition of a joke; asked questions about the universal decay of trade; admired the strength of those heads by which the price of stocks is changed and adjusted; and behaved with such prudence and circumspection, that after six years the will was made, and Juvenculus was declared heir. But unhappily, a month afterwards, retiring at night from his uncle's chamber, he left the door open behind

'm: the old man tore his will, and being then ·erceptibly declining, for want of time to delib·rate, left his money to a trading company.

When female minds are embittered by age or olitude, their malignity is generally exerted in rigorous and spiteful superintendence of do·estic trifles. Eriphile has employed her elo·uence for twenty years upon the degeneracy of ervants, the nastiness of her house, the ruin of er furniture, the difficulty of preserving tap·stry from the moths and the carelessness of the ·uts whom she employs in brushing it. It is er business every morning to visit all the ·ooms, in hopes of finding a chair without its over, a window shut or open contrary to her ·ders, a spot on the hearth, or a feather on the oor, that the rest of the day may be justifiably ·ent in taunts of contempt and vociferations of ·ger. She lives for no other purpose but to reserve the neatness of a house and gardens, ·d feels neither inclination to pleasure, nor as·ration after virtue, while she is engrossed by ·e great employment of keeping gravel from ·ass and wainscoat from dust. Of three amiable nieces she has declared herself an irreconcileable enemy to one, because she broke off a ·lip with her hoop; to another, because she spilt ·r coffee on a Turkey carpet; and to the third, ·cause she let a wet dog run into the parlour. ·he has broken off her intercourse of visits, be·use company makes a house dirty; and re·lves to confine herself more to her own af·irs, and to live no longer in mire by foolish ·nity.

Peevishness is generally the vice of narrow ·inds, and except when it is the effect of an·ish and disease, by which the resolution is ·oken, and the mind made too feeble to bear ·e lightest addition to its miseries, proceeds ·om an unreasonable persuasion of the import·ce of trifles. The proper remedy against it is, ·consider the dignity of human nature, and ·e folly of suffering perturbation and uneasi·ss from causes unworthy of our notice.

He that resigns his peace to little casualties, ·d suffers the course of his life to be interrupt·d by fortuitous inadvertencies, or offences, de·ers up himself to the direction of the wind, ·d loses all that constancy and equanimity ·hich constitute the chief praise of a wise man. The province of prudence lies between the ·eatest things and the least: some surpass our ·ew by their magnitude, and some escape our ·tice by their number and their frequency. But ·e indispensable business of life will afford suf·ent exercise to every understanding; and ·ch is the limitation of the human powers, that ·attention to trifles, we must let things of im·tance pass unobserved: when we examine a ·te with a glass, we see nothing but a mite.

That it is every man's interest to be pleased, ·ll need little proof: that it is his interest to please others, experience will inform him. It is therefore not less necessary to happiness than to virtue, that he rid his mind of passions which make him uneasy to himself, and hateful to the world, which enchain his intellects, and obstruct his improvement.

No. 113.] TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 1751.

——Uxorem, Posthume, ducis?
Die qua Tisiphone, quibus exagitare colubris?
JUV.

A sober man like thee to change his life!
What fury would possess thee with a wife?
DRYDEN

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I KNOW not whether it is always a proof of innocence to treat censure with contempt. We owe so much reverence to the wisdom of mankind, as justly to wish, that our own opinion of our merit may be ratified by the concurrence of others' suffrages; and since guilt and infamy must have the same effect upon intelligences unable to pierce beyond external appearance, and influenced often rather by example than precept, we are obliged to refute a false charge, lest we should countenance the crime which we have never committed. To turn away from an accusation with supercilious silence, is equally in the power of him that is hardened by villany, and inspirited by innocence. The wall of brass which Horace erects upon a clear conscience, may be sometimes raised by impudence or power; and we should always wish to preserve the dignity of virtue by adorning her with graces which wickedness cannot assume.

For this reason I have determined no longer to endure, with either patient or sullen resignation, a reproach, which is, at least in my opinion, unjust; but will lay my case honestly before you, that you or your readers may at length decide it.

Whether you will be able to preserve your boasted impartiality, when you hear, that I am considered as an adversary by half the female world, you may surely pardon me for doubting, notwithstanding the veneration to which you may imagine yourself entitled by your age, your learning, your abstraction, or your virtue. Beauty, Mr. Rambler, has often overpowered the resolutions of the firm, and the reasonings of the wise, roused the old to sensibility, and subdued the rigorous to softness.

I am one of those unhappy beings, who have been marked out as husbands for many different women, and deliberated a hundred times on the brink of matrimony. I have discussed all the nuptial preliminaries so often, that I can repeat

the forms in which jointures are settled, pin-money secured, and provisions for younger children ascertained; but am at last doomed by general consent to everlasting solitude, and excluded by an irreversible decree from all hopes of connubial felicity. I am pointed out by every mother as a man whose visits cannot be admitted without reproach; who raises hopes only to embitter disappointment, and makes offers only to seduce girls into a waste of that part of life in which they might gain advantageous matches, and become mistresses and mothers.

I hope you will think, that some part of this penal severity may justly be remitted, when I inform you, that I never yet professed love to a woman without sincere intentions of marriage; that I have never continued an appearance of intimacy from the hour that my inclination changed, but to preserve her whom I was leaving from the shock of abruptness, or the ignominy of contempt; that I always endeavoured to give the ladies an opportunity of seeming to discard me; and that I never forsook a mistress for larger fortune, or brighter beauty, but because I discovered some irregularity in her conduct, or some depravity in her mind; not because I was charmed by another, but because I was offended by herself.

I was very early tired of that succession of amusements by which the thoughts of most young men are dissipated, and had not long glittered in the splendour of an ample patrimony before I wished for the calm of domestic happiness. Youth is naturally delighted with sprightliness and ardour, and therefore I breathed out the sighs of my first affection at the feet of the gay, the sparkling, the vivacious Ferocula. I fancied to myself a perpetual source of happiness in wit never exhausted, and spirit never depressed; looked with veneration on her readiness of expedients, contempt of difficulty, assurance of address, and promptitude of reply; considered her as exempt by some prerogative of nature from the weakness and timidity of female minds; and congratulated myself upon a companion superior to all common troubles and embarrassments. I was, indeed, somewhat disturbed by the unshaken perseverance with which she enforced her demands of an unreasonable settlement; yet I should have consented to pass my life in union with her, had not my curiosity led me to a crowd gathered in the street, where I found Ferocula, in the presence of hundreds, disputing for sixpence with a chairman. I saw her in so little need of assistance, that it was no breach of the laws of chivalry to forbear interposition, and I spared myself the shame of owning her acquaintance. I forgot some point of ceremony at our next interview, and soon provoked her to forbid me her presence.

My next attempt was upon a lady of great eminence for learning and philosophy. I had frequently observed the barrenness and uniformity of connubial conversation, and therefore thought highly of my own prudence and discernment, when I selected from a multitude of wealthy beauties, the deep-read Misothea, who declared herself the inexorable enemy of ignorant pertness and puerile levity; and scarcely condescended to make tea, but for the linguist, the geometrician, the astronomer, or the poet. The queen of the Amazons was only to be gained by the hero who could conquer her in single combat; and Misothea's heart was only to bless the scholar who could overpower her by disputation. Amidst the fondest transports of courtship she could call for a definition of terms, and treated every argument with contempt that could not be reduced to regular syllogism. You may easily imagine, that I wished this courtship at an end; but when I desired her to shorten my torments, and fix the day of my felicity, we we were led into a long conversation, in which Misothea endeavoured to demonstrate the folly of attributing choice and self-direction to any human being. It was not difficult to discover the danger of committing myself for ever to the arms of one who might at any time mistake the dictates of passion, or the calls of appetite, for the decree of fate; or consider cuckoldom as necessary to the general system, as a link to the everlasting chain of successive causes. I therefore told her, that destiny had ordained us to part, and that nothing should have torn me from her but the talons of necessity.

I then solicited the regard of the calm, the prudent, the economical Sophronia, a lady who considered wit as dangerous, and learning as superfluous, and thought that the woman who kept her house clean, and her accounts exact, took receipts for every payment, and could find them at a sudden call, inquired nicely after the condition of the tenants, read the price of stocks once a-week, and purchased every thing at the best market, could want no accomplishments necessary to the happiness of a wise man. She discoursed with great solemnity on the care and vigilance which the superintendence of a family demands; observed how many were ruined by confidence in servants; and told me that she never expected honesty but from a strong chest, and that the best storekeeper was the mistress's eye. Many such oracles of generosity she uttered, and made every day new improvements in her schemes for the regulation of her servants, and the distribution of her time. I was convinced that, whatever I might suffer from Sophronia, I should escape poverty; and we therefore proceeded to adjust the settlements according to her own rule, *fair and softly*. But one morning her maid came to me in tears to intreat my interest for a reconciliation to her mistress, who had turned her out at night for breaking six teeth in a tortoise-shell comb: she had attended her

dy from a distant province, and having not ved long enough to save much money, was stitute among strangers, and, though of a od family, in danger of perishing in the reets, or of being compelled by hunger to pro-itution. I made no scruple of promising to store her; but upon my first application to phronia, was answered with an air which lled for approbation, that if she neglected her vn affairs, I might suspect her of neglecting ine; that the comb stood her in three half-owns; that no servant should wrong her rice; and that indeed she took the first oppor-nity of parting with Phillida, because, though e was honest, her constitution was bad, and e thought her very likely to fall sick. Of r conference I need not tell you the effect; it rely may be forgiven me, if on this occasion orgot the decency of common forms.

From two more ladies I was disengaged by ding that they entertained my rivals at the me time, and determined their choice by the erality of our sentiments. Another I thought self justified in forsaking, because she gave attorney a bribe to favour her at the bar-n; another because I could never soften her to derness, till she heard that most of my fami-had died young; and another, because, to in-ase her fortune by expectations, she repre-nted her sister as languishing and consump-e.

I shall in another letter give the remaining rt of my history of courtship. I presume t I should hitherto have injured the majesty female virtue, had I not hoped to transfer my ection to higher merit.

I am, &c.

HYMENÆUS.

. 114.] SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 1751.

——Audi,
Nulla unquam de morte hominis cunctatio longa est.
JUV.

—When man's life is in debate,
he judge can ne'er too long deliberate.
DRYDEN.

WER and superiority are so flattering and de-tful, that, fraught with temptation and ex-ed to danger as they are, scarcely any virtue o cautious, or any prudence so timorous, as decline them. Even those that have most erence for the laws of right, are pleased with wing that not fear, but choice, regulates their aviour; and would be thought to comply, ier than obey. We love to overlook the ndaries which we do not wish to pass; and, he Roman satirist remarks, he that has no go to take the life of another, is yet glad to e it in his hands.

From the same principle, tending yet more to degeneracy and corruption, proceeds the desire of investing lawful authority with terror, and governing by force rather than persuasion. Pride is unwilling to believe the necessity of assigning any other reason than her own will; and would rather maintain the most equitable claims by violence and penalties, than descend from the dignity of command to dispute and expostulation.

It may, I think, be suspected, that this political arrogance has sometimes found its way into legislative assemblies, and mingled with deliberations upon property and life. A slight perusal of the laws by which the measures of vindictive and coercive justice are established, will discover so many disproportions between crimes and punishments, such capricious distinctions of guilt, and such confusion of remissness and severity, as can scarcely be believed to have been produced by public wisdom, sincerely and calmly studious of public happiness.

The learned, the judicious, the pious Boerhaave relates, that he never saw a criminal dragged to execution without asking himself, "Who knows whether this man is not less culpable than me?" On the days when the prisons of this city are emptied into the grave, let every spectator of the dreadful procession put the same question to his own heart. Few among those who crowd in thousands to the legal massacre, and look with carelessness, perhaps with triumph, on the utmost exacerbations of human misery, would then be able to return without horror and dejection. For, who can congratulate himself upon a life passed without some act more mischievous to the peace or prosperity of others, than the theft of a piece of money?

It has been always the practice, when any particular species of robbery becomes prevalent and common, to endeavour its suppression by capital denunciations. Thus, one generation of malefactors is commonly cut off, and their successors are frightened into new expedients; the art of thievery is augmented with greater variety of fraud, and subtilized to higher degrees of dexterity, and more occult methods of conveyance. The law then renews the pursuit in the heat of anger, and overtakes the offender again with death. By this practice, capital inflictions are multiplied, and crimes, very different in their degrees of enormity, are equally subjected to the severest punishment that man has the power of exercising upon man.

The lawgiver is undoubtedly allowed to estimate the malignity of an offence, not merely by the loss or pain which single acts may produce, but by the general alarm and anxiety arising from the fear of mischief, and insecurity of possession: he therefore exercises the right which societies are supposed to have over the lives of those that compose them, not simply to punish

a transgression, but to maintain order, and preserve quiet; he enforces those laws with severity that are most in danger of violation, as the commander of a garrison doubles the guard on that side which is threatened by the enemy.

This method has been long tried, but tried with so little success, that rapine and violence are hourly increasing, yet few seem willing to despair of its efficacy, and of those who employ their speculations upon the present corruption of the people, some propose the introduction of more horrid, lingering, and terrific punishments; some are inclined to accelerate the executions; some to discourage pardon; and all seem to think that lenity has given confidence to wickedness, and that we can only be rescued from the talons of robbery by inflexible rigour, and sanguinary justice.

Yet since the right of setting an uncertain and arbitrary value upon life has been disputed, and since experience of past times gives us little reason to hope that any reformation will be effected by a periodical havoc of our fellow-beings, perhaps it will not be useless to consider what consequences might arise from relaxations of the law, and a more rational and equitable adaptation of penalties to offences.

Death is, as one of the ancients observes, τὸ τῶν φοβερῶν φοβερώτατον, *of dreadful things the most dreadful*; an evil beyond which nothing can be threatened by sublunary power, or feared from human enmity or vengeance. This terror should, therefore, be reserved as the last resort of authority, as the strongest and most operative of prohibitory sanctions, and placed before the treasure of life, to guard from invasion what cannot be restored. To equal robbery with murder is to reduce murder to robbery, to confound in common minds the gradations of iniquity, and incite the commission of a greater crime to prevent the detection of a less. If only murder were punished with death, very few robbers would stain their hands with blood; but when by the last act of cruelty, no new danger is incurred, and greater security may be obtained, upon what principle shall we bid them forbear?

It may be urged, that the sentence is often mitigated to simple robbery; but surely this is to confess that our laws are unreasonable in our own opinion; and, indeed, it may be observed, that all but murderers have, at their last hour, the common sensations of mankind pleading in their favour. From this conviction of the inequality of the punishment to the offence, proceeds the frequent solicitation of pardons. They who would rejoice at the correction of a thief, are yet shocked at the thought of destroying him. His crime shrinks to nothing, compared with his misery; and severity defeats itself by exciting pity.

The gibbet, indeed, certainly, disables those who die upon it from infesting the community; but their death seems not to contribute more to the reformation of their associates, than any other method of separation. A thief seldom passes much of his time in recollection or anticipation, but from robbery hastens to riot, and from riot to robbery; nor, when the grave closes upon his companion, has any other care than to find another.

The frequency of capital punishments, therefore, rarely hinders the commission of a crime, but naturally and commonly prevents its detection, and is, if we proceed only upon prudential principles, chiefly for that reason to be avoided. Whatever may be urged by casuists or politicians, the greater part of mankind, as they can never think that to pick the pocket and to pierce the heart is equally criminal, will scarcely believe that two malefactors so different in guilt can be justly doomed to the same punishment; nor is the necessity of submitting the conscience to human laws so plainly evinced, so clearly stated, or so generally allowed, but that the pious, the tender, and the just, will always scruple to concur with the community in an act which their private judgment cannot approve.

He who knows not how often rigorous laws produce total impunity, and how many crimes are concealed and forgotten for fear of hurrying the offender to that state in which there is no repentance, has conversed very little with mankind. And whatever epithets of reproach or contempt this compassion may incur from those who confound cruelty with firmness, I know not whether any wise man would wish it less powerful, or less extensive.

If those whom the wisdom of our laws has condemned to die, had been detected in the rudiments of robbery, they might, by proper discipline and useful labour, have been disentangled from their habits, they might have escaped all the temptations to subsequent crimes, and passed their days in reparation and penitence, and detected they might all have been, had the prosecutors been certain that their lives would have been spared. I believe, every thief will confess, that he has been more than once seized and dismissed; and that he has sometimes ventured upon capital crimes, because he knew, that those whom he injured would rather connive at his escape, than cloud their minds with the horrors of his death.

All laws against wickedness are ineffectual unless some will inform, and some will prosecute; but till we mitigate the penalties for mere violations of property, information will always be hated, and prosecution dreaded. The heart of a good man cannot but recoil at the thought of punishing a slight injury with death, especially when he remembers, that the thief might have procured safety by another crime.

om which he was restrained only by his re-
aining virtue.

The obligations to assist the exercise of public
stice are indeed strong; but they will certainly
overpowered by tenderness for life. What is
nished with severity contrary to our ideas of
equate retribution, will be seldom discovered;
d multitudes will be suffered to advance from
ime to crime, till they deserve death, because,
they had been sooner prosecuted, they would
ve suffered death before they deserved it.

This scheme of invigorating the laws by re-
xation, and extirpating wickedness by lenity,
so remote from common practice, that I might
asonably fear to expose it to the public, could
be supported only by my own observations:
shall, therefore, by ascribing it to its author,
r Thomas More, endeavour to procure it that
tention, which I wish always paid to pru-
nce, to justice, and to mercy.

. 115.] TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 1751.

adam parva quidem, sed non toleranda maritis.
JUV.

Some faults though small, intolerable grow.
DRYDEN.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

IT down, in pursuance of my late engagement,
recount the remaining part of the adventures
t befel me in my long quest of conjugal felici-
which, though I have not yet been so happy
to obtain it, I have at least endeavoured to
erve by unwearied diligence, without suffer-
from repeated disappointments any abate-
nt of my hope, or repression of my activity.
You must have observed in the world a spe-
s of mortals who employ themselves in pro-
ting matrimony, and without any visible
tive of interest or vanity, without any dis-
erable impulse of malice or benevolence,
thout any reason but that they want objects
ttention and topics of conversation, are in-
antly busy in procuring wives and husbands.
ey fill the ears of every single man and wo-
n with some convenient match; and when
y are informed of your age and fortune, offer
rtner for life, with the same readiness, and
same indifference, as a salesman, when he
taken measure by his eye, fits his customer
h a coat.

t might be expected that they should soon be
couraged from this officious interposition by
ntment or contempt; and that every man
uld determine the choice on which so much
is happiness must depend, by his own judg-
t and observation; yet it happens, that as
se proposals are generally made with a show
indness, they seldom provoke anger, but are at
worst heard with patience, and forgotten. They influence weak minds to approbation; for many are sure to find in a new acquaintance, whatever qualities report has taught them to expect; and in more powerful and active understandings they excite curiosity, and sometimes by a lucky chance, bring persons of similar tempers within the attraction of each other.

I was known to possess a fortune, and to want a wife; and therefore was frequently attended by these Hymeneal solicitors, with whose importunity I was sometimes diverted, and sometimes perplexed; for they contended for me as vultures for a carcass; each employing all his eloquence, and all his artifices, to enforce and promote his own scheme, from the success of which he was to receive no other advantage than the pleasure of defeating others equally eager and equally industrious.

An invitation to sup with one of those busy friends, made me, by a concerted chance, acquainted with Camilla, by whom it was expected that I should be suddenly and irresistibly enslaved. The lady whom the same kindness had brought without her own concurrence into the lists of love, seemed to think me at least worthy of the honour of captivity; and exerted the power, both of her eyes and wit, with so much art and spirit, that though I had been too often deceived by appearances to devote myself irrevocably at the first interview, yet I could not suppress some raptures of admiration, and flutters of desire. I was easily persuaded to make nearer approaches; but soon discovered that a union with Camilla was not much to be wished. Camilla professed a boundless contempt for the folly, levity, ignorance, and impertinence of her own sex; and very frequently expressed her wonder that men of learning or experience could submit to trifle away life with beings incapable of solid thought. In mixed companies she always associated with the men, and declared her satisfaction when the ladies retired. If any short excursion into the country was proposed, she commonly insisted upon the exclusion of women from the party; because, where they were admitted, the time was wasted in frothy compliments, weak indulgences, and idle ceremonies. To show the greatness of her mind, she avoided all compliance with the fashion; and to boast the profundity of her knowledge, mistook the various textures of silk, confounded tabbies with damasks, and sent for ribands by wrong names. She despised the commerce of stated visits, a farce of empty form without instruction; and congratulated herself, that she never learned to write message cards. She often applauded the noble sentiment of Plato, who rejoiced that he was born a man rather than a woman; proclaimed her approbation of Swift's opinion, that women are only a higher species of monkeys; and confessed, that when she considered the be-

haviour, or heard the conversation of her sex, she could not but forgive the Turks for suspecting them to want souls.

It was the joy and pride of Camilla to have provoked, by this insolence, all the rage of hatred, and all the persecutions of calumny; nor was she ever more elevated with her own superiority, than when she talked of female anger and female cunning. Well, says she, has nature provided that such virulence should be disabled by folly, and such cruelty be restrained by impotence.

Camilla doubtless expected, that what she lost on one side, she should gain on the other; and imagined that every male heart would be open to a lady, who made such generous advances to the borders of virility. But man, ungrateful man, instead of springing forward to meet her, shrunk back at her approach. She was persecuted by the ladies as a deserter, and at best received by the men only as a fugitive. I, for my part, amused myself a while with her fopperies, but novelty soon gave way to detestation, for nothing out of the common order of nature can be long borne. I had no inclination to a wife who had the ruggedness of a man without his force, and the ignorance of a woman without her softness; nor could I think my quiet and honour to be entrusted to such audacious virtue as was hourly courting danger, and soliciting assault.

My next mistress was Nitella, a lady of gentle mien, and soft voice, always speaking to approve, and ready to receive direction from those with whom chance had brought her into company. In Nitella I promised myself an easy friend, with whom I might loiter away the day without disturbance or altercation. I therefore soon resolved to address her, but was discouraged from prosecuting my courtship, by observing, that her apartments were superstitiously regular; and that, unless she had notice of my visit, she was never to be seen. There is a kind of anxious cleanliness which I have always noted as the characteristic of a slattern; it is the superfluous scrupulosity of guilt, dreading discovery, and shunning suspicion; it is the violence of an effort against habit, which being impelled by external motives, cannot stop at the middle point.

Nitella was always tricked out rather with nicety than elegance; and seldom could forbear to discover by her uneasiness and constraint, that her attention was burdened, and her imagination engrossed: I therefore concluded, that being only occasionally and ambitiously dressed, she was not familiarized to her own ornaments. There are so many competitors for the fame of cleanliness, that it is not hard to gain information of those that fail, from those that desire to excel; I quickly found, that Nitella passed her time between finery and dirt; and was always in a wrapper, nightcap, and slippers, when she was not decorated for immediate show.

I was then led by my evil destiny to Charybdis, who never neglected an opportunity of seizing a new prey when it came within her reach. I thought myself quickly made happy by permission to attend her to public places, and pleased my own vanity with imagining the envy which I should raise in a thousand hearts, by appearing as the acknowledged favourite of Charybdis. She soon after hinted her intention to take a ramble for a fortnight, into a part of the kingdom which she had never seen. I solicited the happiness of accompanying her which, after a short reluctance, was indulged me. She had no other curiosity on her journey, than after all possible means of expense, and was every moment taking occasion to mention some delicacy, which I knew it my duty upon such notices to procure.

After our return, being now more familiar, she told me, whenever we met, of some new diversion; at night she had notice of a charming company that would breakfast in the gardens; and in the morning had been informed of some new song in the opera, some new dress at the playhouse, or some performer at a concert whom she longed to hear. Her intelligence was such, that there never was a show, to which she did not summon me on the second day; and as she hated a crowd, and could not go alone, I was obliged to attend at some intermediate hour, and pay the price of a whole company. When we passed the streets, she was often charmed with some trinket in the toyshops; and, from moderate desires of seals and snuff-boxes, rose, by degrees, to gold and diamonds. I now began to find the smile of Charybdis too costly for a private purse, and added one more to six-and-forty lovers, whose fortune and patience her rapacity had exhausted.

Imperia then took possession of my affections, but kept them only for a short time. She had newly inherited a large fortune, and having spent the earlier part of her life in the perusal of romances, brought with her into the gay world all the pride of Cleopatra; expected nothing less than vows, altars, and sacrifices; and thought her charms dishonoured, and her power infringed, by the softest opposition to her sentiments, or the smallest transgression of her commands. Time might indeed cure this species of pride in a mind not naturally undiscerning, and vitiated only by false representations; but the operations of time are slow; and I therefore left her to grow wise at leisure, or to continue in error at her own expense.

Thus I have hitherto, in spite of myself, passed my life in frozen celibacy. My friends, indeed, often tell me, that I flatter my imagination with higher hopes than human nature can gratify; that I dress up an ideal charmer in all

he radiance of perfection, and then enter the world to look for the same excellence in corporeal beauty. But surely, Mr. Rambler, it s not madness to hope for some terrestrial lady instained with the spots which I have been lescribing; at least, I am resolved to pursue ny search; for I am so far from thinking meanly of marriage, that I believe it able to afford the highest happiness decreed to our present state; and if, after all these miscarriages, find a woman that fills up my expectation, ou shall hear once more from

Yours, &c.

Hymenæus.

No. 116.] Saturday, April 27, 1751.

ptat ephippia bos piger; optat arare caballus.

Hor.

Thus the slow ox would gaudy trappings claim;
The sprightly horse would plough.—— Francis.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

I was the second son of a country gentleman by e daughter of a wealthy citizen of London. y father having by his marriage freed the tate from a heavy mortgage, and paid his sis- rs their portions, thought himself discharged m all obligation to further thought, and enled to spend the rest of his life in rural pleasres. He therefore spared nothing that might ntribute to the completion of his felicity; he ocured the best guns and horses that the kingm could supply, paid large salaries to his om and huntsman, and became the envy of country for the discipline of his hounds. t, above all his other attainments, he was inent for a breed of pointers and setting-dogs, hich by long and vigilant cultivation he had much improved, that not a partridge or thcock could rest in security; and game of atever species, that dared to light upon his nor, was beaten down by his shot, or covered h his nets.

My elder brother was very early initiated in chace, and, at an age when other boys are *ping like snails unwillingly to school*, he could d the horn, beat the bushes, bound over ges, and swim rivers. When the huntsn one day broke his leg, he supplied his place h equal abilities, and came home with the t in his hat, amidst the acclamations of the ole village. I being either delicate or timis, less desirous of honour, or less capable of an heroism, was always the favourite of my her; because I kept my coat clean, and my plexion free from freckles; and did not e home, like my brother, mired and tanned, carry corn in my hat to the horse, nor bring y curs into the parlour.

My mother had not been taught to amuse herself with books, and being much inclined to despise the ignorance and barbarity of the country ladies, disdained to learn their sentiments or conversation, and had made no addition to the notions which she had brought from the precincts of Cornhill. She was, therefore, always recounting the glories of the city; enumerating the succession of mayors; celebrating the magnificence of the banquets at Guildhall; and relating the civilities paid her at the companies' feasts by men, of whom some are now made aldermen, some have fined for sheriffs, and none are worth less than forty thousand pounds. She frequently displayed her father's greatness; told of the large bills which he had paid at sight; of the sums for which his word would pass upon the Exchange; the heaps of gold which he used on Saturday night to toss about with a shovel; the extent of his warehouse, and the strength of his doors; and when she relaxed her imagination with lower subjects, described the furniture of their country-house, or repeated the wit of the clerks and porters.

By these narratives I was fired with the splendour and dignity of London, and of trade. I therefore devoted myself to a shop, and warmed my imagination from year to year with inquiries about the privileges of a freeman, the power of the common council, the dignity of a wholesale dealer, and the grandeur of mayoralty, to which my mother assured me that many had arrived who began the world with less than myself.

I was very impatient to enter into a path, which led to such honour and felicity; but was forced for a time to endure some repression of my eagerness, for it was my grandfather's maxim, that *a young man seldom makes much money, who is out of his time before two-and-twenty*. They thought it necessary, therefore, to keep me at home till the proper age, without any other employment than that of learning merchants' accounts, and the art of regulating books; but at length the tedious days elapsed, I was transplanted to town, and, with great satisfaction to myself, bound to a haberdasher.

My master, who had no conception of any virtue, merit, or dignity, but that of being rich, had all the good qualities which naturally arise from a close and unwearied attention to the main chance; his desire to gain wealth was so well tempered by the vanity of showing it, that, without any other principle of action, he lived in the esteem of the whole commercial world; and was always treated with respect by the only men, whose good opinion he valued or solicited, those who were universally allowed to be richer than himself.

By his instructions I learned in a few weeks to handle a yard with great dexterity, to wind tape neatly upon the ends of my fingers, and to

make up parcels with exact frugality of paper and packthread; and soon caught from my fellow-apprentices the true grace of a counter-bow, the careless air with which a small pair of scales is to be held between the fingers, and the vigour and sprightliness with which the box, after the riband has been cut, is returned into its place. Having no desire of any higher employment, and therefore applying all my powers to the knowledge of my trade, I was quickly master of all that could be known, became a critic in small wares, contrived new variations of figures, and new mixtures of colours, and was sometimes consulted by the weavers, when they projected fashions for the ensuing spring.

With all these accomplishments, in the fourth year of my apprenticeship I paid a visit to my friends in the country, where I expected to be received as a new ornament of the family, and consulted by the neighbouring gentlemen as a master of pecuniary knowledge, and by the ladies as an oracle of the mode. But unhappily, at the first public table, to which I was invited, appeared a student of the Temple, and an officer of the guards, who looked upon me with a smile of contempt, which destroyed at once all my hopes of distinction, so that I durst hardly raise my eyes for fear of encountering their superiority of mien. Nor was my courage revived by any opportunities of displaying my knowledge; for the templar entertained the company for part of the day with historical narratives and political observations; and the colonel afterwards detailed the adventures of a birth-night, told the claims and expectations of the courtiers, and gave an account of assemblies, gardens, and diversions. I, indeed, essayed to fill up a pause in a parliamentary debate with a faint mention of trade and Spaniards; and once attempted, with some warmth, to correct a gross mistake about a silver breast-knot; but neither of my antagonists seemed to think a reply necessary; they resumed their discourse without emotion, and again engrossed the attention of the company; nor did one of the ladies appear desirous to know my opinion of her dress, or to hear how long the carnation shot with white, that was then new amongst them, had been antiquated in town.

As I knew that neither of these gentlemen had more money than myself, I could not discover what had depressed me in their presence; nor why they were considered by others as more worthy of attention and respect: and therefore resolved, when we met again, to rouse my spirit, and force myself into notice. I went very early to the next weekly meeting, and was entertaining a small circle very successfully with a minute representation of my lord mayor's show, when the colonel entered careless and gay, sat down with a kind of unceremonious civility, and without appearing to intend any interruption, drew my audience away to the other part of the room, to which I had not the courage to follow them. Soon after came in the lawyer, not indeed with the same attraction of mien, but with greater powers of language: and by one or other the company was so happily amused, that I was neither heard nor seen, nor was able to give any other proof of my existence than that I put round the glass, and was in my turn permitted to name the toast.

My mother indeed endeavoured to comfort me in my vexation, by telling me, that perhaps these showy talkers were hardly able to pay every one his own; that he who has money in his pocket needs not care what any man says of him; that if I minded my trade, the time will come when lawyers and soldiers would be glad to borrow out of my purse; and that it is fine, when a man can set his hands to his sides, and say he is worth forty thousand pounds every day of the year. These and many more such consolations and encouragements I received from my good mother, which, however, did not much allay my uneasiness; for having by some accident heard, that the country ladies despised her as a cit, I had therefore no longer much reverence for her opinions, but considered her as one whose ignorance and prejudice had hurried me, though without ill intentions, into a state of meanness and ignominy, from which I could not find any possibility of rising to the rank which my ancestors had always held.

I returned, however, to my master, and busied myself among thread, and silks, and laces, but without my former cheerfulness and alacrity. I had now no longer any felicity in contemplating the exact disposition of my powdered curls, the equal plaits of my ruffles, or the glossy blackness of my shoes; nor heard with my former elevation those compliments which ladies sometimes condescended to pay me upon my readiness in twisting a paper, or counting out the change. The term of *Young Man*, with which I was sometimes honoured, as I carried a parcel to the door of a coach, tortured my imagination; I grew negligent of my person, and sullen in my temper; often mistook the demands of the customers, treated their caprices and objections with contempt, and received and dismissed them with surly silence.

My master was afraid lest the shop should suffer by this change of my behaviour; and therefore, after some expostulations, posted me in the warehouse, and preserved me from the danger and reproach of desertion, to which my discontent would certainly have urged me, had I continued any longer behind the counter.

In the sixth year of my servitude my brother died of drunken joy, for having run down a fox that had baffled all the packs in the province.

was now heir, and with the hearty consent of my master commenced gentleman. The adventures in which my new character engaged me shall be communicated in another letter, by, Sir,

Yours, &c.

MISOCAPELUS.

No. 117.] TUESDAY, APRIL 30, 1751.

Ὅσσαν ἐπ' Οὐλύμπῳ μέμασαν θέμεν· αὐτὰρ ἐπ' Ὄσσῃ
Πήλιον εἰνοσίφυλλον, ἵν' οὐρανὸς ἄμβατος εἴη. HOM.

The gods they challenge, and affect the skies:
Heaved on Olympus, tottering Ossa stood;
On Ossa, Pelion nods with all his wood. POPE.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

NOTHING has more retarded the advancement of learning than the disposition of vulgar minds to ridicule and vilify what they cannot comprehend. All industry must be excited by hope; and as the student often proposes no other reward to himself than praise, he is easily discouraged by contempt and insult. He who brings with him into a clamorous multitude the timidity of recluse speculation, and has never hardened his front in public life, or accustomed his passions to the vicissitudes and accidents, the triumphs and defeats of mixed conversation, will blush at the stare of petulant incredulity, and suffer himself to be driven, by a burst of laughter, from the fortresses of demonstration. The mechanist will be afraid to assert before hardy contradiction, the possibility of tearing down bulwarks with a silkworm's thread; and the astronomer relating the rapidity of light, the distance of the fixed stars, and the height of the lunar mountains.

If I could by any efforts have shaken off this cowardice, I had not sheltered myself under a borrowed name, nor applied to you for the means of communicating to the public the theory of a garret; a subject which, except some slight and transient strictures, has been hitherto neglected by those who were best qualified to adorn it, either for want of leisure to prosecute the various researches in which a nice discussion must engage them, or because it requires such diversity of knowledge, and such extent of curiosity, as is scarcely to be found in any single intellect; or perhaps others foresaw the tumults which would be raised against them, and confined their knowledge to their own breasts, and abandoned prejudice and folly to the direction of chance.

That the professors of literature generally reside in the highest stories, has been immemorially observed. The wisdom of the ancients was well acquainted with the intellectual advantages of an elevated situation: why else were the muses stationed on Olympus, or Parnassus, by those who could with equal right have raised them bowers in the vale of Tempe, or erected their altars among the flexures of Meander? Why was Jove himself nursed upon a mountain? or why did the goddesses, when the prize of beauty was contested, try the cause upon the top of Ida? Such were the fictions by which the great masters of the earlier ages endeavoured to inculcate to posterity the importance of a garret, which, though they had been long obscured by the negligence and ignorance of succeeding times, were well enforced by the celebrated symbol of Pythagoras, ἀνεμῶν πνεόντων τὴν ἠχὼ σεβεσθαι; "when the wind blows, worship its echo." This could not but be understood by his disciples as an inviolable injunction to live in a garret, which I have found frequently visited by the echo and the wind. Nor was the tradition wholly obliterated in the age of Augustus, for Tibullus evidently congratulates himself upon his garret, not without some allusion to the Pythagorean precept:

Quam juvat immites ventos audire cubantem—
Aut, gelidas hybernus aquas cum fuderit auster,
Securum somnos, imbre juvante, sequi!

How sweet in sleep to pass the careless hours,
Lull'd by the beating winds and dashing showers!

And it is impossible not to discover the fondness of Lucretius, an early writer, for a garret, in his description of the lofty towers of serene learning, and of the pleasure with which a wise man looks down upon the confused and erratic state of the world moving below him:

Sed nil dulcius est, bene quam munita tenere
Edita doctrina sapientum templa serena;
Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre
Errare, atque viam palantèis quærere vitæ.

——'Tis sweet thy labouring steps to guide
To virtue's heights, with wisdom well supplied,
And all the magazines of learning fortified:
From thence to look below on human kind,
Bewilder'd in the maze of life, and blind,

DRYDEN.

The institution has, indeed, continued to our own time; the garret is still the usual receptacle of the philosopher and poet; but this, like many ancient customs, is perpetuated only by an accidental imitation, without knowledge of the original reason for which it was established:

Causa latet: res est notissima.

The cause is secret, but th' effect is known.

ADDISON.

Conjectures have, indeed, been advanced concerning these habitations of literature, but without much satisfaction to the judicious inquirer. Some have imagined, that the garret is generally chosen by the wits as most easily rented; and concluded that no man rejoices in his aërial

abode, but on the days of payment. Others suspect that a garret is chiefly convenient, as it is remoter than any other part of the house from the outer door, which is often observed to be infested by visitants, who talk incessantly of beer, or linen, or a coat, and repeat the same sounds every morning, and sometimes again in the afternoon, without any variation, except that they grow daily more importunate and clamorous, and raise their voices in time from mournful murmurs to raging vociferations. This eternal monotony is always detestable to a man whose chief pleasure is to enlarge his knowledge, and vary his ideas. Others talk of freedom from noise, and abstraction from common business or amusements; and some, yet more visionary, tell us, that the faculties are enlarged by open prospects, and that the fancy is more at liberty, when the eye ranges without confinement.

These conveniences may perhaps all be found in a well-chosen garret; but surely they cannot be supposed sufficiently important to have operated invariably upon different climates, distant ages, and separate nations. Of a universal practice, there must still be presumed a universal cause, which, however recondite and abstruse, may be perhaps reserved to make me illustrious by its discovery, and you by its promulgation.

It is universally known that the faculties of the mind are invigorated or weakened by the state of the body, and that the body is in a great measure regulated by the various compressions of the ambient element. The effects of the air in the production or cure of corporal maladies have been acknowledged from the time of Hippocrates: but no man has yet sufficiently considered how far it may influence the operations of the genius, though every day affords instances of local understanding, of wits and reasoners, whose faculties are adapted to some single spot, and who, when they are removed to any other place, sink at once into silence and stupidity. I have discovered, by a long series of observations, that invention and elocution suffer great impediments from dense and impure vapours, and that the tenuity of a defecated air, at a proper distance from the surface of the earth, accelerates the fancy, and sets at liberty those intellectual powers which were before shackled by too strong attraction, and unable to expand themselves under the pressure of a gross atmosphere. I have found dulness to quicken into sentiment in a thin ether, as water, though not very hot, boils in a receiver partly exhausted; and heads, in appearance empty, have teemed with notions upon rising ground, as the flaccid sides of a football would have swelled out into stiffness and extension.

For this reason I never think myself qualified to judge decisively of any man's faculties, whom I have only known in one degree of elevation; but take some opportunity of attending him from the cellar to the garret, and try upon him all the various degrees of rarefaction and condensation, tension and laxity. If he is neither vivacious aloft, nor serious below, I then consider him as hopeless; but as it seldom happens, that I do not find the temper to which the texture of his brain is fitted, I accommodate him in time with a tube of mercury, first marking the point most favourable to his intellects, according to rules which I have long studied, and which I may, perhaps, reveal to mankind in a complete treatise of barometrical pneumatology.

Another cause of the gayety and sprightliness of the dwellers in garrets is probably the increase of that vertiginous motion, with which we are carried round by the diurnal revolution of the earth. The power of agitation upon the spirits is well known; every man has felt his heart lightened in a rapid vehicle, or on a galloping horse; and nothing is plainer, than that he who towers to the fifth story, is whirled through more space by every circumrotation, than another that grovels upon the ground-floor. The nations between the tropics are known to be fiery, inconstant, inventive, and fanciful; because, living at the utmost length of the earth's diameter, they are carried about with more swiftness than those whom nature has placed nearer to the poles; and, therefore, as it becomes a wise man to struggle with the inconveniences of his country, whenever celerity and acuteness are requisite, we must actuate our languor by taking a few turns round the centre in a garret.

If you imagine that I ascribe to air and motion effects which they cannot produce, I desire you to consult your own memory, and consider whether you have never known a man acquire reputation in his garret, which, when fortune or a patron had placed him upon the first floor, he was unable to maintain; and who never recovered his former vigour of understanding, till he was restored to his original situation. That a garret will make every man a wit, I am very far from supposing; I know there are some who would continue blockheads even on the summit of the Andes, or on the peak of Teneriffe. But let not any man be considered as unimprovable till this potent remedy has been tried; for perhaps he was formed to be great only in a garret, as the joiner of Aretæus was rational in no other place but in his own shop.

I think a frequent removal to various distances from the centre, so necessary to a just estimate of intellectual abilities, and consequently of so great use in education, that if I hoped that the public could be persuaded to a expensive an experiment, I would propose, that there should be a cavern dug, and a tower erec

, like those which Bacon describes in Solo-
on's house, for the expansion and concentra-
n of understanding, according to the exigence
different employments, or constitutions.
erhaps some that fume away in meditations
on time and space in the tower, might com-
se tables of interest at a certain depth: and he
at upon level ground stagnates in silence, or
eeps in narrative, might at the height of half
mile, ferment into merriment, sparkle with
partee, and froth with declamation.

Addison observes, that we may find the heat
Virgil's climate in some lines of his Georgic:
when I read a composition, I immediately
termine the height of the author's habitation.
s an elaborate performance is commonly said
smell of the lamp, my commendation of a
ble thought, a sprightly sally, or a bold figure,
to pronounce it fresh from the garret; an
pression which would break from me upon
e perusal of most of your papers, did I not
lieve that you sometimes quit the garret, and
end into the cock-loft.

HYPERTATUS.

o. 118.] SATURDAY, MAY 4, 1751.

——Omnes illacrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longa
Nocte. HOR.

n endless night they sleep, unwept, unknown.
FRANCIS.

ICERO has, with his usual elegance and magni-
nce of language, attempted, in his relation of
dream of Scipio, to depreciate those honours
which he himself appears to have panted
th restless solicitude, by showing within what
row limits all that fame and celebrity which
n can hope for from men is circumscribed.
"You see," says Africanus, pointing at the
th, from the celestial regions, "that the
be assigned to the residence and habitation
human beings is of small dimensions: how
n can you obtain from the praise of men, any
ry worthy of a wish? Of this little world
inhabited parts are neither numerous nor
le; even the spots where men are to be found
broken by intervening deserts, and the na-
ns are so separated as that nothing can be
smitted from one to another. With the
ple of the south, by whom the opposite part
the earth is possessed, you have no inter-
rse; and by how small a tract do you com-
nicate with the countries of the north? e territory which you inhabit is no more n a scanty island, inclosed by a small body water, to which you give the name of the at sea and the Atlantic ocean. And even in known and frequented continent, what hope can you entertain, that your renown will pass the stream of Ganges, or the cliffs of Caucasus? or by whom will your name be uttered in the extremities of the north or south, towards the rising or the setting sun? So narrow is the space to which your fame can be propagated, and even there how long will it remain?"

He then proceeds to assign natural causes, why fame is not only narrow in its extent, but short in its duration; he observes the difference between the computation of time in earth and heaven, and declares that, according to the celestial chronology, no human honours can last a single year.

Such are the objections by which Tully has made a show of discouraging the pursuit of fame; objections which sufficiently discover his tenderness and regard for his darling phantom. Homer, when the plan of his poem made the death of Patroclus necessary, resolved, at least, that he should die with honour; and therefore brought down against him the patron god of Troy, and left to Hector only the mean task of giving the last blow to an enemy whom a Divine hand had disabled from resistance. Thus Tully ennobles fame, which he professes to degrade, by opposing it to celestial happiness; he confines not its extent but by the boundaries of nature, nor contracts its duration but by representing it small in the estimation of superior beings. He still admits it the highest and noblest of terrestrial objects, and alleges little more against it, than that it is neither without end, nor without limits.

What might be the effect of these observations conveyed in Ciceronian eloquence to Roman understandings, cannot be determined; but few of those who shall in the present age read my humble version will find themselves much depressed in their hopes, or retarded in their designs; for I am not inclined to believe, that they who among us pass their lives in the cultivation of knowledge, or acquisition of power, have very anxiously inquired what opinions prevail on the further banks of the Ganges, or invigorated any effort by the desire of spreading their renown among the clans of Caucasus. The hopes and fears of modern minds are content to range in a narrower compass; a single nation, and a few years, have generally sufficient amplitude to fill our imaginations.

A little consideration will indeed teach us, that fame has other limits than mountains and oceans; and that he who places happiness in the frequent repetition of his name, may spend his life in propagating it, without any danger of weeping for new worlds, or necessity of passing the Atlantic sea.

The numbers to whom any real and perceptible good or evil can be derived by the greatest power, or most active diligence, are inconsider-

able; and where neither benefit nor mischief operate, the only motive to the mention or remembrance of others is curiosity; a passion, which, though in some degree universally associated to reason, is easily confined, overborne, or diverted from any particular object.

Among the lower classes of mankind, there will be found very little desire of any other knowledge, than what may contribute immediately to the relief of some pressing uneasiness, or the attainment of some near advantage. The Turks are said to hear with wonder a proposal to walk out, only that they may walk back; and inquire why any man should labour for nothing? so those whose condition has always restrained them to the contemplation of their own necessities, and who have been accustomed to look forward only to a small distance, will scarcely understand, why nights and days should be spent in studies, which end in new studies, and which, according to Malherbe's observation, do not tend to lessen the price of bread; nor will the trader or manufacturer easily be persuaded, that much pleasure can arise from the mere knowledge of actions, performed in remote regions, or in distant times; or that any thing can deserve their inquiry, of which κλέος οἶον ἀκούομεν, οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν, we can only hear the report, but which cannot influence our lives by any consequences.

The truth is, that very few have leisure from indispensable business, to employ their thoughts upon narrative or characters; and among those to whom fortune has given the liberty of living more by their own choice, many create to themselves engagements, by the indulgence of some petty ambition, the admission of some insatiable desire, or the toleration of some predominant passion. The man whose whole wish is to accumulate money, has no other care than to collect interest, to estimate securities, and to engage for mortgages: the lover disdains to turn his ear to any other name than that of Corinna; and the courtier thinks the hour lost, which is not spent in promoting his interest, and facilitating his advancement. The adventurers of valour, and the discoveries of science, will find a cold reception, when they are obtruded upon an attention thus busy with its favourite amusement, and impatient of interruption or disturbance.

But not only such employments as seduce attention by appearances of dignity, or promises of happiness, may restrain the mind from excursion and inquiry: curiosity may be equally destroyed by less formidable enemies; it may be dissipated in trifles, or congealed by indolence. The sportsmen and the men of dress have their heads filled with a fox or a horse-race, a feather or a ball; and live in ignorance of every thing beside, with as much content as he that heaps up gold, or solicits preferment, digs the field, or beats the anvil; and some yet lower in the ranks of intellect, dream out their days without pleasure or business, without joy or sorrow, nor ever rouse from their lethargy to hear or think.

Even of those who have dedicated themselves to knowledge, the far greater part have confined their curiosity to a few objects, and have very little inclination to promote any fame, but that which their own studies entitle them to partake. The naturalist has no desire to know the opinions or conjectures of the philologer: the botanist looks upon the astronomer as a being unworthy of his regard; the lawyer scarcely hears the name of a physician without contempt; and he that is growing great and happy by electrifying a bottle, wonders how the world can be engaged by trifling prattle about war or peace.

If, therefore, he that imagines the world filled with his actions and praises, shall subduct from the number of his encomiast, all those who are placed below the flight of fame, and who hear in the valleys of life no voice but that of necessity; all those who imagine themselves too important to regard him, and consider the mention of his name as a usurpation of their time; all who are too much or too little pleased with themselves to attend to any thing external; all who are attracted by pleasure, or chained down by pain, to unvaried ideas; all who are withheld from attending his triumph by different pursuits; and all who slumber in universal negligence; he will find his renown straitened by nearer bounds than the rocks of Caucasus, and perceive that no man can be venerable or formidable, but to a small part of his fellow-creatures.

That we may not languish in our endeavours after excellence, it is necessary that, as Africanus counsels his descendant, "we raise our eyes to higher prospects, and contemplate our future and eternal state, without giving up our hearts to the praise of crowds, or fixing our hopes on such rewards as human power can bestow."

No. 119.] TUESDAY, MAY 7, 1751.

Iliacos intra muros peccatur, et extra. HOR.

Faults lay on either side the Trojan towers.
ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

AS, notwithstanding all that wit, or malice, or pride, or prudence, will be able to suggest, men and women must at last pass their lives together, I have never therefore thought those writers friends to human happiness, who endeavour to excite in either sex a general contempt or suspicion of the other. To persuade them who are entering the world, and looking abroad for a suitable associate, that all are equally vicious, or equally ridiculous; that they who trust are certainly betrayed, and they who esteem are always disappointed; is not to awaken judgment, but

inflame temerity. Without hope there can no caution. Those who are convinced, that reason for preference can be found, will ver harass their thoughts with doubt and iberation; they will resolve, since they are med to misery, that no needless anxiety ll disturb their quiet; they will plunge at ard into the crowd, and snatch the first hand t shall be held toward them.

That the world is over-run with vice cannot denied; but vice, however predominant, has yet gained an unlimited dominion. Simple unmingled good is not in our power, but may generally escape a greater evil by suffng a less; and therefore, those who under- to initiate the young and ignorant in the wledge of life, should be careful to inculcate possibility of virtue and happiness, and to ourage endeavours by prospects of success.

You, perhaps, do not suspect, that these are sentiments of one who has been subject for ny years to all the hardships of antiquated inity; has been long accustomed to the ness of neglect, and the petulance of insult; been mortified in full assemblies by inquiries r forgotten fashions, games long disused, and and beauties of ancient renown; has been ted, with malicious importunity, to the nd wedding of many acquaintances; has ridiculed by two generations of coquettes whispers intended to be heard: and been considered by the airy and gay, as too rable for familiarity, and too wise for ure. It is indeed natural for injury to oke anger, and by continual repetition to uce an habitual asperity; yet I have hitherto struggled with so much vigilance against oride and my resentment, that I have preed my temper uncorrupted. I have not yet e it any part of my employment to collect nces against marriage; nor am inclined to n the number of the few friends whom has left me, by obstructing that happiness h I cannot partake, and venting my vexain censures of the forwardness and indison of girls, or the inconstancy, tastelessness, erfidy of men.

is, indeed, not very difficult to bear that ition to which we are not condemned by sity, but induced by observation and e; and therefore I, perhaps, have never lt all the malignity with which a reproach, with the appellation of old maid, swells of those hearts in which it is infixed. s not condemned in my youth to solitude, by indigence or deformity, nor passed the r part of life without the flattery of court- and the joys of triumph. I have danced ound of gayety amidst the murmurs of and gratulations of applause; been at- from pleasure to pleasure by the great, rightly, and the vain; and seen my regard solicited by the obsequiousness of gallantry, the gayety of wit, and the timidity of love. If, therefore, I am yet a stranger to nuptial happiness, I suffer only the consequences of my own resolves, and can look back upon the succession of lovers, whose addresses I have rejected, without grief, and without malice.

When my name first began to be inscribed upon glasses, I was honoured with the amorous professions of the gay Venustulus, a gentleman, who, being the only son of a wealthy family, had been educated in all the wantonness of expense, and softness of effeminacy. He was beautiful in his person, and easy in his address; and, therefore, soon gained upon my eye at an age when the sight is very little overruled by the understanding. He had not any power in himself of gladdening or amusing: but supplied his want of conversation by treats and diversions: and his chief art of courtship was to fill the mind of his mistress with parties, rambles, music, and shows. We were often engaged in short excursions to gardens and seats, and I was for a while pleased with the care which Venustulus discovered in securing me from any appearance of danger, or possibility of mischance. He never failed to recommend caution to his coachman, or to promise the waterman a reward if he landed us safe; and always contrived to return by day-light for fear of robbers. This extraordinary solicitude was represented for a time as the effect of his tenderness for me; but fear is too strong for continued hypocrisy. I soon discovered, that Venustulus had the cowardice as well as elegance of a female. His imagination was perpetually clouded with terrors, and he could scarcely refrain from screams and outcries at any accidental surprise. He durst not enter a room if a rat was heard behind the wainscot, nor cross a field where the cattle were frisking in the sunshine; the least breeze that waved upon the river was a storm, and every clamour in the street was a cry of fire. I have seen him lose his colour when my squirrel had broke his chain; and was forced to throw water in his face on the sudden entrance of a black cat. Compassion once obliged me to drive away with my fan a beetle that kept him in distress, and chide off a dog that yelped at his heels, to which he would gladly have given up me to facilitate his own escape. Women naturally expect defence and protection from a lover or a husband, and therefore you will not think me culpable in refusing a wretch, who would have burdened life with unnecessary fears, and flown to me for that succour which it was his duty to have given.

My next lover was Fungosa, the son of a stock-jobber, whose visits my friends, by the importunity of persuasion, prevailed upon me to allow. Fungosa was no very suitable com-

panion; for having been bred in a counting-house, he spoke a language unintelligible in any other place. He had no desire of any reputation but that of an acute prognosticator of the changes in the funds; nor had any means of raising merriment, but by telling how somebody was over-reached in a bargain by his father. He was, however, a youth of great sobriety and prudence, and frequently informed us how carefully he would improve my fortune. I was not in haste to conclude the match, but was so much awed by my parents, that I durst not dismiss him, and might perhaps have been doomed for ever to the grossness of pedlary, and the jargon of usury, had not a fraud been discovered in the settlement, which set me free from the persecution of groveling pride, and pecuniary impudence.

I was afterwards six months without any particular notice, but at last became the idol of the glittering Flosculus, who prescribed the mode of embroidery to all the fops of his time, and varied at pleasure the cock of every hat, and the sleeve of every coat that appeared in fashionable assemblies. Flosculus made some impression upon my heart by a compliment which few ladies can hear without emotion; he commended my skill in dress, my judgment in suiting colours, and my art in disposing ornaments. But Flosculus was too much engaged by his own elegance, to be sufficiently attentive to the duties of a lover, or to please with varied praise an ear made delicate by riot of adulation. He expected to be repaid part of his tribute, and stayed away three days, because I neglected to take notice of a new coat. I quickly found, that Flosculus was rather a rival than an admirer: and that we should probably live in a perpetual struggle of emulous finery, and spend our lives in stratagems to be first in the fashion.

I had soon after the honour at a feast of attracting the eyes of Dentatus, one of those human beings whose only happiness is to dine. Dentatus regaled me with foreign varieties, told me of measures that he had laid for procuring the best cook in France, and entertained me with bills of fare, prescribed the arrangement of dishes, and taught me two sauces invented by himself. At length, such is the uncertainty of human happiness, I declared my opinion too hastily upon a pie made under his own direction; after which he grew so cold and negligent, that he was easily dismissed.

Many other lovers, or pretended lovers, I have had the honour to lead a while in triumph. But two of them I drove from me, by discovering that they had no taste or knowledge in music; three I dismissed, because they were drunkards; two, because they paid their addresses at the same time to other ladies; and six, because they attempted to influence my choice by bribing my maid. Two more I discarded at the second visit for obscene allusion and five for drollery on religion. In the lat part of my reign, I sentenced two to perpetu exile, for offering me settlements, by which t children of a former marriage would have be injured; four, for representing falsely the val of their estates; three, for concealing th debts; and one, for raising the rent of a decre tenant.

I have now sent you a narrative, which t ladies may oppose to the tale of Hymenæus. mean not to depreciate the sex which has p duced poets and philosophers, heroes and m tyrs; but will not suffer the rising generati of beauties to be dejected by partial satire; to imagine that those who censured them h not likewise their follies and their vices. I not yet believe happiness unattainable in m riage, though I have never yet been able to f a man, with whom I could prudently venti an inseparable union. It is necessary to exp faults, that their deformity may be seen; the reproach ought not to be extended beyo the crime, nor either sex to be condemned cause some women, or men, are indelicate dishonest.

I am, &c.

TRANQUILLA.

No. 120.] SATURDAY, MAY 11, 1751.

Redditum Cyri solio Phraaten,
Dissidens; lebi, numero beatorum
Eximit virtus, populumque falsis
Dedocet uti
Vocibus. HOR

True virtue can the crowd unteach
Their false mistaken forms of speech;
Virtue, to crowds a foe profess'd,
Disdains to number with the bless'd
Phraates, by his slaves adored,
And to the Parthian crown restored.

FRANCIS

IN the reign of Jenghiz Can, conqueror of east, in the city of Samarcand, lived Noura the merchant, renowned throughout all regions of India for the extent of his comme and the integrity of his dealings. His w houses were filled with all the commoditie the remotest nations; every rarity of nat every curiosity of art, whatever was valu whatever was useful, hasted to his hand. streets were crowded with his carriages; sea was covered with his ships; the stream Oxus were wearied with conveyance, every breeze of the sky wafted wealth Nouradin.

At length Nourdin felt himself seized a slow malady, which he first endeavour divert by application, and afterwards to re by luxury and indulgence; but finding strength every day less, he was at last terr

d called for help upon the sages of physic: ey filled his apartments with alexipharmics, storatives, and essential virtues; the pearls of e ocean were dissolved, the spices of Arabia re distilled, and all the powers of nature re employed to give new spirits to his nerves, d new balsam to his blood. Nouradin was some time amused with promises, invigor- d with cordials, or soothed with anodynes; t the disease preyed upon his vitals, and he n discovered with indignation, that health s not to be bought. He was confined to chamber, deserted by his physicians, and ely visited by his friends; but his unwil- gness to die flattered him long with hopes of .

At length, having passed the night in tedious guor, he called to him Almamoulin, his only , and, dismissing his attendants, "My son," s he, "behold here the weakness and fragility nan; look backward a few days, thy father s great and happy, fresh as the vernal rose, strong as the cedar of the mountain; the ons of Asia drank his dews, and art and merce delighted in his shade. Malevolence eld me, and sighed: His root, she cried, is d in the depths; it is watered by the foun- s of Oxus; it sends out branches afar, and defiance to the blast; prudence reclines nst his trunk, and prosperity dances on his Now, Almamoulin, look upon me wither- and prostrate; look upon me, and attend. ve trafficked, I have prospered, I have rioted uin; my house is splendid, my servants are erous; yet I displayed only a small part of riches; the rest, which I was hindered from ying by the fear of raising envy, or tempting city, I have piled in towers, I have buried verns, I have hidden in secret repositories, h this scroll will discover. My purpose after ten months more spent in commerce, ave withdrawn my wealth to a safer coun- to have given seven years to delight and vity, and the remaining part of my days to ude and repentance; but the hand of death on me; a frigorific torpor encroaches upon eins; I am now leaving the produce of my which it must be thy business to enjoy with om." The thought of leaving his wealth Nouradin with such grief, that he fell into alsions, became delirious, and expired.

Almamoulin, who loved his father, was ed awhile with honest sorrow, and sat two in profound meditation, without perusing aper which he held in his hand. He then d to his own chamber, as overborne with ion, and there read the inventory of his new ssions, which swelled his heart with such ports, that he no longer lamented his fa- death. He was now sufficiently com- to order a funeral of modest magnificence, ose at once to the rank of Nouradin's pro- fession, and the reputation of his wealth. The two next nights he spent in visiting the tower and the caverns, and found the treasures greater to his eye than to his imagination.

Almamoulin had been bred to the practice of exact frugality, and had often looked with envy on the finery and expenses of other young men: he therefore believed that happiness was now in his power, since he could obtain all of which he had hitherto been accustomed to regret the want. He resolved to give a loose to his desires, to revel in enjoyment, and feel pain or uneasiness no more.

He immediately procured a splendid equipage, dressed his servants in rich embroidery, and covered his horses with golden caparisons. He showered down silver on the populace, and suffered their acclamations to swell him with insolence. The nobles saw him with anger, the wise men of the state combined against him, the leaders of armies threatened his destruction. Almamoulin was informed of his danger: he put on the robe of mourning in the presence of his enemies, and appeased them with gold, and gems, and supplication.

He then sought to strengthen himself, by an alliance with the princes of Tartary, and offered the price of kingdoms for a wife of noble birth. His suit was generally rejected, and his presents refused; but a princess of Astracan once condescended to admit him to her presence. She received him sitting on a throne, attired in the robe of royalty, and shining with the jewels of Golconda; command sparkled in her eyes, and dignity towered on her forehead. Almamoulin approached and trembled. She saw his confusion and disdained him: How, says she, dares the wretch hope my obedience, who thus shrinks at my glance? Retire, and enjoy thy riches in sordid ostentation; thou wast born to be wealthy, but never canst be great.

He then contracted his desires to more private and domestic pleasures. He built palaces, he laid out gardens, he changed the face of the land, he transplanted forests, he levelled mountains, opened prospects into distant regions, poured fountains from the tops of turrets, and rolled rivers through new channels.

These amusements pleased him for a time; but languor and weariness soon invaded him. His bowers lost their fragrance, and the waters murmured without notice. He purchased large tracts of land in distant provinces, adorned them with houses of pleasure, and diversified them with accommodations for different seasons. Change of place at first relieved his satiety, but all the novelties of situation were soon exhausted; he found his heart vacant, and his desires, for want of external objects, ravaging himself.

He therefore returned to Samarcand, and set open his doors to those whom idleness sends out in search of pleasure. His tables were always

covered with delicacies; wines of every vintage sparkled in his bowls, and his lamps scattered perfumes. The sound of the lute, and the voice of the singer, chased away sadness; every hour was crowded with pleasure; and the day ended and began with feasts and dances, and revelry and merriment. Almamoulin cried out, "I have at last found the use of riches; I am surrounded by companions, who view my greatness without envy; and I enjoy at once the raptures of popularity, and the safety of an obscure station. What trouble can he feel, whom all are studious to please, that they may be repaid with pleasure? What danger can he dread, to whom every man is a friend?"

Such were the thoughts of Almamoulin, as he looked down from a gallery upon the gay assembly, regaling at his expense; but in the midst of this soliloquy, an officer of justice entered the house, and in the form of legal citation, summoned Almamoulin to appear before the emperor. The guests stood awhile aghast, then stole imperceptibly away, and he was led off without a single voice to witness his integrity. He now found one of his most frequent visitants accusing him of treason, in hopes of sharing his confiscation; yet, unpatronized and unsupported, he cleared himself by the openness of innocence, and the consistence of truth; he was dismissed with honour, and his accuser perished in prison.

Almamoulin now perceived with how little reason he had hoped for justice or fidelity from those who live only to gratify their senses: and, being now weary with vain experiments upon life and fruitless researches after felicity, he had recourse to a sage, who after spending his youth in travel and observation, had retired from all human cares, to a small habitation on the banks of Oxus, where he conversed only with such as solicited his counsel. "Brother," said the philosopher, "thou hast suffered thy reason to be deluded by idle hopes and fallacious appearances. Having long looked with desire upon riches, thou hadst taught thyself to think them more valuable than nature designed them, and to expect from them, what experience has now taught thee, that they cannot give. That they do not confer wisdom, thou mayest be convinced, by considering at how dear a price they tempted thee, upon thy first entrance into the world, to purchase the empty sound of vulgar acclamation. That they cannot bestow fortitude or magnanimity, that man may be certain, who stood trembling at Astracan, before a being not naturally superior to himself. That they will not supply unexhausted pleasure, the recollection of forsaken palaces, and neglected gardens, will easily inform thee. That they rarely purchase friends, thou didst soon discover, when thou wert left to stand thy trial uncountenanced and alone. Yet think not riches useless; there are purposes to which wise man may be delighted to apply them; th may, by a rational distribution to those w want them, ease the pains of helpless disea still the throbs of restless anxiety, relieve in cence from oppression, and raise imbecility cheerfulness and vigour. This they will ena thee to perform, and this will afford the o happiness ordained for our present state, t confidence of Divine favour, and the hope future rewards."

No. 121.] Tuesday, May 14, 1751.

O imitatores, servum pecus! HO

Away, ye imitators, servile herd!

ELPHINSTO

I have been informed by a letter from one the universities, that among the youth fro whom the next swarm of reasoners is to lea philosophy, and the next flight of beauties hear elegies and sonnets, there are many, wh instead of endeavouring by books and medit tion to form their own opinions, content the selves with the secondary knowledge, which convenient bench in a coffee-house can suppl and, without any examination or distinctio adopt the criticisms and remarks which ha pen to drop from those who have risen, merit or fortune, to reputation and authority.

These humble retailers of knowledge m correspondent stigmatizes with the name Echoes; and seems desirous that they shou be made ashamed of lazy submission, and a mated to attempts after new discoveries, a original sentiments.

It is very natural for young men to be veh ment, acrimonious and severe. For as th seldom comprehend at once all the consequen of a position, or perceive the difficulties which cooler and more experienced reasone are restrained from confidence, they form th conclusions with great precipitance. Seei nothing that can darken or embarrass the qu tion, they expect to find their own opinion u versally prevalent, and are inclined to impu uncertainty and hesitation to want of hones rather than of knowledge. I may perha therefore, be reproached by my lively corr pondent, when it shall be found, that I have inclination to persecute these collectors of f tuitous knowledge with the severity require yet, as I am now too old to be much pained hasty censure, I shall not be afraid of tak into protection those whom I think condem without a sufficient knowledge of their cause

He that adopts the sentiments of anoth whom he has reason to believe wiser than h self, is only to be blamed when he claims

nours which are not due but to the author, id endeavours to deceive the world into praise id veneration; for to learn is the proper busi- ss of youth; and whether we increase our nowledge by books or by conversation, we are nally indebted to foreign assistance.

The greater part of students are not born with ilities to construct systems, or advance know- lge; nor can have any hope beyond that of coming intelligent hearers in the schools of t, of being able to comprehend what others scover, and to remember what others teach. ven those to whom Providence hath allotted eater strength of understanding, can expect ly to improve a single science. In every other rt of learning, they must be content to follow inions, which they are not able to examine: d, even in that which they claim as peculiarly ir own, can seldom add more than some small rticle of knowledge to the hereditary stock de- ved to them from ancient times, the collective lour of a thousand intellects.

In science, which, being fixed and limited, ad- ts of no other variety than such as arises from w methods of distribution, or new arts of il- tration, the necessity of following the traces our predecessors is indisputably evident; but re appears no reason why imagination should subject to the same restraint. It might be ceived, that of those who profess to forsake narrow paths of truth, every one may devi- towards a different point, since, though rec- tde is uniform and fixed, obliquity may be in- tely diversified. The roads of science are row, so that they who travel them, must ver follow or meet one another; but in the ndless regions of possibility, which fiction ms for her dominion, there are surely a thou- l recesses unexplored, a thousand flowers un- ked, a thousand fountains unexhausted, com- ations of imagery yet unobserved, and races ileal inhabitants not hitherto described.

Yet, whatever hope may persuade, or reason ce, experience can boast of very few addi- ns to ancient fable. The wars of Troy, and travels of Ulysses, have furnished almost all ceding poets with incidents, characters, and timents. The Romans are confessed to have mpted little more than to display in their tongue the inventions of the Greeks. There all their writings, such a perpetual recur- e of allusions to the tales of the fabulous that they must be confessed often to want power of giving pleasure which novelty sup- ; nor can we wonder that they excelled so h in the graces of diction, when we consider rarely they were employed in search of thoughts.

he warmest admirers of the great Mantuan can extol him for little more than the skill which he has, by making his hero both a ller and a warrior, united the beauties of the Iliad and the Odyssey in one composition; yet his judgment was perhaps sometimes over- borne by his avarice of the Homeric treasures; and, for fear of suffering a sparkling ornament to be lost, he has inserted it where it cannot shine with its original splendour.

When Ulysses visited the infernal regions, he found among the heroes that perished at Troy, his competitor Ajax, who, when the arms of Achilles were adjudged to Ulysses, died by his own hand in the madness of disappointment. He still appeared to resent, as on earth, his loss and disgrace. Ulysses endeavoured to pacify him with praises and submission; but Ajax walked away without reply. This passage has always been considered as eminently beautiful; because Ajax, the haughty chief, the unlettered soldier, of unshaken courage, of immoveable con- stancy, but without the power of recommending his own virtues by eloquence, or enforcing his assertions by any other argument than the sword, had no way of making his anger known but by gloomy sullenness, and dumb ferocity. His hatred of a man whom he conceived to have de- feated him only by volubility of tongue, was therefore naturally shown by silence, more con- temptuous and piercing than any words that so rude an orator could have found, and by which he gave his enemy no opportunity of exerting the only power in which he was superior.

When Æneas is sent by Virgil to the shades, he meets Dido the queen of Carthage, whom his perfidy had hurried to the grave; he accosts her with tenderness and excuses; but the lady turns away like Ajax in mute disdain. She turns away like Ajax; but she resembles him in none of those qualities which give either dig- nity or propriety to silence. She might, with- out any departure from the tenor of her conduct, have burst out, like other injured women, into clamour, reproach, and denunciation; but Vir- gil had his imagination full of Ajax, and there- fore could not prevail on himself to teach Dido any other mode of resentment.

If Virgil could be thus seduced by imitation, there will be little hope that common wits should escape; and accordingly we find that, besides the universal and acknowledged practice of co- pying the ancients, there has prevailed in every age a particular species of fiction. At one time, all truth was conveyed in allegory; at another, nothing was seen but in a vision; at one period all the poets followed sheep, and every event pro- duced a pastoral; at another, they busied them- selves wholly in giving directions to a painter.

It is indeed easy to conceive why any fashion should become popular, by which idleness is fa- voured, and imbecility assisted; but surely no man of genius can much applaud himself for repeating a tale with which the audience is al- ready tired, and which could bring no honour to any but its inventor.

There are, I think, two schemes of writing, on which the laborious wits of the present time employ their faculties. One is the adaptation of sense to all the rhymes which our language can supply to some word that makes the burden of the stanza; but this, as it has been only used in a kind of amorous burlesque, can scarcely be censured with much acrimony. The other is the imitation of Spenser, which, by the influence of some men of learning and genius, seems likely to gain upon the age, and therefore deserves to be more attentively considered.

To imitate the fictions and sentiments of Spenser can incur no reproach, for allegory is perhaps one of the most pleasing vehicles of instruction. But I am very far from extending the same respect to his diction as his stanza. His style was in his own time allowed to be vicious, so darkened with old words and peculiarities of phrase, and so remote from common use, that Jonson boldly pronounces him to have written no language. His stanza is at once difficult and unpleasing; tiresome to the ear by its uniformity, and to the attention by its length. It was at first formed in imitation of the Italian poets, without due regard to the genius of our language. The Italians have little variety of termination, and were forced to contrive such a stanza as might admit the greatest number of similar rhymes; but our words end with so much diversity, that it is seldom convenient for us to bring more than two of the same sound together. If it be justly observed by Milton, that rhyme obliges poets to express their thoughts in improper terms, these improprieties must always be multiplied, as the difficulty of rhyme is increased by long concatenations.

The imitators of Spenser are indeed not very rigid censors of themselves, for they seem to conclude that, when they have disfigured their lines with a few obsolete syllables, they have accomplished their design, without considering that they ought not only to admit old words, but to avoid new. The laws of imitation are broken by every word introduced since the time of Spenser, as the character of Hector is violated by quoting Aristotle in the play. It would indeed be difficult to exclude from a long poem all modern phrase, though it is easy to sprinkle it with gleanings of antiquity. Perhaps, however, the style of Spenser might by long labour be justly copied; but life is surely given us for higher purposes than to gather what our ancestors have wisely thrown away, and to learn what is of no value, but because it has been forgotten.

No. 122.] SATURDAY, MAY 18, 1751.

Ne cio qua natale solum dulcedine cunctos Ducit.
OVID.

By secret charms our native land attracts.

NOTHING is more subject to mistake and disappointment than anticipated judgment concernin the easiness or difficulty of any undertakin whether we form our opinion from the perform ances of others, or from abstracted contempl tion of the thing to be attempted.

Whatever is done skilfully appears to be do with ease; and art, when it is once matured habit, vanishes from observation. We are ther fore more powerfully excited to emulation, those who have attained the highest degree excellence, and whom we can therefore wi least reason hope to equal.

In adjusting the probability of success by previous consideration of the undertaking, are equally in danger of deceiving ourselves. is never easy, nor often possible, to comprise t series of any process with all its circumsta ces, incidents, and variations, in a speculati scheme. Experience soon shows us the tortu sities of imaginary rectitude, the complicatio of simplicity, and the asperities of smoothne Sudden difficulties often start up from the ar bushes of art, stop the career of activity, repre the gayety of confidence, and, when we imagi ourselves almost at the end of our labours, dri us back to new plans and different measures.

There are many things which we every d see others unable to perform, and perhaps ha even ourselves miscarried in attempting; a yet can hardly allow to be difficult; nor can forbear to wonder afresh at every new failu or to promise certainty of success to our ne essay; but when we try, the same hindran recur, the same inability is perceived, and t vexation of disappointment must again be su fered.

Of the various kinds of speaking or writin which serve necessity, or promote pleasure, no appears so artless or easy as simple narratio for what should make him that knows t whole order and progress of an affair unable relate it? Yet we hourly find such as endea our to entertain or instruct us by recitals, clou ing the facts which they intend to illustrate, a losing themselves and their auditors in wilds a mazes, in digression and confusion. When have congratulated ourselves upon a new oppo tunity of inquiry, and new means of inform tion, it often happens that without designi either deceit or concealment, without ignoran of the fact, or unwillingness to disclose it, relator fills the ear with empty sounds, haras the attention with fruitless impatience, and d turbs the imagination by a tumult of event without order of time, or train of consequence

It is natural to believe, upon the same prin ple, that no writer has a more easy task than historian. The philosopher has the works omniscience to examine; and is therefore e gaged in disquisitions, to which finite intelle are utterly unequal. The poet trusts to his i ventions, and is not only in danger of thos i

consistencies to which every one is exposed by departure from truth; but may be censured as well for deficiencies of matter, as for irregularity of disposition, or impropriety of ornament. But the happy historian has no other labour than of gathering what tradition pours down before him, or records treasure for his use. He has only the actions and designs of men like himself to conceive and to relate; he is not to form, but copy characters, and therefore is not blamed for the inconsistency of statesmen, the injustice of tyrants, or the cowardice of commanders. The difficulty of making variety consistent, or uniting probability with surprise, needs not to disturb him; the manners and actions of his personages are already fixed; his materials are provided and put into his hands, and he is at leisure to employ all his powers in arranging and displaying them.

Yet, even with these advantages, very few in any age have been able to raise themselves to reputation by writing histories; and among the innumerable authors, who fill every nation with accounts of their ancestors, or undertake to transmit to futurity the events of their own time, the greater part, when fashion and novelty have ceased to recommend them, are of no other use than chronological memorials, which necessity may sometimes require to be consulted, but which fright away curiosity, and disgust delicacy.

It is observed, that our nation, which has produced so many authors eminent for almost every other species of literary excellence, has been hitherto remarkably barren of historical genius; and, so far has this defect raised prejudices against us, that some have doubted whether an Englishman can stop at that mediocrity of style, or confine his mind to that even tenor of imagination, which narrative requires.

They who can believe that nature has so capriciously distributed understanding have surely no claim to the honour of serious confutation. The inhabitants of the same country have opposite characters in different ages; the prevalence or neglect of any particular study can proceed only from the accidental influence of some temporary cause; and if we have failed in history, we can have failed only because history has not hitherto been diligently cultivated.

But how is it evident, that we have not historians among us, whom we may venture to place in comparison with any that the neighbouring nations can produce? The attempt of Raleigh is deservedly celebrated for the labour of his researches, and the elegance of his style; but he has endeavoured to exert his judgment more than his genius, to select facts rather than adorn them; and has produced a historical dissertation, but seldom risen to the majesty of history.

The works of Clarendon deserve more regard. His diction is indeed neither exact in itself, nor suited to the purpose of history. It is the effusion of a mind crowded with ideas, and desirous of imparting them; and therefore always accumulating words, and involving one clause and sentence in another. But there is in his negligence a rude, inartificial majesty, which, without the nicety of laboured elegance swells the mind by its plenitude and diffusion. His narration is not perhaps sufficiently rapid, being stopped too frequently by particularities, which, though they might strike the author who was present at the transactions, will not equally detain the attention of posterity. But his ignorance or carelessness of the art of writing is amply compensated by his knowledge of nature and of policy; the wisdom of his maxims, the justness of his reasonings, and the variety, distinctness, and strength of his characters.

But none of our writers can, in my opinion, justly contest the superiority of Knolles, who, in his history of the Turks, has displayed all the excellences that narration can admit. His style, though somewhat obscured by time, and sometimes vitiated by false wit, is pure, nervous, elevated, and clear. A wonderful multiplicity of events is so artfully arranged, and so distinctly explained, that each facilitates the knowledge of the next. Whenever a new personage is introduced, the reader is prepared by his character for his actions; when a nation is first attacked, or city besieged, he is made acquainted with its history, or situation; so that a great part of the world is brought into view. The descriptions of this author are without minuteness, and the digressions without ostentation. Collateral events are so artfully woven into the contexture of his principal story, that they cannot be disjoined without leaving it lacerated and broken. There is nothing turgid in his dignity, nor superfluous in his copiousness. His orations only, which he feigns, like the ancient historians, to have been pronounced on remarkable occasions, are tedious and languid; and since they are merely the voluntary sports of imagination, prove how much the most judicious and skilful may be mistaken, in the estimate of their own powers.

Nothing could have sunk this author in obscurity but the remoteness and barbarity of the people whose story he relates. It seldom happens, that all circumstances concur to happiness or fame. The nation which produced this great historian, has the grief of seeing his genius employed upon a foreign and uninteresting subject; and that writer, who might have secured perpetuity to his name, by a history of his own country, has exposed himself to the danger of oblivion, by recounting enterprises and revolutions, of which none desire to be informed.

No. 123.] Tuesday, May 21, 1751.

Quo semel est imbuta recens, servabit odorem
Testa diu. HOR.

What season'd first the vessel, keeps the taste.
CREECH.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

Though I have so long found myself deluded by projects of honour and distinction, that I often resolve to admit them no more into my heart; yet, how determinately soever excluded, they always recover their dominion by force or stratagem; and whenever, after the shortest relaxation of vigilance, reason and caution return to their charge, they find hope again in possession, with all her train of pleasures dancing about her.

Even while I am preparing to write a history of disappointed expectations, I cannot forbear to flatter myself, that you and your readers are impatient for my performance; and that the sons of learning have laid down several of your late papers with discontent, when they found that Misocapelus had delayed to continue his narrative.

But the desire of gratifying the expectations that I have raised, is not the only motive of this relation, which, having once promised it, I think myself no longer at liberty to forbear. For, however I may have wished to clear myself from every other adhesion of trade, I hope I shall be always wise enough to retain my punctuality, and amidst all my new arts of politeness, continue to despise negligence, and detest falsehood.

When the death of my brother had dismissed me from the duties of a shop, I considered myself as restored to the rights of my birth, and entitled to the rank and reception which my ancestors obtained. I was, however, embarrassed with many difficulties at my first re-entrance into the world; for my haste to be a gentleman inclined me to precipitate measures; and every accident that forced me back towards my old station, was considered by me as an obstruction of my happiness.

It was with no common grief and indignation, that I found my former companions still daring to claim my notice, and the journeymen and apprentices sometimes pulling me by the sleeve as I was walking in the street, and, without any terror of my new sword, which was, notwithstanding of an uncommon size, inviting me to partake of a bottle at the old house, and entertaining me with histories of the girls in the neighbourhood. I had always, in my officinal state, been kept in awe by lace and embroidery; and imagined that, to fright away these unwelcome familiarities, nothing was necessary, but that I should, by splendour of dress, proclaim my reunion with a higher rank. I therefore sent for my tailor; ordered a suit with twice the usual quantity of lace; and, that I might not let my persecutors increase their confidence, by the habit of accosting me, staid at home till it was made.

This week of confinement I passed in practising a forbidding frown, a smile of condescension, a slight salutation, and an abrupt departure; and in four mornings was able to turn upon my heel, with so much levity and sprightliness, that I made no doubt of discouraging all public attempts upon my dignity. I therefore issued forth in my new coat, with a resolution of dazzling intimacy to a fitter distance; and pleased myself with the timidity and reverence, which I should impress upon all who had hitherto presumed to harass me with their freedoms. But, whatever was the cause, I did not find myself received with any new degree of respect: those whom I intended to drive from me, ventured to advance with their usual phrases of benevolence; and those, whose acquaintance I solicited, grew more supercilious and reserved. I began soon to repent the expense, by which I had procured no advantage, and to suspect that a shining dress, like a weighty weapon, has no force in itself, but owes all its efficacy to him that wears it.

Many were the mortifications and calamities which I was condemned to suffer in my initiation to politeness. I was so much tortured by the incessant civilities of my companions, that I never passed through that region of the city but in a chair with the curtains drawn; and at last left my lodgings, and fixed myself in the verge of the court. Here I endeavoured to be thought a gentleman just returned from his travels, and was pleased to have my landlord believe that I was in some danger from importunate creditors; but this scheme was quickly defeated by a formal deputation sent to offer me, though I had now retired from business, the freedom of my company.

I was now detected in trade, and therefore resolved to stay no longer. I hired another apartment, and changed my servants. Here I lived very happily for three months, and, with secret satisfaction, often overheard the family celebrating the greatness and felicity of the esquire; though the conversation seldom ended without some complaint of my covetousness, or some remark upon my language, or my gait. I now began to venture into the public walks, and to know the faces of nobles and beauties; but could not observe, without wonder, as I passed by them, how frequently they were talking of a tailor. I longed, however, to be admitted to conversation, and was somewhat weary of walking in crowds without a companion, yet continued to come and go with the rest, till a lady, whom I endeavoured to protect in a crowded passage, as she was about to step into her cha-

riot, thanked me for my civility, and told me, that as she had often distinguished me for my modest and respectful behaviour, whenever I set up for myself, I might expect to see her among my first customers.

Here was an end of all my ambulatory projects. I indeed sometimes entered the walks again, but was always blasted by this destructive lady, whose mischievous generosity recommended me to her acquaintance. Being therefore forced to practise my adscititious character upon another stage, I betook myself to a coffee-house frequented by wits, among whom I learned in a short time the cant of criticism, and talked so loudly and volubly of nature, and manners, and sentiment, and diction, and similes, and contrasts, and action, and pronunciation, that I was often desired to lead the hiss and clap, and was feared and hated by the players and the poets. Many a sentence have I hissed, which I did not understand, and many a groan have I uttered, when the ladies were weeping in the boxes. At last a malignant author, whose performance I had persecuted through the nine nights, wrote an epigram upon Tape the critic, which drove me from the pit for ever.

My desire to be a fine gentleman still continued: I therefore, after a short suspense, chose a new set of friends at the gaming-table, and was for some time pleased with the civility and openness with which I found myself treated. I was indeed obliged to play; but being naturally timorous and vigilant, was never surprised into large sums. What might have been the consequence of long familiarity with these gamesters I had not an opportunity of knowing; for one night the constables entered and seized us, and I was once more compelled to sink into my former condition, by sending for my old master to attest my character.

When I was deliberating to what new qualifications I should aspire, I was summoned into the country, by an account of my father's death. Here I had hopes of being able to distinguish myself, and to support the honour of my family. I therefore bought guns and horses, and, contrary to the expectation of the tenants, increased the salary of the huntsman. But when I entered the field, it was soon discovered that I was not destined to the glories of the chace. I was afraid of thorns in the thicket, afraid of dirt in the marsh; I shivered on the brink of a river while the sportsmen crossed it, and trembled at the sight of a five-bar gate. When the sport and danger were over, I was all equally disconcerted; for I was effeminate, though not delicate, and could only join a feeble-whispering voice in the clamours of their triumph.

A fall, by which my ribs were broken, soon called me to domestic pleasures, and I exerted all my art to obtain the favour of the neighbouring ladies; but, wherever I came, there was always some unlucky conversation upon ribands, fillets, pins, or thread, which drove all my stock of compliments out of my memory, and overwhelmed me with shame and dejection.

Thus I passed the ten first years after the death of my brother, in which I have learned at last to repress that ambition, which I could never gratify; and, instead of wasting more of my life in vain endeavours after accomplishments, which if not early acquired, no endeavours can obtain, I shall confine my care to those higher excellences which are in every man's power, and though I cannot enchant affection by elegance and ease, hope to secure esteem by honesty and truth.

I am, &c.

MISOCAPELUS.

No. 124.] SATURDAY, MAY 25, 1751.

——Tacitum sylvas inter reptare salubres,
Curantem quicquid dignum sapiente bonoque est.
HOR.

To range in silence through each healthful wood,
And muse what's worthy of the wise and good.
ELPHINSTON.

THE season of the year is now come, in which the theatres are shut, and the card-tables forsaken; the regions of luxury are for awhile unpeopled, and pleasure leads out her votaries to groves and gardens, to still scenes and erratic gratifications. Those who have passed many months in a continual tumult of diversion; who have never opened their eyes in the morning, but upon some new appointment; nor slept at night without a dream of dances, music, and good hands, or of soft sighs and humble supplications; must now retire to distant provinces, where the syrens of flattery are scarcely to be heard, where beauty sparkles without praise or envy, and wit is repeated only by the echo.

As I think it one of the most important duties of social benevolence to give warning of the approach of calamity, when by timely prevention it may be turned aside, or by preparatory measures be more easily endured, I cannot feel the increasing warmth, or observe the lengthening days, without considering the condition of my fair readers, who are now preparing to leave all that has so long filled up their hours, all from which they have been accustomed to hope for delight; and who, till fashion proclaims the liberty of returning to the seats of mirth and elegance, must endure the rugged 'squire, the sober housewife, the loud huntsman, or the formal parson, the roar of obstreperous jollity, or the dulness of prudential instruction; without any retreat but to the gloom of soli-

tude, where they will yet find greater inconveniences, and must learn, however unwillingly, to endure themselves.

In winter the life of the polite and gay may be said to roll on with a strong and rapid current; they float along from pleasure to pleasure, without the trouble of regulating their own motions, and pursue the course of the stream in all the felicity of inattention; content that they find themselves in progression, and careless whither they are going. But the months of summer are a kind of sleeping stagnation without wind or tide, where they are left to force themselves forward by their own labour, and to direct their passage by their own skill; and where, if they have not some internal principle of activity, they must be stranded upon shallows, or lie torpid in a perpetual calm.

There are, indeed, some to whom this universal dissolution of gay societies affords a welcome opportunity of quitting, without disgrace, the post which they have found themselves unable to maintain; and of seeming to retreat only at the call of nature, from assemblies where, after a short triumph of uncontested superiority, they are overpowered by some new intruder of softer elegance or sprightlier vivacity. By these, hopeless of victory, and yet ashamed to confess a conquest, the summer is regarded as a release from the fatiguing service of celebrity, a dismission to more certain joys and a safer empire. They now solace themselves with the influence which they shall obtain, where they have no rival to fear; and with the lustre which they shall effuse, when nothing can be seen of brighter splendour. They imagine, while they are preparing for their journey, the admiration with which the rustics will crowd about them; plan the laws of a new assembly; or contrive to delude provincial ignorance with a fictitious mode. A thousand pleasing expectations swarm in the fancy; and all the approaching weeks are filled with distinctions, honours, and authority.

But others, who have lately entered the world, or have yet had no proofs of its inconstancy and desertion, are cut off, by this cruel interruption, from the enjoyment of their prerogatives, and doomed to lose four months in unactive obscurity. Many complaints do vexation and desire extort from those exiled tyrants of the town, against the inexorable sun, who pursues his course without any regard to love or beauty; and visits either tropic at the stated time, whether shunned or courted, deprecated or implored.

To them who leave the places of public resort in the full bloom of reputation, and withdraw from admiration, courtship, submission, and applause, a rural triumph can give nothing equivalent. The praise of ignorance, and the subjection of weakness, are little regarded by beauties who have been accustomed to more important conquests, and more valuable panegyrics. Nor indeed should the powers which have made havoc in the theatres, or borne down rivalry in courts be degraded to a mean attack upon the untravelled heir, or ignoble contest with the ruddy milkmaid.

How then must four long months be worn away? Four months, in which there will be no routs, no shows, no ridottos; in which visits must be regulated by the weather, and assemblies will depend upon the moon! The Platonists imagine, that the future punishment of those who have in this life debased their reason by subjection to their senses, and have preferred the gross gratifications of lewdness and luxury, to the pure and sublime felicity of virtue and contemplation, will arise from the predominance and solicitations of the same appetites, in a state which can furnish no means of appeasing them. I cannot but suspect that this month, bright with sunshine, and fragrant with perfumes; this month, which covers the meadow with verdure, and decks the gardens with all the mixtures of colorific radiance; this month, from which the man of fancy expects new infusions of imagery, and the naturalist new scenes of observation; this month will chain down multitudes to the Platonic penance of desire without enjoyment, and hurry them from the highest satisfactions, which they have yet learned to conceive, into a state of hopeless wishes and pining recollection, where the eye of vanity will look round for admiration to no purpose, and the hand of avarice shuffle cards in a bower with ineffectual dexterity.

From the tediousness of this melancholy suspension of life, I would willingly preserve those who are exposed to it only by inexperience; who want not inclination to wisdom or virtue, though they have been dissipated by negligence, or misled by example; and who would gladly find the way to rational happiness, though it should be necessary to struggle with habit, and abandon fashion. To these many arts of spending time might be recommended, which would neither sadden the present hour with weariness, nor the future with repentance.

It would seem impossible to a solitary speculatist, that a human being can want employment. To be born in ignorance with a capacity of knowledge, and to be placed in the midst of a world filled with variety, perpetually pressing upon the senses and irritating curiosity, is surely a sufficient security against the languishment of inattention. Novelty is indeed necessary to preserve eagerness and alacrity; but art and nature have stores inexhaustible by human intellects; and every moment produces something new to him, who has quickened his faculties by diligent observation.

Some studies, for which the country and the summer afford peculiar opportunities, I shall perhaps endeavour to recommend in a future es-

y; but if there be any apprehension not apt
admit unaccustomed ideas, or any attention
stubborn and inflexible, as not easily to com-
y with new directions, even these obstructions
nnot exclude the pleasure of application; for
ere is a higher and nobler employment, to
hich all faculties are adapted by him who gave
em. The duties of religion, sincerely and re-
larly performed, will always be sufficient to
alt the meanest, and to exercise the highest
derstanding. That mind will never be va-
nt, which is frequently recalled by stated du-
s to meditations on eternal interests; nor can
y hour be long, which is spent in obtaining
me new qualification for celestial happiness.

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o. 125.] TUESDAY, MAY 28, 1751.

Descriptas servare vices, operumque colores,
Cur ego, si nequeo ignoroque, poëta salutor?
HOR.

But if, through weakness, or my want of art,
can't to every different style impart
The proper strokes and colours it may claim,
Why am I honour'd with a poet's name?
FRANCIS.

is one of the maxims of the civil law, that
initions are hazardous. Things modified by
man understandings, subject to varieties of
mplication, and changeable as experience ad-
nces knowledge, or accident influences caprice,
scarcely to be included in any standing form
expression, because they are always suffering
ne alteration of their state. Definition is,
eed, not the province of man; every thing
et above or below our faculties. The works
operations of nature are too great in their
ent, or too much diffused in their relations,
the performances of art too inconsistent and
ertain, to be reduced to any determinate
t. It is impossible to impress upon our minds
adequate and just representation of an ob-
so great, that we can never take it into our
w, or so mutable, that it is always changing
ler our eye, and has already lost its form
ile we are labouring to conceive it.

Definitions have been no less difficult or un-
ain in criticisms than in law. Imagina-
, a licentious and vagrant faculty, unsuscep-
e of limitations, and impatient of restraint,
always endeavoured to baffle the logician,
erplex the confines of distinction, and burst
enclosures of regularity. There is, there-
, scarcely any species of writing, of which
can tell what is its essence, and what are its
stituents; every new genius produces some
ovation, which, when invented and improved,
verts the rules which the practice of forego-
authors had established.

Comedy has been particularly unpropitious to definers; though perhaps they might properly have contented themselves with declaring it to be *such a dramatic representation of human life, as may excite mirth*, they have embarrassed their definition with the means by which the comic writers attain their end, without considering that the various methods of exhilarating their audience, not being limited by nature, cannot be comprised in precept. Thus, some make comedy a representation of mean, and others of bad men; some think that its essence consists in the unimportance, others in the fictitiousness of the transaction. But any man's reflections will inform him, that every dramatic composition which raises mirth is comic: and that, to raise mirth, it is by no means universally necessary, that the personages should be either mean or corrupt, nor always requisite, that the action should be trivial, nor ever, that it should be fictitious.

If the two kinds of dramatic poetry had been defined only by their effects upon the mind, some absurdities might have been prevented, with which the compositions of our greatest poets are disgraced, who, for want of some settled ideas and accurate distinctions, have unhappily confounded tragic with comic sentiments. They seem to have thought, that as the meanness of personages constituted comedy, their greatness was sufficient to form a tragedy; and that nothing was necessary but that they should crowd the scene with monarchs, and generals, and guards; and make them talk, at certain intervals, of the downfall of kingdoms, and the route of armies. They have not considered, that thoughts or incidents, in themselves ridiculous, grow still more grotesque by the solemnity of such characters; that reason and nature are uniform and inflexible; and that what is despicable and absurd, will not, by any association with splendid titles, become rational or great; that the most important affairs, by an intermixture of an unseasonable levity, may be made contemptible; and that the robes of royalty can give no dignity to nonsense or to folly.

"Comedy," says Horace, "sometimes raises her voice; and Tragedy may likewise on proper occasions abate her dignity; but as the comic personages can only depart from her familiarity of style, when the more violent passions are put in motion, the heroes and queens of tragedy should never descend to trifle, but in the hours of ease, and intermissions of danger. Yet in the tragedy of Don Sebastian, when the King of Portugal is in the hands of his enemy, and having just drawn the lot, by which he is condemned to die, breaks out into a wild boast that his dust shall take possession of Africe, the dialogue proceeds thus between the captive and his conqueror:

Muley Moluch. What shall I do to conquer thee?

Seb. Impossible!
Souls know no conquerors.
M. Mol. I'll show thee for a monster thro' my Afric.
Seb. No, thou canst only show me for a man:
Afric is stored with monsters; man's a prodigy
Thy subjects have not seen.
M. Mol. Thou talk'st as if
Still at the head of battle.
Seb. Thou mistak'st,
For there I would not talk.
Benducar, the Minister. Sure he would sleep.

This conversation, with the sly remark of the minister, can only be found not to be comic, because it wants the probability necessary to representations of common life, and degenerates too much towards buffoonery and farce.

The same play affords a smart return of the general to the emperor, who, enforcing his orders for the death of Sebastian, vents his impatience in this abrupt threat.

——No more replies,
But see thou dost it; Or——

To which Dorax answers,

Choke in that threat: I can say Or as loud.

A thousand instances of such impropriety might be produced, were not one scene in Aureng-Zebe sufficient to exemplify it. Indamora, a captive queen, having Aureng-Zebe for her lover, employs Arimant, to whose charge she had been entrusted, and whom she had made sensible of her charms, to carry her message to his rival.

ARIMANT, *with a letter in his hand*; INDAMORA.

Arim. And I the messenger to him from you?
Your empire you to tyranny pursue:
You lay commands both cruel and unjust,
To serve my rival, and betray my trust.
Ind. You first betray'd your trust in loving me:
And should not I my own advantage see?
Serving my love, you may my friendship gain;
You know the rest of your pretences vain.
You must, my Arimant, you must be kind:
'Tis in your nature, and your noble mind.
Arim. I'll to the king, and straight my trust resign.
Ind. His trust you may, but you shall never mine.
Heaven made you love me for no other end,
But to become my confident and friend:
As such, I keep no secret from your sight,
And therefore make you judge how ill I write;
Read it, and tell me freely then your mind,
If 'tis indited, as I meant it, kind.
Arim. *I ask not Heaven my freedom to restore,* [Reading.
But only for your sake.——I'll read no more.
And yet I must——
Less for my own, than for your sorrow sad—— [Reading.
Another line like this, would make me mad——
Heaven! she goes on—yet more—and yet more kind! [*As reading.*
Each sentence is a dagger to my mind.
See me this night—— [Reading.
Thank fortune, who did such a friend provide,
For faithful Arimant shall be your guide.
Not only to be made an instrument,
But pre-engaged without my own consent!
Ind. Unknown t' engage you still augments my score,
And gives you scope of meriting the more.
Arim. The best of men
Some interest in their actions must confess;
None merit, but in hope they may possess:
The fatal paper rather let me tear,
Than, like Bellerophon, my own sentence bear.
Ind. You may; but 'twill not be your best advice:
'Twill only give me pains of writing twice.
You know you must obey me, soon or late:
Why should you vainly struggle with your fate?
Arim. I thank thee, Heaven! thou hast been wondrous kind!
Why am I thus to slavery designed,
And yet am cheated with a free born mind
Or make thy orders with my reason suit.
Or let me live by sense, a glorious brute—
She frowns.
You frown, and I obey with speed, before
That dreadful sentence comes, *See me no more.*

In this scene, every circumstance concurs to turn tragedy to farce. The wild absurdity of the expedient; the contemptible subjection of the lover; the folly of obliging him to read the letter only because it ought to have been concealed from him; the frequent interruptions of amorous impatience; the faint expostulation of a voluntary slave; the imperious haughtiness of a tyrant without power; the deep reflection of the yielding rebel upon fate and free-will; and his wise wish to lose his reason as soon as he finds himself about to do what he cannot persuade his reason to approve, are surely sufficient to awaken the most torpid risibility.

There is scarce a tragedy of the last century which has not debased its most important incidents and polluted its most serious interlocutions, with buffoonery and meanness: but though perhaps it cannot be pretended that the present age has added much to the force and efficacy of the drama, it has at least been able to escape many faults, which either ignorance had overlooked, or indulgence had licensed. The latter tragedies indeed have faults of another kind, perhaps more destructive to delight, though less open to censure. The perpetual tumour of phrase with which every thought is now expressed by every personage, the paucity of adventurers, which regularity admits, and the unvaried equality of flowing dialogue, has taken away from our present writers almost all that dominion over the passions which was the boast of their predecessors. Yet they may at least claim this commendation, that they avoid gross faults, and that if they cannot often move terror or pity, they are always careful not to provoke laughter.

No. 126.] Saturday, June 1, 1751.

—Nihil est aliud magnum quàm multa minuta.
VET. AUCT.

ands form the mountain, moments make the year.
YOUNG.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

Among other topics of conversation which your apers supply, I was lately engaged in a dis-ussion of the character given by Tranquilla of er lover Venustulus, whom, notwithstanding ie severity of his mistress, the greater number eemed inclined to acquit of unmanly or cul-able timidity.

One of the company remarked, that prudence ught to be distinguished from fear; and that if Venustulus was afraid of nocturnal adventures, o man who considered how much every avenue f the town was infested with robbers could hink him blameable; for why should life be azarded without prospect of honour or advan-age? Another was of opinion, that a brave an might be afraid of crossing the river in the almest weather, and declared, that, for his part, hile there were coaches and a bridge, he would ever be seen tottering in a wooden case, out of hich he might be thrown by any irregular agi-ation, or which might be overset by accident or egligence, or by the force of a sudden gust, or ie rush of a larger vessel. It was his custom, e said, to keep the security of day-light, and ry ground; for it was a maxim with him, that o wise man ever perished by water, or was st in the dark.

The next was humbly of opinion, that if Tranquilla had seen, like him, the cattle run paring about the meadows in the hot months, he would not have thought meanly of her lover r not venturing his safety among them. His eighbour then told us, that for his part he was ot ashamed to confess, that he could not see a at, though it was dead, without palpitation; hat he had been driven six times out of his dgings either by rats or mice; and that he al-ays had a bed in the closet for his servant, hom he called up whenever the enemy was in otion. Another wondered that any man should ink himself disgraced by a precipitate retreat om a dog; for there was always a possibility hat a dog might be mad; and that surely, ough there was no danger but of being bit by fierce animal, there was more wisdom in flight han contest. By all these declarations another as encouraged to confess, that if he had been mitted to the honour of paying his addresses to Tranquilla, he should have been likely to incur e same censure; for, among all the animals on which nature has impressed deformity and orror, there is none whom he durst not en-unter rather than a beetle.

Thus, Sir, though cowardice is universally defined too close and anxious an attention to personal safety, there will be found scarcely any fear, however excessive in its degree, or unrea-sonable in its object, which will be allowed to characterise a coward. Fear is a passion which every man feels so frequently predominant in his own breast, that he is unwilling to hear it censured with great asperity; and, perhaps, if we confess the truth, the same restraint which would hinder a man from declaiming against the frauds of any employment among those who pro-fess it, should withhold him from treating fear with contempt among human beings.

Yet since fortitude is one of those virtues which the condition of our nature makes hourly necessary, I think you cannot better direct your admonitions than against superfluous and panic terrors. Fear is implanted in us as a preservative from evil; but its duty, like that of other pas-sions, is not to overbear reason, but to assist it; nor should it be suffered to tyrannize in the ima-gination, to raise phantoms of horror, or beset life with supernumerary distresses.

To be always afraid of losing life is, indeed, scarcely to enjoy a life that can deserve the care of preservation. He that once indulges idle fears will never be at rest. Our present state admits only of a kind of negative security; we must conclude ourselves safe when we see no danger, or none inadequate to our powers of opposition. Death indeed continually hovers about us, but hovers commonly unseen, unless we sharpen our sight by useless curiosity.

There is always a point at which caution, however solicitous, must limit its preservatives, because one terror often counteracts another. I once knew one of the speculatists of cowardice, whose reigning disturbance was the dread of house-breakers. His inquiries were for nine years employed upon the best method of barring a window, or a door; and many an hour has he spent in establishing the preference of a bolt to a lock. He had at last, by the daily superaddition of new expedients, contrived a door which could never be forced: for one bar was secured by another with such intricacy of subordination that he was himself not always able to disengage them in the proper method. He was happy in this fortification, till being asked how he would escape if he was threatened by fire, he discover-ed, that, with all his care and expense, he had only been assisting his own destruction. He then immediately tore off his bolts, and now leaves at night his outer door half-locked, that he may not by his own folly perish in the flames.

There is one species of terror which those who are unwilling to suffer the reproach of cowardice have wisely dignified with the name of *antipathy*. A man who talks with intrepidity of the mon-sters of the wilderness while they are out of sight, will readily confess his *antipathy* to a mole,

a weasel, or a frog. He has indeed no dread of harm from an insect or a worm, but his *antipathy* turns him pale whenever they approach him. He believes that a boat will transport him with as much safety as his neighbours, but he cannot conquer his *antipathy* to the water. Thus he goes on without any reproach from his own reflections, and every day multiplies *antipathies*, till he becomes contemptible to others, and burdensome to himself.

It is indeed certain, that impressions of dread may sometimes be unluckily made by objects not in themselves justly formidable; but when fear is discovered to be groundless, it is to be eradicated like other false opinions, and *antipathies* are generally superable by a single effort. He that has been taught to shudder at a mouse, if he can persuade himself to risk one encounter, will find his own superiority, and exchange his terrors for the pride of conquest.

I am, Sir, &c.

THRASO.

SIR,

As you profess to extend your regard to the minuteness of decency, as well as to the dignity of science, I cannot forbear to lay before you a mode of persecution by which I have been exiled to taverns and coffee-houses, and deterred from entering the doors of my friends.

Among the ladies who please themselves with splendid furniture, or elegant entertainment, it is a practice very common, to ask every guest how he likes the carved work of the cornice, or the figures of the tapestry; the china at the table, or the plate on the side-board; and on all occasions to inquire his opinion of their judgment and their choice. Melania has laid her new watch in the window nineteen times, that she may desire me to look upon it. Calista has an art of dropping her snuff-box by drawing out her handkerchief, that when I pick it up I may admire it; and Fulgentia has conducted me by mistake into the wrong room, at every visit I have paid since her picture was put into a new frame.

I hope, Mr. Rambler, you will inform them, that no man should be denied the privilege of silence, or tortured to false declarations; and that though ladies may justly claim to be exempt from rudeness, they have no right to force unwilling civilities. To please is a laudable and elegant ambition, and is properly rewarded with honest praise; but to seize applause by violence, and call out for commendation, without knowing, or caring to know, whether it be given from conviction, is a species of tyranny by which modesty is oppressed, and sincerity corrupted. The tribute of admiration thus exacted by impudence and importunity, differs from the respect paid to silent merit, as the plunder of a pirate from the merchant's profit.

I am, &c.

MISOCOLAX.

SIR,

YOUR great predecessor, the Spectator, endeavoured to diffuse among his female readers a desire of knowledge; nor can I charge you, though you do not seem equally attentive to the ladies, with endeavouring to discourage them from any laudable pursuit. But however either he or you may excite our curiosity, you have not yet informed us how it may be gratified. The world seems to have formed a universal conspiracy against our understandings; our questions are supposed not to expect answers, our arguments are confuted with a jest, and we are treated like beings who transgress the limits of our nature whenever we aspire to seriousness or improvement.

I inquired yesterday of a gentlemen eminent for astronomical skill, what made the day long in summer, and short in winter; and was told that nature protracted the days in summer, lest ladies should want time to walk in the park; and the nights in winter, lest they should not have hours sufficient to spend at the card-table.

I hope you do not doubt but I heard such information with just contempt, and I desire you to discover to this great master of ridicule, that I was far from wanting any intelligence which he could have given me. I asked the question with no other intention than to set him free from the necessity of silence, and gave him an opportunity of mingling on equal terms with a polite assembly, from which however uneasy, he could not then escape, by a kind introduction of the only subject on which I believed him able to speak with propriety,

I am, &c.

GENEROSA.

No. 127.] TUESDAY, JUNE 4, 1751.

Capisti melius quàm desinis: ultima primis
Cedunt: dissimiles, hic vir, et ille puer.

OVID

Succeeding years thy early fame destroy;
Thou, who began'st a man, wilt end a boy.

POLITIAN, a name eminent among the restorers of polite literature, when he published a collection of epigrams, prefixed to many of them the year of his age at which they were composed. He might design by this information, either to boast the early maturity of his genius, or to conciliate indulgence to the puerility of his performances. But, whatever was his intent, it is remarked by Scaliger, he very little promoted his own reputation, because he fell below the promise which his first productions had given,

d in the latter part of his life seldom equalled e sallies of his youth.

It is not uncommon for those who, at their st entrance into the world, were distinguished r attainments or abilities, to disappoint the pes which they had raised, and to end in glect and obscurity that life which they be- n in celebrity and honour. To the long talogue of the inconveniences of old age, hich moral and satirical writers have so piously displayed, may be often added the loss fame.

The advance of the human mind towards any ject of laudable pursuit, may be compared the progress of a body driven by a blow. It oves for a time with great velocity and vigour, t the force of the first impulse is perpetually creasing, and, though it should encounter no stacle capable of quelling it by a sudden stop, resistance of the medium through which it sses, and the latent inequalities of the smooth- surface, will, in a short time, by continued ardation, wholly overpower it. Some hin- ances will be found in every road of life, but that fixes his eyes upon any thing at a dis- nce, necessarily loses sight of all that fills up e intermediate space, and therefore sets for- rd with alacrity and confidence, nor suspects housand obstacles by which he afterwards ds his passage embarrassed and obstructed. me are indeed stopped at once in their career a sudden shock of calamity, or diverted to a ferent direction by the cross impulse of some olent passion; but far the greater part lan- ish by slow degrees, deviate at first into slight tiquities, and themselves scarcely perceive at hat time their ardour forsook them, or when y lost sight of their original design.

Weariness and negligence are perpetually vailing by silent encroachments, assisted by ferent causes, and not observed till they can- , without great difficulty, be opposed. La- r necessarily requires pauses of ease and re- ation, and the deliciousness of ease common- makes us unwilling to return to labour. We, haps, prevail upon ourselves to renew our empts, but eagerly listen to every argument frequent interpositions of amusement; for, en indolence has once entered upon the nd, it can scarcely be dispossessed but by such rts as very few are willing to exert.

t is the fate of industry to be equally en- gered by miscarriage and success, by con- nce and despondency. He that engages in reat undertaking, with a false opinion of its ility, or too high conceptions of his own ength, is easily discouraged by the first hin- nce of his advances, because he had promised self an equal and perpetual progression hout impediment or disturbance; when un- ected interruptions break in upon him, he n the state of a man surprised by a tempest, where he purposed only to bask in the calm, or sport in the shallows.

It is not only common to find the difficulty of an enterprise greater, but the profit less, than hope had pictured it. Youth enters the world with very happy prejudices in her own favour. She imagines herself not only certain of accomplishing every adventure, but of obtaining those rewards which the accomplishment may deserve. She is not easily persuaded to believe that the force of merit can be resisted by obstinacy and avarice, or its lustre darkened by envy and malignity. She has not yet learned that the most evident claims to praise or preferment may be rejected by malice against conviction, or by indolence without examination; that they may be sometimes defeated by artifices, and sometimes overborne by clamour: that, in the mingled numbers of mankind, many need no other provocation to enmity than that they find themselves excelled; that others have ceased their curiosity, and considered every man who fills the mouth of report with a new name, as an intruder upon their retreat, and disturber of their repose; that some are engaged in complications of interest which they imagine endangered by every innovation; that many yield themselves up implicitly to every report which hatred disseminates or folly scatters; and that whoever aspires to the notice of the public, has in almost every man an enemy and a rival; and must struggle with the opposition of the daring, and elude the stratagems of the timorous, must quicken the frigid, and soften the obdurate, must reclaim perverseness and inform stupidity.

It is no wonder that when the prospect of reward has vanished, the zeal of enterprise should cease; for who would persevere to cultivate the soil which he has, after long labour, discovered to be barren? He who hath pleased himself with anticipated praises, and expected that he should meet in every place with patronage or friendship, will soon remit his vigour, when he finds that, from those who desire to be considered as his admirers, nothing can be hoped but cold civility, and that many refuse to own his excellence, lest they should be too justly expected to reward it.

A man thus cut off from the prospect of that port to which his address and fortitude had been employed to steer him, often abandons himself to chance and to the wind, and glides carelessly and idle down the current of life, without resolution to make another effort, till he is swallowed up by the gulf of mortality.

Others are betrayed to the same desertion of themselves by a contrary fallacy. It was said of Hannibal, that he wanted nothing to the completion of his martial virtues, but that when he had gained a victory he should know how to use

it. The folly of desisting too soon from successful labours, and the haste of enjoying advantages before they are secured, are often fatal to men of impetuous desire, to men whose consciousness of uncommon powers fills them with presumption, and who, having borne opposition down before them, and left emulation panting behind, are early persuaded to imagine that they have reached the heights of perfection, and that now, being no longer in danger from competitors, they may pass the rest of their days in the enjoyment of their acquisitions, in contemplation of their own superiority, and in attention to their own praises, and look unconcerned from their eminence upon the toils and contentions of meaner beings.

It is not sufficiently considered in the hour of exultation, that all human excellence is comparative; that no man performs much but in proportion to what others accomplish, or to the time and opportunities which have been allowed him; and that he who stops at any point of excellence is every day sinking in estimation, because his improvement grows continually more incommensurate to his life. Yet, as no man willingly quits opinions favourable to himself, they who have once been justly celebrated, imagine that they still have the same pretensions to regard, and seldom perceive the diminution of their character while there is time to recover it. Nothing then remains but murmurs and remorse; for if the spendthrift's poverty be embittered by the reflection that he once was rich, how must the idler's obscurity be clouded by remembering that he once had lustre!

These errors all arise from an original mistake of the true motives of action. He that never extends his view beyond the praises or rewards of men, will be dejected by neglect and envy, or infatuated by honours and applause. But the consideration that life is only deposited in his hands to be employed in obedience to a Master who will regard his endeavours, not his success, would have preserved him from trivial elations and discouragements, and enabled him to proceed with constancy and cheerfulness, neither enervated by commendation, nor intimidated by censure.

No. 128.] SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 1751.

Αἰὼν δ' ἀσταλὴς
Οὐκ ἰγίνετ', οὐτ' Αἰακίδᾳ παρὰ Πηλῇ,
Οὔτε παῖ' ἀντιβίου
Κάδμου· λίγονταί γε μὰν βρότοι
Ὄλβου ὑπέρτατον ὦ
Σχών. PIND.

For not the brave, or wise, or great,
E'er yet had happiness complete:
Nor Peleus, grandson of the sky,
Nor Cadmus scaped the shafts of pain,
Though favour'd by the Powers on high,
With every bliss that man can gain.

THE writers who have undertaken the task of reconciling mankind to their present state, and relieving the discontent produced by the various distribution of terrestial advantages, frequently remind us that we judge too hastily of good and evil; that we view only the superficies of life, and determine of the whole by a very small part; and that in the condition of men it frequently happens, that grief and anxiety lie hid under the golden robes of prosperity, and the gloom of calamity is cheered by secret radiations of hope and comfort; as in the works of nature the bog is sometimes covered with flowers, and the mine concealed in the barren crags.

None but those who have learned the art of subjecting their senses as well as reason to hypothetical systems, can be persuaded by the most specious rhetorician that the lots of life are equal; yet it cannot be denied that every one has his peculiar pleasures and vexations, and external accidents operate variously upon different minds, and that no man can exactly judge from his own sensations, what another would feel in the same circumstances.

If the general disposition of things be estimated by the representation which every one makes of his own estate, the world must be considered as the abode of sorrow and misery; for how few can forbear to relate their troubles and distresses? If we judge by the account which may be obtained of every man's fortune from others, it may be concluded, that we all are placed in an elysian region, overspread with the luxuriance of plenty, and fanned by the breezes of felicity; since scarcely any complaint is uttered without censure from those that hear it, and almost all are allowed to have obtained a provision at least adequate to their virtue or their understanding, to possess either more than they deserve, or more than they enjoy.

We are either born with such dissimilitude of temper and inclination, or receive so many of our ideas and opinions from the state of life in which we are engaged, that the griefs and cares of one part of mankind seem to the other hypocrisy, folly, and affectation. Every class of society has its cant of lamentation, which is understood or regarded by none but themselves; and every part of life has its uneasiness, which those who do not feel them will not commiserate. An event which spreads distraction over half the commercial world, assembles the trading companies in councils and committees, and shakes the nerves of a thousand stockjobbers, is read by the landlord and the farmer with frigid indifference. An affair of love, which fills the young breast with incessant alternations of hope and fear, and steals away the night and day from

ery other pleasure or employment, is regarded them whose passions time has extinguished, an amusement, which can properly raise ither joy nor sorrow, and, though it may be ffered to fill the vacuity of an idle moment, ould always give way to prudence or interest. He that never had any other desire than to fill a st with money, or to add another manor to estate, who never grieved but at a bad mort- ge, or entered a company but to make a bar- n, would be astonished to hear of beings own among the polite and gay by the denomi- ion of wits. How would he gape with curio- y, or grin with contempt, at the mention of ngs who have no wish but to speak what was er spoken before; who, if they happen to in- rit wealth, often exhaust their patrimonies in ating those who will hear them talk; and, hey are poor, neglect opportunities of im- ving their fortunes, for the pleasure of mak- others laugh! How slowly would he be- e that there are men who would rather lose gacy than the reputation of a distich; who nk it less disgrace to want money than repar- ; whom the vexation of having been foiled contest of raillery is sometimes sufficient to drive of sleep; and who would esteem it a ater evil to miss a profitable bargain by some dental delay, than not to have thought of a rt reply till the time of producing it was ! How little would he suspect that this d of idleness and frolic enters every assembly h a beating bosom, like a litigant on the day ecision, and revolves the probability of ap- ise with the anxiety of a conspirator, whose depends upon the next night; that at the r of retirement he carries home, under a w of airy negligence, a heart lacerated with , or depressed with disappointment; and ures himself in his closet, that he may dis- mber his memory at leisure, review the ress of the day, state with accuracy his loss ain of reputation, and examine the causes of ailure or success?

et more remote from common conceptions the numerous and restless anxieties, by which le happiness is particularly disturbed. A ry philosopher would imagine ladies born an exemption from care and sorrow lulled rpetual quiet, and feasted with unmingled ure; for, what can interrupt the content of , upon whom one age has laboured after ner to confer honours, and accumulate im- ities; those to whom rudeness is infamy, insult is cowardice; whose eye commands rave, and whose smile softens the severe; m the sailor travels to adorn, the soldier s to defend, and the poet wears out life to cele- ; who claim tribute from every art and sci- and for whom all who approach them endea- to multiply delights, without requiring from any return but willingness to be pleased?

Surely among these favourites of nature, thus unacquainted with toil and danger, felicity must have fixed her residence; they must know only the changes of more vivid or more gentle joys; their life must always move either to the slow or sprightly melody of the lyre of gladness; they can never assemble but to pleasure, or retire but to peace.

Such would be the thoughts of every man who should hover at a distance round the world, and know it only by conjecture and speculation. But experience will soon discover how easily those are disgusted who have been made nice by plenty and tender by indulgence. He will soon see to how many dangers power is exposed which has no other guard than youth and beauty, and how easily that tranquillity is molested which can only be soothed with the songs of flattery. It is impossible to supply wants as fast as an idle imagination may be able to form them, or to remove all inconveniences by which elegance refined into impatience may be offended. None are so hard to please, as those whom satiety of pleasure makes weary of themselves; nor any so readily provoked as those who have been always courted with an emulation of civility.

There are indeed some strokes which the envy of fate aims immediately at the fair. The mistress of Catullus wept for her sparrow many centuries ago, and lapdogs will be sometimes sick in the present age. The most fashionable brocade is subject to stains; a pinner, the pride of Brussels, may be torn by a careless washer; a picture may drop from a watch; or the triumph of a new suit may be interrupted on the first day of its enjoyment, and all distinctions of dress unexpectedly obliterated by a general mourning.

Such is the state of every age, every sex, and every condition: all have their cares, either from nature or from folly: and whoever therefore finds himself inclined to envy another, should remember that he knows not the real condition which he desires to obtain, but is certain that, by indulging a vicious passion, he must lessen that happiness which he thinks already too sparingly bestowed.

No. 129.] TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 1751.

——Nunc, o nunc, Dædale, dixit,
Materiam, qua sis ingeniosus, habes:
Possidet en terras, et possidet æquora, Minos.
Nec tellus nostræ, nec patet unda fugæ.
Restat iter cœlo: cœlo tentabimus ire
Da veniam cœpto, Jupiter alte, meo.—OVID.

Now Dædalus, behold, by fate assign'd,
A task proportion'd to thy mighty mind!
Unconquer'd bars on earth and sea withstand;
Thine, Minos, is the main, and thine the land.

The skies are open—let us try the skies:
Forgive great Jove, the daring enterprise.

Moralists, like other writers, instead of casting their eyes abroad in the living world, and endeavouring to form maxims of practice and new hints of theory, content their curiosity with that secondary knowledge which books afford, and think themselves entitled to reverence by a new arrangement of an ancient system, or new illustration of established principles. The sage precepts of the first instructors of the world are transmitted from age to age with little variation, and echoed from one author to another, not perhaps without some loss of their original force at every repercussion.

I know not whether any other reason than this idleness of imitation can be assigned for that uniform and constant partiality, by which some vices have hitherto escaped censure, and some virtues wanted recommendation; nor can I discover why else we have been warned only against part of our enemies, while the rest have been suffered to steal upon us without notice; why the heart has on one side been doubly fortified, and laid open on the other to the incursions of error, and the ravages of vice.

Among the favourite topics of moral declamation may be numbered the miscarriages of imprudent boldness, and the folly of attempts beyond our power. Every page of every philosopher is crowded with examples of temerity that sunk under burdens which she laid upon herself, and called out enemies to battle by whom she was destroyed.

Their remarks are too just to be disputed, and too salutary to be rejected; but there is likewise some danger lest timorous prudence should be inculcated, till courage and enterprise are wholly repressed, and the mind congealed in perpetual inactivity by the fatal influence of frigorific wisdom.

Every man should, indeed, carefully compare his force with his undertaking; for though we ought not to live only for our own sakes, and though therefore danger or difficulty should not be avoided merely because we may expose ourselves to misery or disgrace; yet it may be justly required of us, not to throw away our lives upon inadequate and hopeless designs, since we might, by a just estimate of our abilities, become more useful to mankind.

There is an irrational contempt of danger, which approaches nearly to the folly, if not the guilt, of suicide; there is a ridiculous perseverance in impracticable schemes, which is justly punished with ignominy and reproach. But in the wide regions of probability, which are the proper province of prudence and election, there is always room to deviate on either side of rectitude without rushing against apparent absurdity; and, according to the inclinations of nature, or the impressions of precept, the daring and the cautious may move in different directions without touching upon rashness or cowardice.

That there is a middle path which it is every man's duty to find, and to keep, is unanimously confessed; but it is likewise acknowledged that this middle path is so narrow, that it cannot easily be discovered, and so little beaten that there are no certain marks by which it can be followed: the care therefore of all those who conduct others has been, that whenever they decline into obliquities, they should tend towards the side of safety.

It can, indeed, raise no wonder that temerity has been generally censured; for it is one of the vices with which few can be charged, and which therefore great numbers are ready to condemn. It is the vice of noble and generous minds, the exuberance of magnanimity, and the ebullition of genius; and is therefore not regarded with much tenderness, because it never flatters us by that appearance of softness and imbecility which is commonly necessary to conciliate compassion. But if the same attention had been applied to the search of arguments against the folly of presupposing impossibilities and anticipating frustration, I know not whether many would not have been roused to usefulness, who having been taught to confound prudence with timidity, never ventured to excel, lest they should unfortunately fail.

It is necessary to distinguish our own interests from that of others, and that distinction will perhaps assist us in fixing the just limits of caution and adventurousness. In an undertaking that involves the happiness or the safety of many, we have certainly no right to hazard more than is allowed by those who partake the danger; but where only ourselves can suffer by miscarriage, we are not confined within such narrow limits; and still less is the reproach of temerity, when numbers will receive advantage by success, and only one be incommoded by failure.

Men are generally willing to hear precepts by which ease is favoured; and as no resentment is raised by general representations of human folly, even in those who are most eminent and jealous of comparative reputation, we confess without reluctance, that vain man is ignorant of his own weakness, and therefore frequently presumes to attempt what he can never accomplish; but it ought likewise to be remembered that man is no less ignorant of his own power, and might perhaps have accomplished a thousand designs, which the prejudice of cowardice restrained him from attempting.

It is observed in the golden verses of Pythagoras, that *Power is never far from necessity*. The vigour of the human mind quickly appears, when there is no longer any place for doubt and hesi-

ation, when diffidence is absorbed in the sense of danger, or overwhelmed by some resistless passion. We then soon discover, that difficulty is, for the most part, the daughter of idleness, that the obstacles with which our way seemed to be obstructed were only phantoms, which we believed real, because we durst not advance to a close examination; and we learn that it is impossible to determine without experience how much constancy may endure, or perseverance perform.

But whatever pleasure may be found in the review of distresses when art or courage has surmounted them, few will be persuaded to wish that they may be awakened by want or terror to the conviction of their own abilities. Every one should therefore endeavour to invigorate himself by reason and reflection, and determine to exert the latent force that nature may have deposited in him, before the hour of exigence comes upon him, and compulsion shall torture him to diligence. It is below the dignity of a reasonable being to owe that strength to necessity which ought always to act at the call of choice, or to need any other motive to industry than the desire of performing his duty.

Reflections that may drive away despair, cannot be wanting to him who considers how much life is now advanced beyond the state of naked undisciplined, uninstructed nature. Whatever has been effected for convenience or elegance, while it was yet unknown, was believed impossible; and therefore would never have been attempted, had not some, more daring than the rest, adventured to bid defiance to prejudice and censure. Nor is there yet any reason to doubt that the same labour would be rewarded with the same success. There are qualities in the products of nature yet undiscovered, and combinations in the powers of art yet untried. It is the duty of every man to endeavour that something may be added by his industry to the hereditary aggregate of knowledge and happiness. To add much can indeed be the lot of few, but to add something, however little, every one may hope; and of every honest endeavour, it is certain, that, however unsuccessful, it will be the last rewarded.

No. 130.] SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 1751.

Non sic prata novo vere decentia
Æstatis calidæ dispoliat vapor,
Sævit solstitio cum medias dies;——
Ut fulgor teneris qui radiat genis
Momento rapitur, nullaque non dies
Formosi spolium corporis abstulit.
Res est forma fugax. Quis sapiens bono
Confidat fragili? SENECA.

Not faster in the summer's ray
The spring's frail beauty fades away,
Than anguish and decay consume
The smiling virgin's rosy bloom.
Some beauty's snatch'd each day, each hour;
For beauty is a fleeting flower:
Then how can wisdom e'er confide
In beauty's momentary pride?—ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

You have very lately observed, that in the numerous subdivisions of the world, every class and order of mankind have joys and sorrows of their own; we all feel hourly pain and pleasure from events which pass unheeded before our eyes, but can scarcely communicate our perceptions to minds preoccupied by different objects, any more than the delight of well-disposed colours or harmonious sounds can be imparted to such as want the senses of hearing or of sight.

I am so strongly convinced of the justness of this remark, and have on so many occasions discovered with how little attention pride looks upon calamity of which she thinks herself not in danger, and indolence listens to complaint when it is not echoed by her own remembrance, that though I am about to lay the occurrences of my life before you, I question whether you will condescend to peruse my narrative, or, without the help of some female speculatist, be able to understand it.

I was born a beauty. From the dawn of reason I had my regard turned wholly upon myself, nor can recollect any thing earlier than praise and admiration. My mother, whose face had luckily advanced her to a condition above her birth, thought no evil so great as deformity. She had not the power of imagining any other defect than a cloudy complexion, or disproportionate features; and therefore contemplated me as an assemblage of all that could raise envy or desire, and predicted with triumphant fondness the extent of my conquests, and the number of my slaves.

She never mentioned any of my young acquaintance before me, but to remark how much they fell below my perfection; how one would have had a fine face, but that her eyes were without lustre; how another struck the sight at a distance, but wanted my hair and teeth at a nearer view; another disgraced an elegant shade with a brown skin; some had short fingers, and others dimples in a wrong place.

As she expected no happiness nor advantage but from beauty, she thought nothing but beauty worthy of her care; and her maternal kindness was chiefly exercised in contrivances to protect me from any accident that might deface me with a scar, or stain me with a freckle; she never thought me sufficiently shaded from the sun, or screened from the fire. She was severe or indulgent with no other intention than the preservation of my form; she

excused me from work, lest I should learn to hang down my head, or harden my finger with a needle; she snatched away my book, because a young lady in the neighbourhood had made her eyes red with reading by a candle; but she would scarcely suffer me to eat, lest I should spoil my shape, nor to walk, lest I should swell my ancle with a sprain. At night I was accurately surveyed from head to foot, lest I should have suffered any diminution of my charms in the adventures of the day; and was never permitted to sleep till I had passed through the cosmetic discipline, part of which was a regular lustration performed with bean-flower water and May dews; my hair was perfumed with variety of unguents, by some of which it was to be thickened, and by others to be curled. The softness of my hands was secured by medicated gloves, and my bosom rubbed with a pomade prepared by my mother, of virtue to discuss pimples, and clear discolourations.

I was always called up early, because the morning air gives a freshness to the cheeks: but I was placed behind a curtain in my mother's chamber, because the neck is easily tanned by the rising sun. I was then dressed with a thousand precautions, and again heard my own praises, and triumphed in the compliments and prognostications of all that approached me.

My mother was not so much prepossessed with an opinion of my natural excellences as not to think some cultivation necessary to their completion. She took care that I should want none of the accomplishments included in female education, or considered as necessary in fashionable life. I was looked upon in my ninth year as the chief ornament of the dancing-master's ball, and Mr. Ariet used to reproach his other scholars with my performances on the harpsichord. At twelve I was remarkable for playing my cards with great elegance of manner, and accuracy of judgment.

At last the time came when my mother thought me perfect in my exercises, and qualified to display in the open world those accomplishments which had yet only been discovered in select parties, or domestic assemblies. Preparations were therefore made for my appearance on a public night, which she considered as the most important and critical moment of my life. She cannot be charged with neglecting any means of recommendation, or leaving any thing to chance which prudence could ascertain. Every ornament was tried in every position, every friend was consulted about the colour of my dress, and the mantua-makers were harassed with directions and alterations.

At last the night arrived from which my future life was to be reckoned. I was dressed and sent out to conquer, with a heart beating like that of an old knight-errant at his first sally. Scholars have told me of a Spartan matron, who, when she armed her son for battle, bade him bring back his shield, or be brought upon it. My venerable parent dismissed me to a field, in her opinion, of equal glory, with a command to show that I was her daughter, and not to return without a lover.

I went, and was received, like other pleasing novelties, with a tumult of applause. Every man who valued himself upon the graces of his person, or the elegance of his address, crowded about me, and wit and splendour contended for my notice. I was delightfully fatigued with incessant civilities, which were made more pleasing by the apparent envy of those whom my presence exposed to neglect, and returned with an attendant equal in rank and wealth to my utmost wishes, and from this time stood in the first rank of beauty, was followed by gazers in the Mall, celebrated in the papers of the day, imitated by all who endeavoured to rise into fashion, and censured by those whom age or disappointment forced to retire.

My mother, who pleased herself with the hopes of seeing my exaltation, dreseed me with all the exuberance of finery; and when I represented to her that a fortune might be expected proportionate to my appearance, told me that she should scorn the reptile who could inquire after the fortune of a girl like me. She advised me to prosecute my victories, and time would certainly bring me a captive who might deserve the honour of being enchained for ever.

My lovers were indeed so numerous, that I had no other care than that of determining to whom I should seem to give the preference. But having been steadily and industriously instructed to preserve my heart from any impressions which might hinder me from consulting my interest, I acted with less embarrassment, because my choice was regulated by principles more clear and certain than the caprice of approbation. When I had singled out one from the rest as more worthy of encouragement, I proceeded in my measures by the rules of art; and yet, when the ardour of the first visits was spent, generally found a sudden declension of my influence; I felt in myself the want of some power to diversify amusement and enliven conversation, and could not but suspect that my mind failed in performing the promises of my face. This opinion was soon confirmed by one of my lovers, who married Lavinia with less beauty and fortune than mine, because he thought a wife ought to have qualities which might make her amiable when her bloom was past.

The vanity of my mother would not suffer her to discover any defect in one that had been formed by her instructions, and had all the excellence which she herself could boast. She told me that nothing so much hindered the advancement of women as literature and wit, which general-

frightened away those that could make the best settlements, and drew about them a needy tribe of poets and philosophers, that filled their heads with wild notions of content, and contemplation, and virtuous obscurity. She therefore enjoined me to improve my minuet-step with a new French dancing-master and wait the event of the next birth-night.

I had now almost completed my nineteenth year; if my charms had lost any of their softness, it was more than compensated, by additional dignity; and if the attractions of innocence were impaired, their place was supplied by the arts of allurement. I was therefore preparing for a new attack, without any abatement of my confidence, when, in the midst of my hopes and schemes, I was seized by that dreadful malady which has so often put a sudden end to the tyranny of beauty. I recovered my health after a long confinement; but when I looked again on that face which had been often flushed with transport at its own reflection, and saw all that I had learned to value, all that I had endeavoured to improve, all that had procured me honours or praises, irrecoverably destroyed, I sunk at once into melancholy and despondence. My pain was not much consoled or alleviated by my mother, who grieved that I had not lost my life together with my beauty; and declared, that she thought a young woman divested of her charms had nothing for which those who loved her could desire to save her from the grave.

Having thus continued my relation to the period from which my life took a new course, I shall conclude it in another letter, if by publishing this you show any regard for the correspondence of,

Sir, &c.

VICTORIA.

No. 131.] TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 1751.

——Fatis accede deisque,
Et cole felices; miseros fuge. Sidera cælo
Ut distant, flamma mari, sic utile recto.

LUCAN.

Still follow where auspicious fates invite;
Caress the happy, and the wretched slight.
Sooner shall jarring elements unite,
Than truth with gain, than interest with right.

LEWIS.

THERE is scarcely any sentiment in which, midst the innumerable varieties of inclination, hat nature or accident have scattered in the world, we find greater numbers concurring, han in the wish for riches; a wish indeed so revalent, that it may be considered as universal nd transcendental, as the desire in which all ther desires are included, and of which the vaous purposes which actuate mankind are only ubordinate species and different modifications.

Wealth is the general centre of inclination, the point to which all minds preserve an invariable tendency, and from which they afterwards diverge in numberless directions. Whatever is the remote or ultimate design, the immediate care is to be rich; and in whatever enjoyment we intend finally to acquiesce, we seldom consider it as attainable but by the means of money. Of wealth therefore all unanimously confess the value, nor is there any disagreement but about the use.

No desire can be formed which riches do not assist to gratify. He that places his happiness in splendid equipage or numerous dependents, in refined praise or popular acclamations, in the accumulation of curiosities or the revels of luxury, in splendid edifices or wide plantations, must still, either by birth or acquisition, possess riches. They may be considered as the elemental principles of pleasure, which may be combined with endless diversity; as the essential and necessary substance of which only the form is left to be adjusted by choice.

The necessity of riches being thus apparent, it is not wonderful that almost every mind has been employed in endeavours to acquire them; that multitudes have vied in arts by which life is furnished with accommodations, and which therefore mankind may reasonably be expected to reward.

It had indeed been happy, if this predominant appetite had operated only in concurrence with virtue, by influencing none but those who were zealous to deserve what they were eager to possess, and had abilities to improve their own fortunes by contributing to the ease or happiness of others. To have riches and to have merit would then have been the same, and success might reasonably have been considered as a proof of excellence.

But we do not find that any of the wishes of men keep a stated proportion to their powers of attainment. Many envy and desire wealth, who can never procure it by honest industry or useful knowledge. They therefore turn their eyes about to examine what other methods can be found of gaining that which none, however impotent or worthless, will be content to want.

A little inquiry will discover that there are nearer ways to profit than through the intricacies of art, or up the steeps of labour; what wisdom and virtue scarcely receive at the close of life, as the recompense of long toil, and repeated efforts, is brought within the reach of subtilty and dishonesty by more expeditious and compendious measures: the wealth of credulity is an open prey to falsehood; and the possessions of ignorance and imbecility are easily stolen away by the conveyances of secret artifice, or seized by the gripe of unresisted violence.

It is likewise not hard to discover that riches always procure protection for themselves, that

they dazzle the eyes of inquiry, divert the celebrity of pursuit, or appease the ferocity of vengeance. When any man is incontestibly known to have large possessions, very few think it requisite to inquire by what practices they were obtained; the resentment of mankind rages only against the struggles of feeble and timorous corruption, but when it has surmounted the first opposition, it is afterwards supported by favour, and animated by applause.

The prospect of gaining speedily what is ardently desired, and the certainty of obtaining by every accession of advantage an addition of security, have so far prevailed upon the passions of mankind, that the peace of life is destroyed by a general and incessant struggle for riches. It is observed of gold, by an old epigrammatist, that *to have it is to be in fear, and to want it is to be in sorrow.* There is no condition which is not disquieted either with the care of gaining or of keeping money; and the race of man may be divided in a political estimate between those who are practising fraud, and those who are repelling it.

If we consider the present state of the world, it will be found, that all confidence is lost among mankind, that no man ventures to act where money can be endangered upon the faith of another. It is impossible to see the long scrolls in which every contract is concluded, with all their appendages of seals and attestation, without wondering at the depravity of those beings, who must be restrained from violation of promise by such formal and public evidences, and precluded from equivocation and subterfuge by such punctilious minuteness. Among all the satires to which folly and wickedness have given occasion, none is equally severe with a bond or a settlement.

Of the various arts by which riches may be obtained, the greater part are at the first view irreconcileable with the laws of virtue; some are openly flagitious, and practised not only in neglect, but in defiance of faith and justice; and the rest are on every side so entangled with dubious tendencies, and so beset with perpetual temptations, that very few, even of those who are not yet abandoned, are able to preserve their innocence, or can produce any other claim to pardon, than that they have deviated from the right less than others, and have sooner and more diligently endeavoured to return.

One of the chief characteristics of the golden age, of the age in which neither care nor danger had intruded on mankind, is the community of possessions: strife and fraud were totally excluded, and every turbulent passion was stilled by plenty and equality. Such were indeed happy times, but such times can return no more. Community of possession must include spontaneity of production; for what is obtained by labour will be of right the property of him by whose labour it is gained. And while a rightful claim to pleasure or to affluence must be procured either by slow industry or uncertain hazard, there will always be multitudes whom cowardice or impatience incites to more safe and more speedy methods, who strive to pluck the fruit without cultivating the tree, and to share the advantages of victory without partaking the danger of the battle.

In latter ages, the conviction of the danger to which virtue is exposed while the mind continues open to the influence of riches, has determined many to vows of perpetual poverty; they have suppressed desire by cutting off the possibility of gratification, and secured their peace by destroying the enemy whom they had no hope of reducing to quiet subjection. But, by debarring themselves from evil, they have rescinded many opportunities of good: they have too often sunk into inactivity and uselessness; and, though they have forborne to injure society, have not fully paid their contributions to its happiness.

While riches are so necessary to present convenience, and so much more easily obtained by crimes than virtues, the mind can only be secured from yielding to the continual impulse of covetousness by the preponderation of unchangeable and eternal motives. God will turn the intellectual balance, when weighed only against reputation; but will be light and ineffectual when the opposite scale is charged with justice, veracity, and piety.

No. 132.] SATURDAY, JUNE 22, 1751.

——*Dociles imitandis*
Turpibus ac pravis omnes sumus. JUV.

The mind of mortals, in perverseness strong,
Imbibes with dire docility the wrong.

TO THE RAMBLER.

MR. RAMBLER,

I WAS bred a scholar, and after the usual course of education, found it necessary to employ for the support of life that learning which I had almost exhausted my little fortune in acquiring. The lucrative professions drew my regard with equal attraction; each presented ideas which excited my curiosity, and each imposed duties which terrified my apprehension.

There is no temper more unpropitious to interest than desultory application and unlimited inquiry, by which the desires are held in a perpetual equipoise and the mind fluctuates between different purposes without determination. I had books of every kind round me, among which I divided my time as caprice or accident directed. I often spent the first hours of the day in considering to what study I should devote the rest, and at last snatched up any author that lay next on the table, or perhaps fled to a coffee-house

deliverance from the anxiety of irresolution, and the gloominess of solitude.

Thus my little patrimony grew imperceptibly less, till I was roused from my literary slumber by a creditor, whose importunity obliged me to pacify him with so large a sum, that what remained was not sufficient to support me more than eight months. I hope you will not reproach me with avarice or cowardice, if I acknowledge that I now thought myself in danger of distress, and obliged to endeavour after some certain competence.

There have been heroes of negligence, who have laid the price of their last acre in a drawer, and, without the least interruption of their tranquillity, or abatement of their expenses, taken out one piece after another, till there was no more remaining. But I was not born to such dignity of imprudence, or such exaltation above the cares and necessities of life: I therefore immediately engaged my friends to procure me a little employment, which might set me free from the dread of poverty, and afford me time to plan out some final scheme of lasting advantage.

My friends were struck with honest solicitude, and immediately promised their endeavours for my extrication. They did not suffer their kindness to languish by delay, but prosecuted their inquiries with such success, that in less than a month I was perplexed with variety of offers and contrariety of prospects.

I had however no time for long pauses of consideration; and therefore soon resolved to accept the office of instructing a young nobleman in the house of his father: I went to the seat at which the family then happened to reside, was received with great politeness, and invited to enter immediately on my charge. The terms offered were such as I should willingly have accepted, though my fortune had allowed me greater liberty of choice: the respect with which I was treated flattered my vanity; and perhaps the splendour of the apartments, and the luxury of the table, were not wholly without their influence. I immediately complied with the proposals, and received the young lord into my care.

Having no desire to gain more than I should truly deserve, I very diligently prosecuted my undertaking, and had the satisfaction of discovering in my pupil a flexible temper, a quick apprehension, and a retentive memory. I did not much doubt that my care would, in time, produce a wise and useful counsellor to the state, though my labours were somewhat obstructed by want of authority, and the necessity of complying with the freaks of negligence, and of waiting patiently for the lucky moment of voluntary attention. To a man whose imagination was filled with the dignity of knowledge, and to whom a studious life had made all the common amusements insipid and contemptible, it was not very easy to suppress his indignation, when he saw himself forsaken in the midst of his lecture, for an opportunity to catch an insect, and found his instructions debarred from access to the intellectual faculties, by the memory of a childish frolic, or the desire of a new plaything.

Those vexations would have recurred less frequently, had not his mamma, by entreating at one time that he should be excused from his task as a reward for some petty compliance, and withholding him from his book at another, to gratify herself or her visitants with his vivacity, shown him that every thing was more pleasing and more important than knowledge, and that study was to be endured rather than chosen, and was only the business of those hours which pleasure left vacant, or discipline usurped.

I thought it my duty to complain, in tender terms, of these frequent avocations; but was answered, that rank and fortune might reasonably hope for some indulgence; that the retardation of my pupil's progress would not be imputed to any negligence or inability of mine; that with the success which satisfied every body else, I might surely satisfy myself. I had now done my duty, and without more remonstrances continued to inculcate my precepts whenever they would be heard, gained every day new influence, and found that by degrees my scholar began to feel the quick impulses of curiosity, and the honest ardour of studious ambition.

At length it was resolved to pass a winter in London. The lady had too much fondness for her son to live five months without him, and too high an opinion of his wit and learning to refuse her vanity the gratification of exhibiting him to the public. I remonstrated against too early an acquaintance with cards and company; but with a soft contempt of my ignorance and pedantry, she said that he had been already confined too long to solitary study, and it was now time to show him the world; nothing was more a brand of meanness than bashful timidity; gay freedom and elegant assurance were only to be gained by mixed conversation, a frequent intercourse with strangers, and a timely introduction to splendid assemblies; and she had more than once observed, that his forwardness and complaisance began to desert him, that he was silent when he had not something of consequence to say, blushed whenever he happened to find himself mistaken, and hung down his head in the presence of the ladies, without the readiness of reply, and activity of officiousness, remarkable in young gentlemen that are bred in London.

Again I found resistance hopeless, and again thought it proper to comply. We entered the coach, and in four days were placed in the

gayest and most magnificent region of the town. My pupil, who had for several years lived at a remote seat, was immediately dazzled with a thousand beams of novelty and show. His imagination was filled with the perpetual tumult of pleasure that passed before him, and it was impossible to allure him from the window, or to overpower by any charm of eloquence the rattle of coaches, and the sounds which echoed from the doors in the neighbourhood. In three days his attention, which he began to regain, was disturbed by a rich suit, in which he was equipped for the reception of company, and which, having been long accustomed to a plain dress, he could not at first survey without ecstasy.

The arrival of the family was now formally notified; every hour of every day brought more intimate or more distant acquaintances to the door; and my pupil was indiscriminately introduced to all, that he might accustom himself to change of faces, and be rid with speed of his rustic diffidence. He soon endeared himself to his mother by the speedy acquisition or recovery of her darling qualities; his eyes sparkle at a numerous assembly, and his heart dances at the mention of a ball. He has at once caught the infection of high life, and has no other test of principles or actions than the quality of those to whom they are ascribed. He begins already to look down on me with superiority, and submits to one short lesson in a week, as an act of condescension rather than obedience; for he is of opinion, that no tutor is properly qualified who cannot speak French; and having formerly learned a few familiar phrases from his sister's governess, he is every day soliciting his mamma to procure him a foreign footman, that he may grow polite by his conversation. I am not yet insulted, but find myself likely to become soon a superfluous incumbrance, for my scholar has now no time for science or for virtue; and the lady yesterday declared him so much the favourite of every company, that she was afraid he would not have an hour in the day to dance and fence.

I am, &c.

EUMATHES.

No. 133.] TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 1751.

Magna quidem sacris quæ dat præcepta libellis
Victrix fortunæ sapientia. Dicimus autem
Hos quoque felices, qui ferre incommoda vitæ,
Nec jacture jugum vita didicere magistra. JUV.

Let Stoics ethics' haughty rules advance
To combat fortune, and to conquer chance:
Yet happy those, though not so learn'd are thought,
Whom life instructs, who by experience taught,
For new to come from past misfortunes look,
Nor shake the yoke, which galls the more 'tis shook.
CREECH.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

You have shown, by the publication of my letter, that you think the life of Victoria not wholly unworthy of the notice of a philosopher: I shall therefore continue my narrative, without any apology for unimportance which you have dignified, or for inaccuracies which you are to correct.

When my life appeared to be no longer in danger, and as much of my strength was recovered as enabled me to bear the agitation of a coach, I was placed at a lodging in a neighbouring village, to which my mother dismissed me with a faint embrace, having repeated her command not to expose my face too soon to the sun or wind, and told me, that with care I might perhaps become tolerable again. The prospect of being tolerable had very little power to elevate the imagination of one who had so long been accustomed to praise and ecstacy; but it was some satisfaction to be separated from my mother, who was incessantly ringing the knell of departed beauty, and never entered my room without the whine of condolence, or the growl of anger. She often wandered over my face, as travellers over the ruins of a celebrated city to note every place which had once been remarkable for a happy feature. She condescended to visit my retirement, but always left me more melancholy; for after a thousand trifling inquiries about my diet, and a minute examination of my looks, she generally concluded with a sigh, that I should never more be fit to be seen.

At last I was permitted to return home, but found no great improvement of my condition; for I was imprisoned in my chamber as a criminal, whose appearance would disgrace my friends, and condemn me to be tortured into new beauty. Every experiment which the officiousness of folly could communicate, or the credulity of ignorance admit, was tried upon me. Sometimes I was covered with emollients, by which it was expected that all the scars would be filled, and my cheeks plumped up to their former smoothness; and sometimes I was punished with artificial excoriations, in hope of gaining new graces with a new skin. The cosmetic science was exhausted upon me; but who can repair the ruins of nature? My mother was forced to give me rest at last, and abandon me to the fate of a fallen toast, whose fortune she considered as a hopeless game, no longer worthy of solicitude or attention.

The condition of a young woman who has never thought or heard of any other excellence than beauty, and whom the sudden blast of disease wrinkles in her bloom, is indeed sufficiently calamitous. She is at once deprived of all that gave her eminence or power; of all that elated her pride, or animated her activity; all that

filled her days with pleasure, and her nights with hope; all that gave gladness to the present hour, or brightened her prospects of futurity. It is perhaps not in the power of a man whose attention has been divided by diversity of pursuits, and who has not been accustomed to derive from others much of his happiness, to image to himself such helpless destitution, such dismal inanity. Every object of pleasing contemplation is at once snatched away, and the soul finds every receptacle of ideas empty, or filled only with the memory of joys that can return no more. All is gloomy privation, or impotent desire; the faculties of anticipation slumber in despondency, or the powers of pleasure mutiny for employment.

I was so little able to find entertainment for myself, that I was forced in a short time to venture abroad, as the solitary savage is driven by hunger from his cavern. I entered with all the humility of disgrace into assemblies, where I had lately sparkled with gayety, and towered with triumph. I was not wholly without hope, that dejection had misrepresented me to myself, and that the remains of my former face might yet have some attraction and influence; but the first circle of visits convinced me, that my reign was at an end; that life and death were no longer in my hands; that I was no more to practise the glance of command, or the frown of prohibition; to receive the tribute of sighs and praises, or be soothed with the gentle murmurs of amorous timidity. My opinion was now unheard, and my proposals were unregarded; the narrowness of my knowledge, and the meanness of my sentiments, were easily discovered, when the eyes were no longer engaged against the judgment; and it was observed, by those who had formerly been charmed with my vivacious loquacity, that my understanding was impaired as well as my face, and that I was no longer qualified to fill a place in any company but at a party at cards.

It is scarcely to be imagined how soon the mind sinks to a level with the condition. I, who had long considered all who approached me as vassals condemned to regulate their pleasures by my eyes, and harass their inventions for my entertainment, was in less than three weeks reduced to receive a ticket with professions of obligation; to catch with eagerness a compliment; and to watch with all the anxiousness of dependance, lest any little civility that was paid me should pass unacknowledged.

Though the negligence of the men was not very pleasing when compared with vows and adoration, yet it was far more supportable than the insolence of my own sex. For the first ten months after my return into the world, I never entered a single house in which the memory of my downfal was not revived. At one place I was congratulated on my escape with life; at another I heard of the benefits of early inoculation; by some I have been told in express terms, that I am not yet without my charms; others have whispered at my entrance, This is the celebrated beauty. One told me of a wash that would smooth the skin; and another offered me her chair that I might not front the light. Some soothed me with the observation that none can tell how soon my case may be her own; and some thought it proper to receive me with mournful tenderness, formal condolence, and consolatory blandishments.

Thus was I every day harassed with all the stratagems of well-bred malignity; yet insolence was more tolerable than solitude, and I therefore persisted to keep my time at the doors of my acquaintance, without gratifying them with any appearance of resentment or depression. I expected that their exultation would in time vapour away; that the joy of their superiority would end with its novelty; and that I should be suffered to glide along in my present form among the nameless multitude, whom nature never intended to excite envy or admiration, nor enabled to delight the eye or inflame the heart.

This was naturally to be expected, and this I began to experience. But when I was no longer agitated by the perpetual ardour of resistance, and effort of perseverance, I found more sensibly the want of those entertainments which had formerly delighted me; the day rose upon me without an engagement; and the evening closed in its natural gloom, without summoning me to a concert or a ball. None had any care to find amusements for me, and I had no power of amusing myself. Idleness exposed me to melancholy, and life began to languish in motionless indifference.

Misery and shame are nearly allied. It was not without many struggles that I prevailed on myself to confess my uneasiness to Euphemia, the only friend who had never pained me with comfort or with pity. I at last laid my calamities before her, rather to ease my heart than receive assistance. "We must distinguish," said she, "my Victoria, those evils which are imposed by Providence, from those to which we ourselves give the power of hurting us. Of your calamity a small part is the infliction of Heaven, the rest is little more than the corrosion of idle discontent. You have lost that which may indeed sometimes contribute to happiness, but to which happiness is by no means inseparably annexed. You have lost what the greater number of the human race never have possessed; what those on whom it is bestowed for the most part possess in vain; and what you, while it was yours, knew not how to use: you have only lost early what the laws of nature forbid you to keep long, and

have lost it while your mind is yet flexible, and while you have time to substantiate more valuable and more durable excellences. Consider yourself, my Victoria, as a being born to know, to reason, and to act; rise at once from your dream of melancholy to wisdom and to piety; you will find that there are other charms than those of beauty, and other joys than the praise of fools."

I am, Sir, &c.

VICTORIA.

No. 134.] SATURDAY, JUNE 29, 1751.

Quis scit, an adjiciant hodiernæ crastina summæ
Tempora Dii superi? HOR.

Who knows if Heaven, with ever-bounteous power,
Shall add to-morrow to the present hour?

FRANCIS.

I SAT yesterday morning employed in deliberating on which, among the various subjects that occurred to my imagination, I should bestow the paper of to-day. After a short effort of meditation, by which nothing was determined, I grew every moment more irresolute, my ideas wandered from the first intention, and I rather wished to think, than thought, upon any settled subject; till at last I was awakened from this dream of study by a summons from the press: the time was come for which I had been thus negligently purposing to provide, and, however dubious or sluggish, I was now necessitated to write.

Though to a writer whose design is so comprehensive and miscellaneous, that he may accommodate himself with a topic from every scene of life, or view of nature, it is no great aggravation of his task to be obliged to a sudden composition; yet I could not forbear to reproach myself for having so long neglected what was unavoidably to be done, and of which every moment's idleness increased the difficulty. There was however some pleasure in reflecting that I, who had only trifled till diligence was necessary, might still congratulate myself upon my superiority to multitudes, who have trifled till diligence is vain; who can by no degree of activity or resolution recover the opportunities which have slipped away; and who are condemned by their own carelessness to hopeless calamity and barren sorrow.

The folly of allowing ourselves to delay what we know cannot be finally escaped, is one of the general weaknesses, which, in spite of the instruction of moralists, and the remonstrances of reason, prevail to a greater or less degree in every mind; even they, who most steadily withstand it, find it, if not the most violent, the most pertinacious of the passions, always renewing its attacks, and, though often vanquished, never destroyed.

It is indeed natural to have particular regard to the time present, and to be most solicitous for that which is by its nearness enabled to make the strongest impressions. When therefore any sharp pain is to be suffered, or any formidable danger to be incurred, we can scarcely exempt ourselves wholly from the seducements of imagination; we readily believe that another day will bring some support or advantage which we now want; and are easily persuaded, that the moment of necessity which we desire never to arrive, is at a great distance from us.

Thus life is languished away in the gloom of anxiety, and consumed in collecting resolution which the next morning dissipates; in forming purposes which we scarcely hope to keep, and reconciling ourselves to our own cowardice by excuses, which, while we admit them, we know to be absurd. Our firmness is, by the continual contemplation of misery, hourly impaired: every submission to our fear enlarges its dominion; we not only waste that time in which the evil we dread might have been suffered and surmounted, but even where procrastination produces no absolute increase of our difficulties, make them less superable to ourselves by habitual terrors. When evils cannot be avoided it is wise to contract the interval of expectation to meet the mischiefs which will overtake us if we fly; and suffer only their real malignity without the conflicts of doubt, and anguish of anticipation.

To act is far easier than to suffer; yet we every day see the progress of life retarded by the *vis inertiæ*, the mere repugnance to motion, and find multitudes repining at the want of that which nothing but idleness hinders them from enjoying. The case of Tantalus, in the region of poetic punishment, was somewhat to be pitied because the fruits that hung about him retired from his hand; but what tenderness can be claimed by those who, though perhaps they suffer the pains of Tantalus, will never lift their hands for their own relief?

There is nothing more common among this torpid generation than murmurs and complaints; murmurs at uneasiness which only vacancy and suspicion expose them to feel, and complaints of distresses which it is in their power to remove. Laziness is commonly associated with timidity. Either fear originally prohibits endeavours by infusing despair of success; or the frequent failure of irresolute struggles, and the constant desire of avoiding labour, impress by degrees false terrors on the mind. But fear, whether natural or acquired, when once it has full possession of the fancy, never fails to employ it upon visions of calamity, such as, if they are not dissipated by useful employment, will soon overcast it with horrors, and embitter life not only with those miseries by which all earthly beings are really more or less tormented, but with those which

do not yet exist, and which can only be discerned by the perspicacity of cowardice.

Among all who sacrifice future advantage to present inclination, scarcely any gain so little as those that suffer themselves to freeze in idleness. Others are corrupted by some enjoyment of more or less power to gratify the passions; but to neglect our duties, merely to avoid the labour of performing them, a labour which is always punctually rewarded, is surely to sink under weak temptations. Idleness never can secure tranquillity; the call of reason and of conscience will pierce the closest pavilion of the sluggard; and though it may not have force to drive him from his down, will be loud enough to hinder him from sleep. Those moments which he cannot resolve to make useful by devoting them to the great business of his being, will still be usurped by powers that will not leave them to his disposal; remorse and vexation will seize upon them, and forbid him to enjoy what he is so desirous to appropriate.

There are other causes of inactivity incident to more active faculties and more acute discernment. He to whom many objects of pursuit arise at the same time, will frequently hesitate between different desires till a rival has precluded him, or change his course as new attractions prevail, and harass himself without advancing. He who sees different ways to the same end, will, unless he watches carefully over his own conduct, lay out too much of his attention upon the comparison of probabilities, and the adjustment of expedients, and pause in the choice of his road till some accident intercepts his journey. He whose penetration extends to remote consequences, and who, whenever he applies his attention to any design, discovers new prospects of advantage, and possibilities of improvements, will not easily be persuaded that his project is ripe for execution; but will superadd one contrivance to another, endeavour to unite various purposes in one operation, multiply complications, and refine niceties, till he is entangled in his own scheme, and bewildered in the perplexity of various intentions. He that resolves to unite all the beauties of situation in a new purchase, must waste his life in roving to no purpose from province to province. He that hopes in the same house to obtain every convenience, may draw plans and study Palladio, but will never lay a stone. He will attempt a treatise on some important subject, and amass materials, consult authors, and study all the dependant and collateral parts of learning, but never conclude himself qualified to write. He that has abilities to conceive perfection, will not easily be content without it; and, since perfection cannot be reached, will lose the opportunity of doing well in the vain hope of unattainable excellence.

The certainty that life cannot be long, and the probability that it will be much shorter than nature allows, ought to awaken every man to the active prosecution of whatever he is desirous to perform. It is true that no diligence can ascertain success; death may intercept the swiftest career; but he who is cut off in the execution of an honest undertaking, has at least the honour of falling in his rank, and has fought the battle, though he missed the victory.

No. 135.] TUESDAY, JULY 2, 1751.

Cœlum, non animum mutant.— HOR.

Place may be changed; but who can change his mind?

IT is impossible to take a view on any side, or observe any of the various classes that form the great community of the world, without discovering the influence of example, and admitting with new conviction the observation of Aristotle, *that man is an imitative being.* The greater, far the greater number follow the track which others have beaten, without any curiosity after new discoveries, or ambition of trusting themselves to their own conduct. And of those who break the ranks and disorder the uniformity of the march, most return in a short time from their deviation, and prefer the equal and steady satisfaction of security before the frolics of caprice and the honours of adventure.

In questions difficult or dangerous it is indeed natural to repose upon authority, and, when fear happens to predominate, upon the authority of those whom we do not in general think wiser than ourselves. Very few have abilities requisite for the discovery of abstruse truth; and of those few some want leisure, and some resolution. But it is not so easy to find the reason of the universal submission to precedent where every man might safely judge for himself; where no irreparable loss can be hazarded, nor any mischief of long continuance incurred. Vanity might be expected to operate where the more powerful passions are not awakened; the mere pleasure of acknowledging no superior might produce slight singularities, or the hope of gaining some new degree of happiness awaken the mind to invention or experience.

If in any case the shackles of prescription could be wholly shaken off, and the imagination left to act without control, on what occasion should it be expected, but in the selection of lawful pleasure? Pleasure, of which the essence is choice; which compulsion dissociates from every thing to which nature has united it; and which owes not only its vigour but its being to the smiles of liberty. Yet we see that the senses, as well as the reason, are regulated by credulity; and that most will feel, or say that they feel, the gratifications which others have taught them to expect.

At this time of universal migration, when almost every one, considerable enough to attract regard, has retired, or is preparing with all the earnestness of distress to retire, into the country; when nothing is to be heard but the hopes of speedy departure or the complaints of involuntary delay; I have often been tempted to inquire what happiness is to be gained, or what inconvenience to be avoided, by this stated recession? Of the birds of passage, some follow the summer, and some the winter, because they live upon sustenance which only summer or winter can supply; but of the annual flight of human rovers it is much harder to assign the reason, because they do not appear either to find or seek any thing which is not equally afforded by the town and country.

I believe that many of these fugitives may have heard of men whose continual wish was for the quiet of retirement, who watched every opportunity to steal away from observation, to forsake the crowd and delight themselves with the *society of solitude*. There is indeed scarcely any writer who has not celebrated the happiness of rural privacy, and delighted himself and his reader with the melody of birds, the whisper of groves, and the murmur of rivulets: nor any man, eminent for extent of capacity, or greatness of exploits, that has not left behind him some memorials of lonely wisdom and silent dignity.

But almost all absurdity of conduct arises from the imitation of those whom we cannot resemble. Those who thus testified their weariness of tumult and hurry, and hasted with so much eagerness to the leisure of retreat, were either men overwhelmed with the pressure of difficult employment, harassed with importunities, and distracted with multiplicity; or men wholly engrossed by speculative sciences, who having no other end of life but to learn and teach, found their searches interrupted by the common commerce of civility, and their reasonings disjointed by frequent interruptions. Such men might reasonably fly to that ease and convenience which their condition allowed them to find only in the country. The statesman who devoted the greater part of his time to the public, was desirous of keeping the remainder in his own power. The general ruffled with dangers, wearied with labours, and stunned with acclamations, gladly snatched an interval of silence and relaxation. The naturalist was unhappy where the works of Providence were not always before him. The reasoner could adjust his systems only where his mind was free from the intrusion of outward objects.

Such examples of solitude very few of those who are now hastening from the town, have any pretensions to plead in their own justification, since they cannot pretend either weariness of labour, or desire of knowledge. They purpose nothing more than to quit one scene of idleness for another, and, after having trifled in public, to sleep in secrecy. The utmost that they can hope to gain is the change of ridiculousness to obscurity, and the privilege of having fewer witnesses to a life of folly. He who is not sufficiently important to be disturbed in his pursuits, but spends all his hours according to his own inclination, and has more hours than his mental faculties enable him to fill either with enjoyment or desires, can have nothing to demand of shades and valleys. As bravery is said to be a panoply, insignificancy is always a shelter.

There are, however, pleasures and advantages in a rural situation, which are not confined to philosophers and heroes. The freshness of the air, the verdure of the woods, the paint of the meadows, and the unexhausted variety which summer scatters upon the earth, may easily give delight to an unlearned spectator. It is not necessary that he who looks with pleasure on the colours of a flower should study the principles of vegetation, or that the Ptolemaic and Copernican systems should be compared before the light of the sun can gladden, or its warmth invigorate. Novelty is itself a source of gratification; and Milton justly observes, that to him who has been long pent up in cities, no rural object can be presented which will not delight or refresh some of his senses.

Yet even these easy pleasures are missed by the greater part of those who waste their summer in the country. Should any man pursue his acquaintances to their retreats, he would find few of them listening to Philomel, loitering in the woods, or plucking daisies, catching the healthy gale of the morning, or watching the gentle coruscations of declining day. Some will be discovered at a window by the road side, rejoicing when a new cloud of dust gathers towards them, as at the approach of a momentary supply of conversation, and a short relief from the tediousness of unideal vacancy. Others are placed in the adjacent villages, where they look only upon houses as in the rest of the year, with no change of objects but what a remove to any new street in London might have given them. The same set of acquaintances still settle together, and the form of life is not otherwise diversified than by doing the same things in a different place. They pay and receive visits in the usual form, they frequent the walks in the morning, they deal cards at night, they attend to the same tattle, and dance with the same partners; nor can they, at their return to their former habitation, congratulate themselves on any other advantage, than that they have passed their time like others of the same rank; and have the same right to talk of the happiness and beauty of the country, of happiness which they never felt, and beauty which they never regarded.

To be able to procure its own entertainments,

and to subsist upon its own stock, is not the prerogative of every mind. There are indeed understandings so fertile and comprehensive, that they can always feed reflection with new supplies, and suffer nothing from the preclusion of adventitious amusements; as some cities have within their own walls enclosed ground enough to feed their inhabitants in a siege. But others live only from day to day, and must be constantly enabled, by foreign supplies, to keep out the encroachments of languor and stupidity. Such could not indeed be blamed for hovering within reach of their usual pleasure, more than any other animal for not quitting its native element, were not their faculties contracted by their own fault. But let not those who go into the country, merely because they dare not be left alone at home, boast their love of nature, or their qualifications for solitude; nor pretend that they receive instantaneous infusions of wisdom from the Dryads, and are able, when they leave smoke and noise behind, to act, or think, or reason for themselves.

No. 136.] SATURDAY, JULY 6, 1751.

Ἐχθρὸς γάρ μοι κεῖνος ὁμῶς Ἀΐδαο πύλῃσιν,
Ὅς χ' ἕτερον μὲν κεύθῃ ἐνὶ φρεσίν, ἄλλο δὲ βάζῃ.

HOMER.

Who dares think one thing, and another tell,
My heart detests him as the gates of hell.—

POPE.

THE regard which they whose abilities are employed in the works of imagination claim from the rest of mankind, arises in a great measure from their influence on futurity. Rank may be conferred by princes, and wealth bequeathed by misers or by robbers; but the honours of a lasting name, and the veneration of distant ages, only the sons of learning have the power of bestowing. While, therefore, it continues one of the characteristics of rational nature to decline oblivion, authors never can be wholly overlooked in the search after happiness, nor become contemptible but by their own fault.

The man who considers himself as constituted the ultimate judge of disputable characters, and entrusted with the distribution of the last terrestrial rewards of merit, ought to summon all his fortitude to the support of his dignity with the most vigilant caution and scrupulous justice. To deliver examples to posterity, and to regulate the opinion of future times, is no slight or trivial undertaking; nor is it easy to commit more atrocious treason against the great republic of humanity, than by falsifying its records and misguiding its decrees.

To scatter praise or blame without regard to justice, is to destroy the distinction of good and evil. Many have no other test of actions than general opinion; and all are so far influenced by a sense of reputation, that they are often restrained by fear of reproach, and excited by hope of honour, when other principles have lost their power; nor can any species of prostitution promote general depravity more than that which destroys the force of praise, by showing that it may be acquired without deserving it, and which by setting free the active and ambitious from the dread of infamy, lets loose the rapacity of power, and weakens the only authority by which greatness is controlled.

Praise, like gold and diamonds, owes its value only to its scarcity. It becomes cheap as it becomes vulgar, and will no longer raise expectation, or animate enterprise. It is therefore not only necessary, that wickedness, even when it is not safe to censure it, be denied applause, but that goodness be commended only in proportion to its degree; and that the garlands due to the great benefactors of mankind, be not suffered to fade upon the brow of him who can boast only petty services and easy virtues.

Had these maxims been universally received, how much would have been added to the task of dedication, the work on which all the power of modern wit has been exhausted. How few of these initial panegyrics had appeared, if the author had been obliged first to find a man of virtue, then to distinguish the distinct species and degree of his desert, and at last to pay him only the honours which he might justly claim. It is much easier to learn the name of the last man whom chance has exalted to wealth and power, to obtain by the intervention of some of his domestics the privilege of addressing him, or in confidence of the general acceptance of flattery, to venture on an address without any previous solicitation; and, after having heaped upon him all the virtues to which philosophy has assigned a name, inform him how much more might be truly said, did not the fear of giving pain to his modesty repress the raptures of wonder and the zeal of veneration.

Nothing has so much degraded literature from its natural rank, as the practice of indecent and promiscuous dedication: for what credit can he expect who professes himself the hireling of vanity, however profligate, and, without shame or scruple, celebrates the worthless, dignifies the mean, and gives to the corrupt, licentious, and oppressive, the ornaments which ought only to add grace to truth, and loveliness to innocence? Every other kind of adulteration, however shameful, however mischievous, is less detestable than the crime of counterfeiting characters, and fixing the stamp of literary sanction upon the dross and refuse of the world.

Yet I would not overwhelm the authors with the whole load of infamy, of which part, perhaps the greater part, ought to fall upon their

patrons. If he that hires a bravo, partakes the guilt of murder, why should he who bribes a flatterer, hope to be exempted from the shame of falsehood? The unhappy dedicator is seldom without some motives which obstruct, though not destroy, the liberty of choice; he is oppressed by miseries which he hopes to relieve, or inflamed by ambition which he expects to gratify. But the patron has no incitements equally violent; he can receive only a short gratification, with which nothing but stupidity could dispose him to be pleased. The real satisfaction which praise can afford is by repeating aloud the whispers of conscience, and by showing us that we have not endeavoured to deserve well in vain. Every other encomium is, to an intelligent mind, satire and reproach; the celebration of those virtues which we feel ourselves to want, can only impress a quicker sense of our own defects, and show that we have not yet satisfied the expectations of the world, by forcing us to observe how much fiction must contribute to the completion of our character.

Yet sometimes the patron may claim indulgence; for it does not always happen, that the encomiast has been much encouraged to his attempt. Many a hapless author, when his book, and perhaps his dedication, was ready for the press, has waited long before any one would pay the price of prostitution, or consent to hear the praises destined to insure his name against the casualties of time; and many a complaint has been vented against the decline of learning, and neglect of genius, when either parsimonious prudence has declined expense, or honest indignation rejected falsehood. But if at last, after long inquiry and innumerable disappointments, he find a lord willing to hear of his own eloquence and taste, a statesman desirous of knowing how a friendly historian will represent his conduct, or a lady delighted to leave to the world some memorial of her wit and beauty, such weakness cannot be censured as an instance of enormous depravity. The wisest man may, by a diligent solicitor, be surprised in the hour of weakness, and persuaded to solace vexation, or invigorate hope, with the music of flattery.

To censure all dedications as adulatory and servile would discover rather envy than justice. Praise is the tribute of merit, and he that has incontestibly distinguished himself by any public performance has a right to all the honours which the public can bestow. To men thus raised above the rest of the community, there is no need that the book or its author should have any particular relation: that the patron is known to deserve respect, is sufficient to vindicate him that pays it. To the same regard from particular persons, private virtue and less conspicuous excellence may be sometimes entitled. An author may with great propriety inscribe his work to him by whose encouragement it was undertaken, or by whose liberality he has been enabled to prosecute it, and he may justly rejoice in his own fortitude that dares to rescue merit from obscurity.

Acribus exemplis videor te cludere: misce
Ergo aliquid nostris de moribus. MART.

Thus much I will indulge thee for thy ease,
And mingle something of our times to please.
DRYDEN, jun.

I know not whether greater relaxation may not be indulged, and whether hope as well as gratitude may not unblameably produce a dedication; but let the writer who pours out his praises only to propitiate power, or attract the attention of greatness, be cautious lest his desire betray him to exuberant eulogies. We are naturally more apt to please ourselves with the future than the past, and, while we luxuriate in expectation, may be easily persuaded to purchase what we yet rate, only by imagination, at a higher price than experience will warrant.

But no private views of personal regard can discharge any man from his general obligations to virtue and to truth. It may happen in the various combinations of life, that a good man may receive favours from one, who, notwithstanding his accidental beneficence, cannot be justly proposed to the imitation of others, and whom therefore he must find some other way of rewarding than by public celebrations. Self-love has indeed many powers of seducement, but it surely ought not to exalt any individual to equality with the collective body of mankind, or persuade him that a benefit conferred on him is equivalent to every other virtue. Yet many, upon false principles of gratitude, have ventured to extol wretches, whom all but their dependents numbered among the reproaches of the species, and whom they would likewise have beheld with the same scorn, had they not been hired to dishonest approbation.

To encourage merit with praise, is the great business of literature; but praise must lose its influence, by unjust or negligent distribution; and he that impairs its value may be charged with misapplication of the power that genius puts into his hands, and with squandering on guilt the recompence of virtue.

No. 137.] TUESDAY, JULY 9, 1751.

Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt. HOR.

——Whilst fools one vice condemn,
They run into the opposite extreme. CREECH.

THAT wonder is the effect of ignorance, has been often observed. The awful stillness of attention, with which the mind is overspread at the first view of an unexpected effect, ceases when we have leisure to disentangle complications and

investigate causes. Wonder is a pause of reason, a sudden cessation of the mental progress, which lasts only while the understanding is fixed upon some single idea, and is at an end when it recovers force enough to divide the object into its parts, or mark the intermediate gradations from the first agent to the last consequence.

It may be remarked with equal truth, that ignorance is often the effect of wonder. It is common for those who have never accustomed themselves to the labour of inquiry, nor invigorated their confidence by conquests over difficulty, to sleep in the gloomy quiescence of astonishment, without any effort to animate inquiry, or dispel obscurity. What they cannot immediately conceive, they consider as too high to be reached, or too extensive to be comprehended; they therefore content themselves with the gaze of folly, forbear to attempt what they have no hopes of performing, and resign the pleasure of rational contemplation to more pertinacious study or more active faculties

Among the productions of mechanic art, many are of a form so different from that of their first materials, and many consist of parts so numerous and so nicely adapted to each other, that it is not possible to view them without amazement. But when we enter the shops of artificers, observe the various tools by which every operation is facilitated, and trace the progress of a manufacture through the different hands, that, in succession to each other, contribute to its perfection, we soon discover that every single man has an easy task, and that the extremes, however remote, of natural rudeness and artificial elegance, are joined by a regular concatenation of effects, of which every one is introduced by that which precedes it, and equally introduces that which is to follow.

The same is the state of intellectual and manual performances. Long calculations or complex diagrams affright the timorous and unexperienced from a second view; but if we have skill sufficient to analyze them into simple principles, it will be discovered that our fear was groundless. *Divide and conquer*, is a principle equally just in science as in policy. Complication is a species of confederacy which, while it continues united, bids defiance to the most active and vigorous intellect; but of which every member is separately weak, and which may therefore be quickly subdued, if it can once be broken.

The chief art of learning, as Locke has observed, is to attempt but little at a time. The widest excursions of the mind are made by short flights frequently repeated: the most lofty fabrics of science are formed by the continued accumulation of single propositions.

It often happens, whatever be the cause, that impatience of labour, or dread of miscarriage, seizes those who are most distinguished for quickness of apprehension; and that they who might with greatest reason promise themselves victory are least willing to hazard the encounter. This diffidence, where the attention is not laid asleep by laziness, or dissipated by pleasures, can arise only from confused and general views, such as negligence snatches in haste, or from the disappointment of the first hopes formed by arrogance without reflection. To expect that the intricacies of science will be pierced by a careless glance, or the eminences of fame ascended without labour, is to expect a peculiar privilege, a power denied to the rest of mankind; but to suppose that the maze is inscrutable to diligence or the heights inaccessible to perseverance, is to submit tamely to the tyranny of fancy, and enchain the mind in voluntary shackles.

It is the proper ambition of the heroes of literature to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge by discovering and conquering new regions of the intellectual world. To the success of such undertakings, perhaps, some degree of fortuitous happiness is necessary, which no man can promise or procure to himself; and therefore doubt and irresolution may be forgiven in him that ventures into the unexplored abysses of truth, and attempts to find his way through the fluctuations of uncertainty, and the conflicts of contradiction. But when nothing more is required, than to pursue a path already beaten, and to trample obstacles which others have demolished, why should any man so much distrust his own intellect as to imagine himself unequal to the attempt?

It were to be wished that they who devote their lives to study would at once believe nothing too great for their attainment, and consider nothing as too little for their regard; that they would extend their notice alike to science and to life, and unite some knowledge of the present world to their acquaintance with past ages and remote events.

Nothing has so much exposed men of learning to contempt and ridicule, as their ignorance of things which are known to all but themselves. Those who have been taught to consider the institutions of the schools, as giving the last perfection to human abilities, are surprised to see men wrinkled with study, yet wanting to be instructed in the minute circumstances of propriety, or the necessary forms of daily transaction; and quickly shake off their reverence for modes of education, which they find to produce no ability above the rest of mankind.

Books, says Bacon, *can never teach the use of books.* The student must learn by commerce with mankind to reduce his speculations to practice, and accommodate his knowledge to the purposes of life.

It is too common for those who have been bred to scholastic professions, and passed much of

their time in academies where nothing but learning confers honours, to disregard every other qualification, and to imagine that they shall find mankind ready to pay homage to their knowledge, and to crowd about them for instruction. They therefore step out from their cells into the open world with all the confidence of authority and dignity of importance; they look round about them at once with ignorance and scorn on a race of beings to whom they are equally unknown and equally contemptible, but whose manners they must imitate, and with whose opinions they must comply, if they desire to pass their time happily among them.

To lessen that disdain with which scholars are inclined to look on the common business of the world, and the unwillingness with which they condescend to learn what is not to be found in any system of philosophy, it may be necessary to consider that, though admiration is excited by abstruse researches and remote discoveries, yet pleasure is not given, nor affection conciliated, but by softer accomplishments, and qualities more easily communicable to those about us. He that can only converse upon questions, about which only a small part of mankind has knowledge sufficient to make them curious, must lose his days in unsocial silence, and live in the crowd of life without a companion. He that can only be useful on great occasions, may die without exerting his abilities, and stand a helpless spectator of a thousand vexations which fret away happiness, and which nothing is required to remove but a little dexterity of conduct and readiness of expedients.

No degree of knowledge attainable by man is able to set him above the want of hourly assistance, or to extinguish the desire of fond endearments and tender officiousness; and therefore no one should think it unnecessary to learn those arts by which friendship may be gained. Kindness is preserved by a constant reciprocation of benefits or interchange of pleasures; but such benefits only can be bestowed, as others are capable to receive, and such pleasures only imparted, as others are qualified to enjoy.

By this descent from the pinnacles of art no honour will be lost; for the condescensions of learning are always overpaid by gratitude. An elevated genius employed in little things, appears, to use the simile of Longinus, like the sun in his evening declination; he remits his splendour but retains his magnitude, and pleases more though he dazzles less.

No. 138.] SATURDAY, JULY 13, 1751.

O tantum libeat mecum tibi sordida rura
Atque humiles habitare casas, et figere cervos.

VIRG.

With me retire, and leave the pomp of courts
For humble cottages and rural sports.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH the contempt with which you have treated the annual migrations of the gay and busy part of mankind, is justified by daily observation, since most of those who leave the town, neither vary their entertainments nor enlarge their notions; yet I suppose you do not intend to represent the practice itself as ridiculous, or to declare that he whose condition puts the distribution of his time into his own power, may not properly divide it between the town and country.

That the country, and only the country, displays the inexhaustible varieties of nature, and supplies the philosophical mind with matter for admiration and enquiry, never was denied; but my curiosity is very little attracted by the colour of a flower, the anatomy of an insect, or the structure of a nest; I am generally employed upon human manners, and therefore fill up the months of rural leisure with remarks on those who live within the circle of my notice. If writers would more frequently visit those regions of negligence and liberty, they might diversify their representations, and multiply their images, for in the country are original characters chiefly to be found. In cities, and yet more in courts, the minute discriminations which distinguish one from another are for the most part effaced, the peculiarities of temper and opinion are gradually worn away by promiscuous converse, as angular bodies, and uneven surfaces, lose their points and asperities by frequent attrition against one another, and approach by degrees to uniform rotundity. The prevalence of fashion, the influence of example, the desire of applause, and the dread of censure, obstruct the natural tendencies of the mind, and check the fancy in its first efforts to break forth into experiments of caprice.

Few inclinations are so strong as to grow up into habits, when they must struggle with the constant opposition of settled forms and established customs. But in the country every man is a separate and independent being: solitude flatters irregularity with hopes of secrecy, and wealth, removed from the mortification of comparison, and the awe of equality, swells into contemptuous confidence, and sets blame and laughter at defiance; the impulses of nature act unrestrained, and the disposition dares to show itself in its true form, without any disguise of hypocrisy, or decorations of elegance. Every one indulges the full enjoyment of his own choice, and talks and lives with no other view than to please himself, without inquiring how far he deviates from the general practice, or considering others as entitled to any account of his sentiments or actions. If he builds or demolishes, opens or encloses, deluges or drains, it is

ot his care what may be the opinion of those who are skilled in perspective or architecture, is sufficient that he has no landlord to control im, and that none has any right to examine in what projects the lord of the manor spends his wn money on his own grounds.

For this reason it is not very common to want subjects for rural conversation. Almost very man is daily doing something which produces merriment, wonder or resentment, among is neighbours. This utter exemption from restraint leaves every anomalous quality to operate n its full extent, and suffers the natural character to diffuse itself to every part of life. The ride which, under the check of public observaion, would have been only vented among serants and domestics, becomes in a country barnet the torment of a province, and, instead of erminating in the destruction of China ware nd glases, ruins tenants, dispossesses cottagers, nd harasses villagers with actions of trespass nd bills of indictment.

It frequently happens that, even without iolent passions, or enormous corruption, the reedom and laxity of a rustic life produce remarkable particularities of conduct or manner. n the province where I now reside, we have ne lady eminent for wearing a gown always of ne same cut and colour; another for shaking ands with those that visit her; and a third for nshaken resolution never to let tea or coffee nter her house.

But of all the female characters which this face affords, I have found none so worthy of ttention as that of Mrs. Busy, a widow, who st her husband in her thirtieth year, and has nce passed her time at the manor-house in the overnment of her children, and the manageent of the estate.

Mrs. Busy was married at eighteen from a arding-school, where she had passed her time, ke other young ladies, in needle work, with a w intervals of dancing and reading. When e became a bride she spent one winter with r husband in town, where having no idea of y conversation beyond the formalities of a sit, she found nothing to engage her passions; id when she had been one night at court, and o at an opera, and seen the Monument, the ombs and the Tower, she concluded that Lonon had nothing more to show, and wondered at when women had once seen the world they uld not be content to stay at home. She erefore went willingly to the ancient seat, and r some years studied housewifery under Mr. usy's mother, with so much assiduity, that e old lady, when she died, bequeathed her a udle-cup, a soup-dish, two beakers, and a est of table linen spun by herself.

Mr. Busy, finding the economical qualities of s lady, resigned his affairs wholly into her nds, and devoted his life to his pointers and his hounds. He never visited his estates, but to destroy the partridges or foxes; and often committed such devastations in the rage of pleasure, that some of his tenants refused to hold their lands at the usual rent. Their landlady persuaded them to be satisfied, and entreated her husband to dismiss his dogs, with many exact calculations of the ale drank by his companions, and corn consumed by his horses, and remonstrances against the insolence of the huntsman, and the frauds of the groom. The huntsman was too necessary to his happiness to be discarded; and he had still continued to ravage his own estate, had he not caught a cold and a fever by shooting mallards in the fens. His fever was followed by a consumption, which in a few months brought him to the grave.

Mrs. Busy was too much an economist to feel either joy or sorrow at his death. She received the compliments and consolations of her neighbours in a dark room, out of which she stole privately every night and morning to see the cows milked; and, after a few days, declared that she thought a widow might employ herself better than in nursing grief: and that, for her part, she was resolved that the fortunes of her children should not be impaired by her neglect.

She therefore immediately applied herself to the reformation of abuses. She gave away the dogs, discharged the servants of the kennel and stable, and sent the horses to the next fair, but rated at so high a price that they returned unsold. She was resolved to have nothing idle about her, and ordered them to be employed in common drudgery. They lost their sleekness and grace, and were soon purchased at half the value.

She soon disencumbered herself from her weeds, and put on a riding-hood, a coarse apron, and short petticoats, and has turned a large manor into a farm, of which she takes the management wholly upon herself. She rises before the sun to order the horses to their geers, and sees them well rubbed down at their return from work; she attends the dairy morning and evening, and watches when a calf falls that it may be carefully nursed; she walks out among the sheep at noon, counts the lambs, and observes the fences, and where she finds a gap, stops it with a bush till it can be better mended. In harvest she rides a-field in the waggon, and is very liberal of her ale from a wooden bottle. At her leisure hours she looks goose eggs, airs the wool room, and turns the cheese.

When respect or curiosity brings visitants to her house, she entertains them with prognostics of a scarcity of wheat, or a rot among the sheep, and always thinks herself privileged to dismiss them when she is to see the hogs fed, or to count her poultry on the roost.

The only things neglected about her are her children, whom she has taught nothing but the

lowest household duties. In my last visit I met Miss Busy carrying grains to a sick cow, and was entertained with the accomplishments of her eldest son, a youth of such early maturity, that, though he is only sixteen, she can trust him to sell corn in the market. Her younger daughter, who is eminent for her beauty, though somewhat tanned in making hay, was busy in pouring out ale to the ploughmen, that every one might have an equal share.

I could not but look with pity on this young family, doomed, by the absurd prudence of their mother, to ignorance and meanness; but, when I recommended a more elegant education, was answered, that she never saw bookish or finical people grow rich, and that she was good for nothing herself till she had forgotten the nicety of the boarding-school.

I am yours, &c.

BUCOLUS.

No. 139.] TUESDAY, JULY 16, 1751.

——*Sit quod vis simplex duntaxat et unum.*

HOR.

Let every piece be simple and be one.

IT is required by Aristotle to the perfection of a tragedy, and is equally necessary to every other species of regular composition, that it should have a beginning, a middle, and an end. "The beginning," says he, "is that which has nothing necessarily previous, but to which that which follows is naturally consequent; the end, on the contrary, is that which by necessity, or at least according to the common course of things, succeeds something else, but which implies nothing consequent to itself; the middle is connected on one side to something that naturally goes before, and on the other to something that naturally follows it."

Such is the rule laid down by this great critic, for the disposition of the different parts of a well-constituted fable. It must begin, where it may be made intelligible without introduction; and end, where the mind is left in repose, without expectation of any farther event. The intermediate passages must join the last effect to the first cause, by a regular and unbroken concatenation; nothing must be therefore inserted which does not apparently arise from something foregoing, and properly make way for something that succeeds it.

This precept is to be understood in its rigour only with respect to great and essential events, and cannot be extended in the same force to minuter circumstances and arbitrary decorations, which yet are more happy, as they contribute more to the main design; for it is always a proof of extensive thought and accurate circumspection, to promote various purposes by the same act; and the idea of an ornament admits use, though it seems to exclude necessity.

Whoever purposes, as it is expressed by Milton, *to build the lofty rhyme*, must acquaint himself with this law of poetical architecture, and take care that his edifice be solid as well as beautiful; that nothing stand single or independent, so as that it may be taken away without injuring the rest; but that, from the foundation to the pinnacles, one part rest firm upon another.

This regular and consequential distribution is, among common authors, frequently neglected; but the failures of those, whose example can have no influence, may be safely overlooked, nor is it of much use to recal obscure and unregarded names to memory for the sake of sporting with their infamy. But if there is any writer whose genius can embellish impropriety, and whose authority can make error venerable, his works are the proper objects of critical inquisition. To expunge faults where there are no excellences, is a task equally uselsss with that of the chemist, who employs the arts of separation and refinement upon ore in which no precious metal is contained to reward his preparations.

The tragedy of Samson Agonistes has been celebrated as the second work of the great author of "Paradise Lost," and opposed, with all the confidence of triumph, to the dramatic performances of other nations. It contains indeed just sentiments, maxims of wisdom, and oracles of piety, and many passages written with the ancient spirit of choral poetry, in which there is just and pleasing mixture of Seneca's moral declamation, with the wild enthusiasm of the Greek writers. It is therefore worthy of examination, whether a performance thus illuminated with genius, and enriched with learning, is composed according to the indispensable laws of Aristotelian criticism: and, omitting at present all other considerations, whether it exhibits a beginning, a middle, and an end.

The beginning is undoubtedly beautiful and proper, opening with a graceful abruptness, and proceeding naturally to a mournful recital of facts necessary to be known.

Samson. A little onward lend thy guiding hand
To these dark steps, a little farther on;
For yonder bank hath choice of sun and shade;
There I am wont to sit when any chance
Relieves me from my task of servile toil,
Daily in the common prison else enjoin'd me.—
—O wherefore was my birth from heaven foretold
Twice by an angel?—
—Why was my breeding order'd and prescribed,
As of a person separate to God,
Design'd for great exploits; if I must die
Betray'd, captived, and both my eyes put out?
—Whom have I to complain of but myself?
Who this high gift of strength, committed to me,
In what part lodg'd, how easily bereft me,
Under the seal of silence could not keep,
But weakly to a woman must reveal it.

His soliloquy is interrupted by a chorus or company of men of his own tribe, who condole his miseries, extenuate his fault, and conclude with a solemn vindication of Divine justice. So that at the conclusion of the first act there is no design laid, no discovery made, nor any disposition formed towards the subsequent event.

In the second act, Manoah, the father of Samson, comes to seek his son, and, being shown him by the chorus, breaks out into lamentations of his misery, and comparisons of his present with his former state, representing to him the ignominy which his religion suffers, by the festival this day celebrated in honour of Dagon, to whom the idolaters ascribed his overthrow.

——Thou bears't
Enough, and more, the burden of that fault;
Bitterly hast thou paid and still art paying
That rigid score. A worse thing yet remains:
This day the Philistines a popular feast
Here celebrate in Gaza; and proclaim
Great pomp and sacrifice, and praises loud
To Dagon, as their god, who hath deliver'd
Thee, Samson, bound and blind, into their hands,
Them out of thine, who slew'st them many a slain.

Samson, touched with this reproach, makes a reply equally penitential and pious, which his father considers as the effusion of prophetic confidence.

Samson. ——God, be sure,
Will not connive or linger thus provoked,
But will arise and his great name assert:
Dagon must stoop, and shall ere long receive
Such a discomfit, as shall quite despoil him
Of all these boasted trophies won on me
Manoah. With cause this hope relieves thee, and these words
as a prophecy receive; for God,
Nothing more certain, will not long defer,
To vindicate the glory of his name.

This part of the dialogue, as it might tend to animate or exasperate Samson, cannot, I think, be censured as wholly superfluous; but the succeeding dispute, in which Samson contends to die, and which his father breaks off, that he may go to solicit his release, is only valuable for its own beauties, and has no tendency to introduce any thing that follows it.

The next event of the drama is the arrival of Delilah, with all her graces, artifices, and allurements. This produces a dialogue, in a very high degree elegant and instructive, from which she retires, after she has exhausted her persuasions, and is no more seen nor heard of; nor has her visit any effect but that of raising the character of Samson.

In the fourth act enters Harapha, the giant of Gath, whose name had never been mentioned before, and who has now no other motive of coming, than to see the man whose strength and actions are so loudly celebrated:

Harapha. ——Much I have heard
Of thy prodigious might, and feats perform'd
Incredible to me; in this displeased
That I was never present in the place
Of those encounters, where we might have tried
Each other's force in camp or listed fields:
And I now am come to see of whom such noise
Hath walked about, and each limb to survey,
If thy appearance answer loud report.

Samson challenges him to the combat; and, after an interchange of reproaches, elevated by repeated defiance on one side, and embittered by contemptuous insults on the other, Harapha retires; we then hear it determined, by Samson and the chorus, that no consequence good or bad will proceed from their interview:

Chorus. He will directly to the lords, I fear,
And with malicious counsel stir them up
Some way or other farther to afflict thee.
Sams. He must allege some cause, and offered fight
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise,
Whether he durst accept the offer or not;
And that he durst not, plain enough appear'd.

At last, in the fifth act, appears a messenger from the lords, assembled at the festival of Dagon, with a summons by which Samson is required to come and entertain them with some proof of his strength. Samson, after a short expostulation, dismisses him with a firm and resolute refusal; but, during the absence of the messenger, having awhile defended the propriety of his conduct, he at last declares himself moved by a secret impulse to comply, and utters some dark presages of a great event to be brought to pass by his agency, under the direction of Providence.

Sams. Be of good courage; I begin to feel
Some rousing motions in me, which dispose
To something extraordinary my thoughts.
I with this messenger will go along,
Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonour
Our law, or stain my vow of Nazarite.
If there be aught of presage in the mind,
This day will be remarkable in my life,
By some great act, or of my days the last.

While Samson is conducted off by the messenger, his father returns with hopes of success in his solicitation, upon which he confers with the chorus till their dialogue is interrupted, first by a shout of triumph, and afterwards by screams of horror and agony. As they stand deliberating where they shall be secure, a man who had been present at the show enters, and relates how Samson, having prevailed on his

guide to suffer him to lean against the main pillars of the theatrical edifice, tore down the roof upon the spectators and himself.

——Those two massy pillars,
With horrible confusion, to and fro
He tugg'd, he shook, till down they came, and drew
The whole roof after them, with burst of thunder,
Upon the heads of all who sat beneath.——
——Samson, with these immixt, inevitably
Pull'd down the same destruction on himself.

This is undoubtedly a just and regular catastrophe, and the poem, therefore, has a beginning and an end which Aristotle himself could not have disapproved; but it must be allowed to want a middle, since nothing passes between the first act and the last, that either hastens or delays the death of Samson. The whole drama, if its superfluities were cut off, would scarcely fill a single act; yet this is the tragedy which ignorance has admired, and bigotry applauded.

No. 140.] SATURDAY, JULY 20, 1751.

——Quis tam Lucili fautor inepte est,
Ut non hoc fateatur? HOR.

What doting bigot, to his faults so blind,
As not to grant me this, can Milton find?

IT is common, says Bacon, to desire the end without enduring the means. Every member of society feels and acknowledges the necessity of detecting crimes; yet scarce any degree of virtue or reputation is able to secure an informer from public hatred. The learned world has always admitted the usefulness of critical disquisitions, yet he that attempts to show, however modestly, the failures of a celebrated writer, shall surely irritate his admirers, and incur the imputation of envy, captiousness and malignity.

With this danger full in my view, I shall proceed to examine the sentiments of Milton's tragedy, which, though much less liable to censure than the disposition of his plan, are, like those of other writers, sometimes exposed to just exceptions for want of care, or want of discernment.

Sentiments are proper and improper as they consist more or less with the character and circumstances of the person to whom they are attributed, with the rules of the composition in which they are found, or with the settled and unalterable nature of things.

It is common among the tragic poets to introduce their persons alluding to events or opinions, of which they could not possibly have any knowledge. The barbarians of remote or newly-discovered regions often display their skill in European learning. The god of love is mentioned in Tamerlane with all the familiarity of a Roman epigrammatist; and a late writer has put Harvey's doctrine of the circulation of the blood into the mouth of a Turkish statesman, who lived near two centuries before it was known even to philosophers or anatomists.

Milton's learning, which acquainted him with the manners of the ancient eastern nations, and his invention, which required no assistance from the common cant of poetry, have preserved him from frequent outrages of local or chronological propriety. Yet he has mentioned Chalybean steel, of which it is not very likely that his chorus should have heard, and has made Alp the general name of a mountain, in a region where the Alps could scarcely be known:

No medicinal liquor can assuage,
Nor breath of cooling air from snowy Alp.

He has taught Samson the tales of Circe, and the Syrenes, at which he apparently hints in his colloquy with Delilah:

——I know thy trains,
Tho' dearly to my cost, thy gins and toils;
Thy fair *enchanted cup* and *warbling charms*,
No more on me have power.

But the grossest error of this kind is the solemn introduction of the phœnix in the last scene; which is faulty, not only as it is incongruous to the personage to whom it is ascribed, but as it is so evidently contrary to reason and nature, that it ought never to be mentioned but as a fable in any serious poem:

——Virtue giv'n for lost,
Deprest, and overthrown, as seem'd
Like that self-begotten bird
In the Arabian woods embost
That no second knows, nor third,
And lay ere while a holocaust;
From out our ashy womb now teem'd
Revives, reflourishes, then vigorous most
When most inactive deem'd.
And tho' her body die, her fame survives,
A secular bird ages of lives.

Another species of impropriety is the unsuitableness of thoughts to the general character of the poem. The seriousness and solemnity of tragedy necessarily reject all pointed or epigrammatical expressions, all remote conceits and opposition of ideas. Samson's complaint is therefore too elaborate to be natural:

As in the land of darkness, yet in light,
To live a life half dead, a living death,
And bury'd; but, O yet more miserable!
Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave!
Bury'd, yet not exempt,
By privilege of death and burial,
From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs.

All allusions to low and trivial objects, with which contempt is usually associated, are [illegible] less unsuitable to a species of composition which ought to be always awful though not alwa[illegible]

magnificent. The remark therefore of the chorus on good and bad news seems to want elevation:

Manoah. A little stay will bring some notice hither,
Chor. Of good or bad so great, of bad the sooner;
For evil news *rides post*, while good news *baits*.

But of all meanness, that has least to plead which is produced by mere verbal conceits, which, depending only upon sounds, lose their existence by the change of a syllable. Of this kind, is the following dialogue:

Chor. But had we best retire? I see a *storm*.
Sams. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain.
Chor. But this another kind of tempest brings.
Sams. Be less abstruse, my riddling days are past.
Chor. Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear
The bait of honied words; a rougher tongue
Draws hitherward, I know him by his stride,
The giant Harapha.——

And yet more despicable are the lines in which Manoah's paternal kindness is commended by the chorus:

Fathers are wont to *lay up* for their sons.
Thou for thy son are bent to *lay out* all;——

Samson's complaint of the inconveniences of imprisonment is not wholly without verbal quaintness:

——I, a prisoner chain'd, scarce freely draw
The air, imprison'd also, close and damp.

From the sentiments we may properly descend to the consideration of the language, which, in imitation of the ancients, is through the whole dialogue remarkably simple and unadorned, seldom heightened by epithets, or varied by figures; yet sometimes metaphors find admission, even where their consistency is not accurately preserved. Thus Samson confounds loquacity with a shipwreck:

How could I once look up, or heave the head,
Who, like a foolish *pilot*, have *shipwreck'd*
My *vessel* trusted to me from above,
Gloriously *rigg'd*; and for a word, a tear,
Fool, have *divulg'd* the *secret gift* of God
To a deceitful woman!——

And the chorus talks of adding fuel to flame in a report:

He's gone, and who knows how he may *report*
Thy *words*, by *adding fuel to the flame!*

The versification is in the dialogue much more smooth and harmonious than in the parts allotted to the chorus, which are often so harsh and dissonant, as scarce to preserve, whether the lines end with or without rhymes, any appearance of metrical regularity:

Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be he,
That heroic, that renown'd,
Irresistible Samson; whom unarmed
No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast, could withstand;
Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid?——

Since I have thus pointed out the faults of Milton, critical integrity requires that I should endeavour to display his excellences, though they will not easily be discovered in short quotations, because they consist in the justness of diffuse reasonings, or in the contexture and method of continued dialogues; this play having none of those descriptions, similes, or splendid sentences, with which other tragedies are so lavishly adorned.

Yet some passages may be selected which seem to deserve particular notice, either as containing sentiments of passion, representations of life, precepts of conduct, or sallies of imagination. It is not easy to give a stronger representation of the weariness of despondency, than in the words of Samson to his father:

——I feel my genial spirits droop,
My hopes all flat; nature within me seems
In all her functions weary of herself;
My race of glory run, and race of shame;
And I shall shortly be with them that rest.

The reply of Samson to the flattering Delilah affords a just and striking description of the stratagems and allurements of feminine hypocrisy:

——These are thy wonted arts,
And arts of every woman false like thee,
To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray,
Then as repentant to submit, beseech,
And reconcilement move with feign'd remorse,
Confess and promise wonders in her change;
Not truly penitent, but chief to try
Her husband, how far urg'd his patience bears,
His virtue or weakness which way to assail;
Then with more cautious and instructed skill
Again transgresses and again submits.

When Samson has refused to make himself a spectacle at the feast of Dagon, he first justifies his behaviour to the chorus, who charge him with having served the Philistines, by a very just distinction; and then destroys the common excuse of cowardice and servility, which always confound temptation with compulsion:

Chor. Yet with thy strength thou serv'st the Philistines.
Sams. Not in their idol worship, but by labour
Honest and lawful to deserve my food
Of those who have me in their civil power.
Chor. Where the heart joins not, outward acts defile not.
Sams. Where outward force constrains, the sentence holds,
But who constrains me to the temple of Dagon,
Not dragging? the Philistine lords command.
Commands are no restraints. If I obey them,
I do it freely, vent'ring to displease
God for the fear of man, and man prefer,
Set God behind.

The complaint of blindness which Samson pours out at the beginning of the tragedy is equally addressed to the passions and the fancy. The enumeration of his miseries is succeeded by a very pleasing train of poetical images, and concluded by such expostulations and wishes, as reason too often submits to learn from despair:

O first created beam, and thou great word
Let there be light, and light was over all;
Why am I thus bereaved thy prime decree?
The sun to me is dark,
And silent as the moon,
When she deserts the night,
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.
Since light so necessary is to life,
And almost life itself; if it be true,
That light is in the soul,
She all in every part; why was the sight
To such a tender ball as the eye confined,
So obvious and so easy to be quench'd,
And not, as feeling, through all parts diffused
That she may look at will through every pore?

Such are the faults and such the beauties of Samson Agonistes, which I have shown with no other purpose than to promote the knowledge of true criticism. The everlasting verdure of Milton's laurels has nothing to fear from the blasts of malignity; nor can my attempt produce any other effect, than to strengthen their shoots by lopping their luxuriance.

No. 141.] TUESDAY, JULY 23, 1751.

Hilarisque, tamen cum pondere, virtus. STAT.

Greatness with ease, and gay severity.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

POLITICIANS have long observed that the greatest events may be often traced back to slender causes. Petty competition or casual friendship, the prudence of a slave, or the garrulity of a woman, have hindered or promoted the most important schemes, and hastened or retarded the revolutions of empires.

Whoever shall review his life will generally find that the whole tenor of his conduct has been determined by some accident of no apparent moment, or by a combination of inconsiderable circumstances, acting when his imagination was unoccupied, and his judgment unsettled; and that his principles and actions have taken their colour from some secret infusion, mingled without design in the current of his ideas. The desires that predominate in our hearts are instilled by imperceptible communications at the time when we look upon the various scenes of the world, and the different employments of men, with the neutrality of inexperience; and we come forth from the nursery or the school, invariably destined to the pursuit of great acquisitions, or petty accomplishments.

Such was the impulse by which I have been kept in motion from my earliest years. I was born to an inheritance which gave my childhood a claim to distinction and caresses, and was accustomed to hear applauses before they had much influence on my thoughts. The first praise of which I remember myself sensible was that of good-humour, which, whether I deserved it or not when it was bestowed, I have since made it my whole business to propagate and maintain.

When I was sent to school, the gayety of my look, and the liveliness of my loquacity, soon gained me admission to hearts not yet fortified against affection by artifice or interest. I was entrusted with every stratagem, and associated in every sport; my company gave alacrity to a frolic, and gladness to a holiday. I was indeed so much employed in adjusting or executing schemes of diversion, that I had no leisure for my tasks, but was furnished with exercises, and instructed in my lessons by some kind patron of the higher classes. My master not suspecting my deficiency, or unwilling to detect what his kindness would not punish nor his impartiality excuse, allowed me to escape with a slight examination, laughed at the pertness of my ignorance and the sprightliness of my absurdities, and could not forbear to show that he regarded me with such tenderness as genius and learning can seldom excite.

From school I was dismissed to the university, where I soon drew upon me the notice of the younger students, and was the constant partner of their morning walks and evening compotations. I was not indeed much celebrated for literature, but was looked on with indulgence as a man of parts, who wanted nothing but the dulness of a scholar, and might become eminent whenever he should condescend to labour and attention. My tutor a while reproached me with negligence, and repressed my sallies with supercilious gravity; yet having natural good-humour lurking in his heart, he could not long hold out against the power of hilarity, but after a few months began to relax the muscles of disciplinarian moroseness, received me with smiles after an elopement, and that he might not betray his trust to his fondness, was content to spare my diligence by increasing his own.

Thus I continued to dissipate the gloom of collegiate austerity, to waste my own life in idleness, and lure others from their studies, till the happy hour arrived when I was sent to London. I soon discovered the town to be the proper element of youth and gayety, and was quickly distinguished as a wit by the ladies, a species of beings only heard of at the university, whom I had no sooner the happiness of approaching than I devoted all my faculties to the ambition of pleasing them.

A wit, Mr. Rambler, in the dialect of ladies, is not always a man who by the action of a vigorous fancy upon comprehensive knowledge brings distant ideas unexpectedly together, who by some peculiar acuteness discovers resemblances in objects dissimilar to common eyes, or, by mixing heterogeneous notions, dazzles the attention with sudden scintillations of conceit. A lady's wit is a man who can make ladies laugh, to which, however easy it may seem, many gifts of nature and attainments of art must commonly concur. He that hopes to be received as a wit in female assemblies should have a form neither so amiable as to strike with admiration, nor so coarse as to raise disgust, with an understanding too feeble to be dreaded, and too forcible to be despised. The other parts of the character are more subject to variation: it was formerly essential to a wit, that half his back should be covered with a snowy fleece; and at a time yet more remote, no man was a wit without his boots. In the days of the "Spectator" a snuff box seems to be indispensable; but in my time an embroidered coat was sufficient, without any precise regulation of the rest of his dress.

But wigs and boots and snuff-boxes are vain, without a perpetual resolution to be merry, and who can always find supplies of mirth? Juvenal, indeed, in his comparison of the two opposite philosophers, wonders only whence an unexhausted fountain of tears could be discharged: but had Juvenal, with all his spirit, undertaken my province, he would have found constant gayety equally difficult to be supported. Consider, Mr Rambler, and compassionate the condition of a man who has taught every company to expect from him a continual feast of laughter, an unintermitted stream of jocularity. The task of every other slave has an end. The rower in time reaches the port; the lexicographer at last finds the conclusion of his alphabet; only the hapless wit has his labour always to begin; the call for novelty is never satisfied, and one jest only raises expectation of another.

I know that among men of learning and asperity the retainers to the female world are not much regarded: yet I cannot but hope that, if you knew at how dear a rate our honours are purchased, you would look with some gratulation on our success, and with some pity on our miscarriages. Think on the misery of him who is condemned to cultivate barrenness and ransack vacuity; who is obliged to continue his talk when his meaning is spent, to raise merriment without images, to harass his imagination in quest of thoughts which he cannot start, and his memory in pursuit of narratives which he cannot overtake; observe the effort with which he strains to conceal despondency by a smile, and the distress in which he sits while the eyes of the company are fixed upon him as their last refuge from silence and dejection.

It were endless to recount the shifts to which I have been reduced, or to enumerate the different species of artificial wit. I regularly frequented coffee-houses, and have often lived a week upon an expression, of which he who dropped it did not know the value. When fortune did not favour my erratic industry, I gleaned jests at home from obsolete farces. To collect wit was indeed safe, for I consorted with none that looked much into books, but to disperse it was the difficulty. A seeming negligence was often useful, and I have very successfully made a reply not to what the lady had said, but to what it was convenient for me to hear; for very few were so perverse as to rectify a mistake which had given occasion to a burst of merriment. Sometimes I drew the conversation up by degrees to a proper point, and produced a conceit which I had treasured up, like sportsmen who boast of killing the foxes which they lodge in the covert. Eminence is however, in some happy moments, gained at less expense; I have delighted a whole circle at one time with a series of quibbles, and made myself good company at another by scalding my fingers, or mistaking a lady's lap for my own chair.

These are artful deceits and useful expedients; but expedients are at length exhausted, and deceits detected. Time itself, among other injuries, diminishes the power of pleasing, and I now find, in my forty-fifth year, many pranks and pleasantries very coldly received, which had formerly filled a whole room with jollity and acclamation. I am under the melancholy necessity of supporting that character by study, which I gained by levity, having learned too late that gayety must be recommended by higher qualities, and that mirth can never please long but as the efflorescence of a mind loved for its luxuriance, but esteemed for its usefulness.

I am, &c.

PAPILIUS.

No. 142.] SATURDAY, JULY 27, 1751.

Ενθα δ' ἀνὴρ ἐνίαυε πελώριος—οὐδὲ, μέτ' ἄλλους
Πωλεῖτ'· ἀλλ' ἀπάνευθεν ἐὼν ἀθεμίστια ᾔδη·
Καὶ γὰρ θαῦμ' ἐτέτυκτο πελώριον, οὐδὲ ἐῴκει
Ανερι σιτοφάγῳ. HOMER.

A giant shepherd here his flock maintains,
Far from the rest, and solitary reigns,
In shelter thick of horrid shade reclined;
And gloomy mischiefs labour in his mind.
A form enormous! far unlike the race
Of human birth, in stature or in face. POPE.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

HAVING been accustomed to retire annually from the town, I lately accepted the invitation

of Eugenio, who has an estate and seat in a distant county. As we were unwilling to travel without improvement, we turned often from the direct road to please ourselves with the view of nature or of art; we examined every wild mountain and medicinal spring, criticised every edifice, contemplated every ruin, and compared every scene of action with the narratives of historians. By this succession of amusements we enjoyed the exercise of a journey without suffering the fatigue, and had nothing to regret but that by a progress so leisurely and gentle we missed the adventures of a post-chaise, and the pleasure of alarming villages with the tumult of our passage, and of disguising our insignificancy by the dignity of hurry.

The first week after our arrival at Eugenio's house, was passed in receiving visits from his neighbours, who crowded about him with all the eagerness of benevolence; some impatient to learn the news of the court in town, that they might be qualified by authentic information to dictate to the rural politicians on the next bowling day; others desirous of his interest to accommodate disputes, or of his advice in the settlement of their fortunes and the marriage of their children.

The civilities which he had received were soon to be returned; and I passed some time with great satisfaction in roving through the country, and viewing the seats, gardens, and plantations which are scattered over it. My pleasure would indeed have been greater had I been sometimes allowed to wander in a park or wilderness alone; but to appear as the friend of Eugenio was an honour not to be enjoyed without some inconveniences; so much was every one solicitous for my regard, that I could seldom escape to solitude, or steal a moment from the emulation of complaisance, and the vigilance of officiousness.

In these rambles of good neighbourhood, we frequently passed by a house of unusual magnificence. When I had my curiosity yet distracted among many novelties, it did not much attract my observation; but in a short time I could not forbear surveying it with particular notice; for the length of the wall which inclosed the gardens, the disposition of the shades that waved over it, and the canals of which I could obtain some glimpses through the trees from our own windows, gave me reason to expect more grandeur and beauty than I had yet seen in that province. I therefore inquired as we rode by it, why we never, amongst our excursions, spent an hour where there was such an appearance of splendour and affluence? Eugenio told me that the seat which I so much admired was commonly called in the country the *haunted house*, and that no visits were paid there by any of the gentlemen whom I had yet seen. As the haunts of incorporeal beings are generally ruinous, neglected and desolate, I easily conceived that there was something to be explained, and told him that I supposed it only fairy ground, on which we might venture by daylight without danger. The danger, says he, is indeed only that of appearing to solicit the acquaintance of a man, with whom it is not possible to converse without infamy, and who has driven from him, by his insolence or malignity, every human being who can live without him.

Our conversation was then accidentally interrupted, but my inquisitive humour being now in motion, could not rest without a full account of this newly-discovered prodigy. I was soon informed that the fine house and spacious gardens were haunted by squire Bluster, of whom it was very easy to learn the character, since nobody had regard for him sufficient to hinder them from telling whatever they could discover.

Squire Bluster is descended of an ancient family. The estate which his ancestors had immemorially possessed was much augmented by Captain Bluster, who served under Drake in the reign of Elizabeth; and the Blusters, who were before only petty gentlemen, have from that time frequently represented the shire in parliament, been chosen to present addresses, and given laws at hunting-matches and races. They were eminently hospitable and popular, till the father of this gentleman died of an election. His lady went to the grave soon after him, and left the heir, then only ten years old, to the care of his grandmother, who would not suffer him to be controlled, because she could not bear to hear him cry; and never sent him to school, because she was not able to live without his company. She taught him however very early to inspect the steward's accounts, to dog the butler from the cellar, and to catch the servants at a junket; so that he was at the age of eighteen a complete master of all the lower arts of domestic policy, had often on the road detected combinations between the coachman and the ostler, and procured the discharge of nineteen maids for illicit correspondence with cottagers and char-women.

By the opportunities of parsimony which minority affords, and which the probity of his guardians had diligently improved, a very large sum of money was accumulated, and he found himself when he took his affairs into his own hands the richest man in the county. It has been long the custom of this family to celebrate the heir's completion of his twenty-first year by an entertainment, at which the house is thrown open to all that are inclined to enter it, and the whole province flocks together as to a general festivity. On this occasion young Bluster exhibited the first tokens of his future eminence, by shaking his purse at an old gentle-

man who had been the intimate friend of his father, and offering to wager a greater sum than he could afford to venture; a practice with which he has at one time or other insulted every freeholder within ten miles round him.

His next acts of offence were committed in a contentious and spiteful vindication of the privileges of his manors, and a rigorous and relentless prosecution of every man that presumed to violate his game. As he happens to have no estate adjoining equal to his own, his oppressions are often borne without resistance for fear of a long suit, of which he delights to count the expenses without the least solicitude about the event; for he knows that where nothing but an honorary right is contested, the poorer antagonist must always suffer, whatever shall be the last decision of the law.

By the success of some of these disputes he has so elated his insolence, and by reflection upon the general hatred which they have brought upon him so irritated his virulence, that his whole life is spent in meditating or executing mischief. It is his common practice to procure his hedges to be broken in the night, and then to demand satisfaction for damages which his grounds have suffered from his neighbour's cattle. An old widow was yesterday soliciting Eugenio to enable her to replevin her only cow, then in the pound by squire Bluster's order, who had sent one of his agents to take advantage of her calamity, and persuade her to sell the cow at an under-rate. He has driven a day-labourer from his cottage for gathering blackberries in a hedge for his children, and has now an old woman in the county-jail for a trespass which she committed, by coming into his ground to pick up acorns for her hog.

Money, in whatever hands, will confer power. Distress will fly to immediate refuge without much consideration of remote consequences. Bluster has therefore a despotic authority in many families, whom he has assisted, on pressing occasions, with larger sums than they can easily repay. The only visits that he makes are to these houses of misfortune, where he enters with the insolence of absolute command, enjoys the terrors of the family, exacts their obedience, riots at their charge, and in the height of his joy insults the father with menaces, and the daughters with obscenity.

He is of late somewhat less offensive; for one of his debtors, after gentle expostulations, by which he was only irritated to grosser outrage, seized him by the sleeve, led him trembling into the court-yard, and closed the door upon him in a stormy night. He took his usual revenge next morning by a writ; but the debt was discharged by the assistance of Eugenio.

It is his rule to suffer his tenants to owe him rent, because by this indulgence he secures to himself the power of seizure whenever he has an inclination to amuse himself with calamity, and feast his ears with entreaties and lamentations. Yet as he is sometimes capriciously liberal to those whom he happens to adopt as favourites, and lets his lands at a cheap rate, his farms are never long unoccupied; and when one is ruined by oppression, the possibility of better fortune quickly lures another to supply his place.

Such is the life of squire Bluster; a man in whose power fortune has liberally placed the means of happiness, but who has defeated all her gifts of their end by the depravity of his mind. He is wealthy without followers; he is magnificent without witnesses; he has birth without alliance, and influence without dignity. His neighbours scorn him as a brute; his dependants dread him as an oppressor; and he has only the gloomy comfort of reflecting, that if he is hated he is likewise feared.

I am, Sir, &c.

VAGULUS.

No. 143.] TUESDAY, JULY 30, 1751.

——Moveat cornicula risum
Furtivis nudata coloribus.—— HOR.

Lest when the birds their various colours claim
Strip'd of his stolen pride, the crow forlorn
Should stand the laughter of the public scorn.

FRANCIS.

AMONG the innumerable practices by which interest or envy has taught those who live upon literary fame to disturb each other at their airy banquets, one of the most common is the charge of plagiarism. When the excellence of a new composition can no longer be contested, and malice is compelled to give way to the unanimity of applause, there is yet this one expedient to be tried, by which the author may be degraded, though his work be reverenced; and the excellence which we cannot obscure, may be set at such a distance as not to overpower our fainter lustre.

This accusation is dangerous, because, even when it is false, it may be sometimes urged with probability. Bruyere declares that we are come into the world too late to produce any thing new, that nature and life are preoccupied, and that description and sentiment have been long exhausted. It is indeed certain, that whoever attempts any common topic, will find unexpected coincidences of his thoughts with those of other writers; nor can the nicest judgment always distinguish accidental similitude from artful imitation. There is likewise a common stock of images, a settled mode of arrangement, and a beaten track of transition, which all authors suppose themselves at liberty to use, and which produce the resemblance generally ob-

servable among contemporaries. So that in books which best deserve the name of originals, there is little new beyond the disposition of materials already provided; the same ideas and combinations of ideas have been long in the possession of other hands; and, by restoring to every man his own, as the Romans must have returned to their cots from the possession of the world, so the most inventive and fertile genius would reduce his folios to a few pages. Yet the author who imitates his predecessors only by furnishing himself with thoughts and elegances out of the same general magazine of literature, can with little more propriety be reproached as a plagiary, than the architect can be censured as a mean copier of Angelo or Wren, because he digs his marble from the same quarry, squares his stones by the same art, and unites them in columns of the same orders.

Many subjects fall under the consideration of an author, which being limited by nature, can admit only of slight and accidental diversities. All definitions of the same thing must be nearly the same; and descriptions, which are definitions of a more lax and fanciful kind, must always have in some degree that resemblance to each other which they all have to their object. Different poets describing the spring or the sea would mention the zephyrs and the flowers, the billows and the rocks; reflecting on human life, they would, without any communication of opinions, lament the deceitfulness of hope, the fugacity of pleasure, the fragility of beauty, and the frequency of calamity: and for palliatives of these incurable miseries, they would concur in recommending kindness, temperance, caution, and fortitude.

When therefore there are found in Virgil and Horace two similar passages:

Hæ tibi erunt artes ——
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.——
VIRG.

To tame the proud, the fetter'd slave to free:
These are imperial arts, and worthy thee.
DRYDEN.

Imperet bellante prior, jacentem
Lenis in hostem. HOR.

Let Cæsar spread his conquests far,
Less pleased to triumph than to spare.

it is surely not necessary to suppose with a late critic, that one is copied from the other, since neither Virgil nor Horace can be supposed ignorant of the common duties of humanity, and the virtue of moderation in success.

Cicero and Ovid have on very different occasions remarked how little of the honour of a victory belongs to the general, when his soldiers and his fortune have made their deductions; yet why should Ovid be suspected to have owed to Tully an observation which perhaps occurs to every man that sees or hears of military glories?

Tully observes of Achilles, that had not Homer written, his valour had been without praise.

Nisi Illas illa extitisset, idem tumulus qui corpus ejus contexerat, nomen ejus obruisset.

Unless the Iliad had been published, his name had been lost in the tomb that covered his body.

Horace tells us with more energy that there were brave men before the wars of Troy, but they were lost in oblivion for want of a poet:

Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi; sed omnes illachrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longa
Nocte, carent quia vate sacro.

Before great Agamemnon reign'd,
Reign'd kings as great as he, and brave,
Whose huge ambition's now contain'd
In the small compass of a grave;
In endless night they sleep, unwept, unknown,
No bard had they to make all time their own.
FRANCIS.

Tully inquires, in the same oration, why, but for fame, we disturb a short life with so many fatigues?

Quid est quod in hoc tam exiguo vitæ curriculo et tam brevi, tantis nos in laboribus exerceamus?

Why in so small a circuit of life should we employ ourselves in so many fatigues?

Horace inquires in the same manner,

Quid brevi fortes jaculamur ævo
Multa?

Why do we aim, with eager strife,
At things beyond the mark of life? FRANCIS.

when our life is of so short duration, why we form such numerous designs? But Horace, as well as Tully, might discover that records are needful to preserve the memory of actions, and that no records were so durable as poems; either of them might find out that life is short, and that we consume it in unnecessary labour.

There are other flowers of fiction so widely scattered and so easily cropped, that it is scarcely just to tax the use of them as an act by which any particular writer is despoiled of his garland; for they may be said to have been planted by the ancients in the open road of poetry for the accommodation of their successors, and to be the right of every one that has art to pluck them without injuring their colours or their fragrance. The passage of Orpheus to hell, with the recovery and second loss of Eurydice, have been described after Boethius by Pope, in such a manner as might justly leave him suspected of imitation, were not the images such as they might both have derived from more ancient writers.

Quæ sontes agitant metu
Ultrices scelerum deæ
Jam mœstæ lacrymis madent,
Non Ixioniun caput
Velox præcipitat rota.

The powers of vengeance, while they hear,
Touch'd with compassion, drop a tear;
Ixion's rapid wheel is bound,
Fix'd in attention to the sound. F. LEWIS.

Thy stone, O Sysiphus, stands still,
Ixion rests upon his wheel,
And the pale spectres dance!
The furies sink upon their iron beds.

Tandem, vincimur, arbiter
Umbrarum, miserans, ait——
Donemus, comitem viro,
Emtam carmine, conjugem.

Subdued at length, Hell's pitying monarch cried,
The song rewarding, let us yield the bride.
F. LEWIS.

He sung, and Hell consented
To hear the poet's prayer;
Stern Proserpine relented,
And gave him back the fair.

Heu, noctis prope terminos
Orpheus Eurydicen suam
Vidit, perdidit, occidit.

Nor yet the golden verge of day begun,
When Orpheus, her unhappy lord,
Eurydice to life restor'd,
At once beheld, and lost, and was undone.
F. LEWIS.

But soon, too soon, the lover turns his eyes;
Again she falls, again she dies, she dies!

No writer can be fully convicted of imitation, except there is a concurrence of more resemblance than can be imagined to have happened by chance; as where the same ideas are conjoined without any natural series or necessary coherence, or where not only the thought but the words are copied. Thus it can scarcely be doubted, that in the first of the following passages Pope remembered Ovid, and that in the second he copied Crashaw:

Sæpe pater dixit, studium quid inutile tentas?
Mæonides nullas ipse reliquit opes——
Sponte sua carmen numeros veniebat ad aptos,
Et quod conabar scribere, versus erat.—OVID.

Quit, quit this barren trade, my father cried;
Even Homer left no riches when he died——
In verse spontaneous flowed my native strain,
Forçed by no sweat or labour of the brain.
F. LEWIS.

I left no calling for this idle trade;
No duty broke, no father disobey'd;
While yet a child, ere yet a fool to fame,
I lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came.—POPE.

——This plain floor,
Believe me, reader, can say more
Than many a braver marble can,
Here lies a truly honest man. CRASHAW.

This modest stone, what few vain marbles can,
May truly say, Here lies an honest man. POPE.

Conceits, or thoughts not immediately impressed by sensible objects, or necessarily arising from the coalition or comparison of common sentiments, may be with great justice suspected whenever they are found a second time. Thus Waller probably owed to Grotius an elegant compliment:

Here lies the learned Savil's heir,
So early wise, and lasting fair,
That none, except her years they told,
Thought her a child, or thought her old.
WALLER.

Unica lux sæcli, genitoris gloria, nemo
Quem puerum, nemo credidit esse senem.
GROTIUS.

The age's miracle, his father's joy!
Nor old you would pronounce him, nor a boy.
F. LEWIS.

And Prior was indebted for a pretty illustration to Alleyne's poetical history of Henry the Seventh.

For nought but light itself, itself can show,
And only kings can write, what kings can do.
ALLEYNE

Your music's power, your music must disclose,
For what light is, 'tis only light that shows.
PRIOR.

And with yet more certainty may the same writer be censured for endeavouring the clandestine appropriation of a thought which he borrowed, surely without thinking himself disgraced, from an epigram of Plato:

Τῇ Παφίῃ τὸ κάτοπτρον· ἔπει τοίη μὲν ὀρᾶσθαι
Οὐκ ἐθέλω, οἵη δ' ἦν πάρος, οὐ δύναμαι.

Venus take my votive glass,
Since I am not what I was;
What from this day I shall be,
Venus, let me never see.

As not every instance of similitude can be considered as a proof of imitation, so not every imitation ought to be stigmatized as plagiarism. The adoption of a noble sentiment, or the insertion of a borrowed ornament, may sometimes display so much judgment as will almost compensate for invention: and an inferior genius may, without any imputation of servility, pursue the path of the ancients, provided he declines to tread in their footsteps.

No. 144.] SATURDAY, AUG. 3, 1751.

Daphnidis arcum
Fregisti et calamos: quæ tu, perverse Menalca,
Et cum vidisti puero donata, dolebas;
Et si non aliqua nocuisses, mortuus esses.—VIRG.

The bow of Daphnis and the shafts you broke;
When the fair boy receiv'd the gift of right;
And but for mischief, you had died for spite.

DRYDEN.

It is impossible to mingle in conversation without observing the difficulty with which a new name makes its way into the world. The first appearance of excellence unites multitudes against it; unexpected opposition rises upon every side; the celebrated and the obscure join in the confederacy; subtilty furnishes arms to impudence, and invention leads on credulity.

The strength and unanimity of this alliance is not easily conceived. It might be expected that no man should suffer his heart to be inflamed with malice, but by injuries; that none should busy himself in contesting the pretensions of another, but when some right of his own was involved in the question; that at least hostilities commenced without cause, should quickly cease; that the armies of malignity should soon disperse, when no common interest could be found to hold them together; and that the attack upon a rising character should be left to those who had something to hope or fear from the event.

The hazards of those that aspire to eminence, would be much diminished if they had none but acknowledged rivals to encounter. Their enemies would then be few, and what is of yet greater importance, would be known. But what caution is sufficient to ward off the blows of invisible assailants, or what force can stand against unremitted attacks, and a continual succession of enemies? Yet such is the state of the world, that no sooner can any man emerge from the crowd, and fix the eyes of the public upon him, than he stands as a mark to the arrows of lurking calumny, and receives in the tumult of hostility, from distant and from nameless hands, wounds not always easy to be cured.

It is probable that the onset against the candidates for renown is originally incited by those who imagine themselves in danger of suffering by their success: but, when war is once declared, volunteers flock to the standard, multitudes follow the camp only for want of employment, and flying squadrons are dispersed to every part, so pleased with an opportunity of mischief, that they toil without prospect of praise, and pillage without hope of profit.

When any man has endeavoured to deserve distinction, he will be surprised to hear himself censured where he could not expect to have been named; he will find the utmost acrimony of malice among those whom he never could have offended.

As there are to be found in the service of envy men of every diversity of temper, and degree of understanding, calumny is diffused by all arts and methods of propagation. Nothing is too gross or too refined, too cruel or too trifling to be practised; very little regard is had to the rules of honourable hostility, but every weapon is accounted lawful, and those that cannot make a thrust at life are content to keep themselves in play with petty malevolence, to tease with feeble blows and impotent disturbance.

But as the industry of observation has divided the most miscellaneous and confused assemblages into proper classes, and ranged the insects of the summer, that torment us with their drones or stings, by their several tribes; the persecutors of merit, notwithstanding their numbers, may be likewise commodiously distinguished into Roarers, Whisperers, and Moderators.

The Roarer is an enemy rather terrible than dangerous. He has no other qualification for a champion of controversy than a hardened front and strong voice. Having seldom so much desire to confute as to silence, he depends rather upon vociferation than argument, and has very little care to adjust one part of his accusation to another, to preserve decency in his language, or probability in his narratives. He has always a store of reproachful epithets and contemptuous appellations, ready to be produced as occasion may require, which by constant use he pours out with resistless volubility. If the wealth of a trader is mentioned, he without hesitation devotes him to bankruptcy; if the beauty and elegance of a lady be commended, he wonders how the town can fall in love with rustic deformity; if a new performance of genius happens to be celebrated, he pronounces the writer a hopeless idiot, without knowledge of books or life, and without the understanding by which it must be acquired. His exaggerations are generally without effect upon those whom he compels to hear them; and though it will sometimes happen that the timorous are awed by his violence, and the credulous mistake his confidence for knowledge, yet the opinions which he endeavours to suppress soon recover their former strength, as the trees that bend to the tempest erect themselves again when its force is past.

The Whisperer is more dangerous. He easily gains attention by a soft address, and excites curiosity by an air of importance. As secrets are not to be made cheap by promiscuous publication, he calls a select audience about him, and gratifies their vanity with an appearance of trust by communicating his intelligence in a low voice. Of the trader he can tell that, though he seems to manage an extensive commerce, and talks in high terms of the funds, yet his wealth is not equal to his reputation; he has lately suffered much by an expensive project, and had a greater share than is acknowledged in the rich ship that perished by the

storm. Of the beauty he has little to say, but that they who see her in a morning do not discover all those graces which are admired in the park. Of the writer he affirms with great certainty, that though the excellence of the work be incontestible, he can claim but a small part of the reputation; that he owed most of the images and sentiments to a secret friend; and that the accuracy and equality of the style was produced by the successive correction of the chief critics of the age.

As every one is pleased with imagining that he knows something not yet commonly divulged, secret history easily gains credit; but it is for the most part believed only while it circulates in whispers; and when once it is openly told, is openly confuted.

The most pernicious enemy is the man of Moderation. Without interest in the question, or any motive but honest curiosity, this impartial and zealous inquirer after truth is ready to hear either side, and always disposed to kind interpretations and favourable opinions. He has heard the trader's affairs reported with great variation, and, after a diligent comparison of the evidence, concludes it probable that the splendid superstructure of business, being originally built upon a narrow basis, has lately been found to totter; but between dilatory payment and bankruptcy there is a great distance; many merchants have supported themselves by expedients for a time, without any final injury to their creditors; and what is lost by one adventure may be recovered by another. He believes that a young lady pleased with admiration, and desirous to make perfect what is already excellent, may heighten her charms by artificial improvements, but surely most of her beauties must be genuine, and who can say that he is wholly what he endeavours to appear? The author he knows to be a man of diligence, who perhaps does not sparkle with the fire of Homer, but who has the judgment to discover his own deficiencies, and to supply them by the help of others; and, in his opinion, modesty is a quality so amiable and rare, that it ought to find a patron wherever it appears, and may justly be preferred by the public suffrage to petulent wit and ostentatious literature.

He who thus discovers failings with unwillingness, and extenuates the faults which cannot be denied, puts an end at once to doubt or vindication; his hearers repose upon his candour and veracity, and admit the charge without allowing the excuse.

Such are the arts by which the envious, the idle, the peevish, and the thoughtless, obstruct that worth which they cannot equal, and by artifices thus easy, sordid, and detestable, is industry defeated, beauty blasted, and genius depressed.

No. 145.] TUESDAY, AUG. 6, 1751.

Non, si priores Mœonius tenet
Sedes Homerus, Pindaricæ latent,
Cœæque et Alcæi minaces,
Stesichorique graves Camœnæ. HOR.

What though the Muse her Homer throne
High above all th' immortal quire;
Nor Pindar's rapture she disowns,
Nor hides the plaintive Cœan lyre:
Alcæus strikes the tyrant soul with dread,
Nor yet is grave Stesichorus unread.—FRANCIS.

IT is allowed that vocations and employments of least dignity are of the most apparent use; that the meanest artisan or manufacturer contributes more to the accommodation of life, than the profound scholar and argumentative theorist; and that the public would suffer less present inconvenience from the banishment of philosophers than from the extinction of any common trade.

Some have been so forcibly struck with this observation, that they have, in the first warmth of their discovery, thought it reasonable to alter the common distribution of dignity, and ventured to condemn mankind of universal ingratitude. For justice exacts, that those by whom we are most benefited should be most honoured. And what labour can be more useful than that which procures to families and communities those necessaries which supply the wants of nature, or those conveniences by which ease, security, and elegance, are conferred?

This is one of the innumerable theories which the first attempt to reduce them into practice certainly destroys. If we estimate dignity by immediate usefulness, agriculture is undoubtedly the first and noblest science; yet we see the plough driven, the clod broken, the manure spread, the seeds scattered, and the harvest reaped, by men whom those that feed upon their industry will never be persuaded to admit into the same rank with heroes or with sages; and who, after all the confessions which truth may extort in favour of their occupation, must be content to fill up the lowest class of the commonwealth, to form the base of the pyramid of subordination, and lie buried in obscurity themselves, while they support all that is splendid, conspicuous, or exalted.

It will be found, upon a closer inspection, that this part of the conduct of mankind is by no means contrary to reason or equity. Remuneratory honours are proportioned at once to the usefulness and difficulty of performances, and are properly adjusted by comparison of the mental and corporeal abilities, which they appear to employ. That work, however necessary, which is carried on only by muscular strength and manual dexterity, is not of equal esteem, in the consideration of rational beings, with the tasks that exercise the intellectual powers, and re-

quire the active vigour of imagination, or the gradual and laborious investigations of reason.

The merit of all manual occupations seems to terminate in the inventor; and surely the first ages cannot be charged with ingratitude; since those who civilized barbarians, and taught them how to secure themselves from cold and hunger, were numbered amongst their deities. But these arts once discovered by philosophy, and facilitated by experience, are afterward practised with very little assistance from the faculties of the soul; nor is any thing necessary to the regular discharge of these inferior duties, beyond that rude observation which the most sluggish intellect may practise, and that industry which the stimulations of necessity naturally enforce.

Yet though the refusal of statues and panegyric to those who employ only their hands and feet in the service of mankind may be easily justified, I am far from intending to incite the petulance of pride, to justify the superciliousness of grandeur, or to intercept any part of that tenderness and benevolence, which, by the privilege of their common nature, one may claim from another.

That it would be neither wise nor equitable to discourage the husbandman, the labourer, the miner, or the smith, is generally granted; but there is another race of beings equally obscure and equally indigent, who, because their usefulness is less obvious to vulgar apprehensions, live unrewarded and die unpitied, and who have been long exposed to insult without a defender, and to censure without an apologist.

The authors of London were formerly computed by Swift at several thousands, and there is not any reason for suspecting that their number has decreased. Of these only a very few can be said to produce, or endeavour to produce, new ideas, to extend any principle of science, or gratify the imagination with any uncommon train of images or contexture of events; the rest, however laborious, however arrogant, can only be considered as the drudges of the pen, the manufacturers of literature, who have set up for authors, either with or without a regular initiation, and, like other artificers, have no other care than to deliver their tale of wares at the stated time.

It has been formerly imagined, that he who intends the entertainment or instruction of others, must feel in himself some peculiar impulse of genius; that he must watch the happy minute in which his natural fire is excited, in which his mind is elevated with nobler sentiments, enlightened with clearer views, and invigorated with stronger comprehension; that he must carefully select his thoughts and polish his expressions; and animate his efforts with the hope of raising a monument of learning, which neither time nor envy shall be able to destroy.

But the authors whom I am now endeavouring to recommend, have been too long *hackmed in the ways of men* to indulge the chimerical ambition of immortality; they have seldom any claim to the trade of writing, but that they have tried some other without success; they perceive no particular summons to composition, except the sound of the clock; they have no other rule than the law or the fashion for admitting their thoughts or rejecting them; and about the opinion of posterity they have little solicitude, for their productions are seldom intended to remain in the world longer than a week.

That such authors are not to be rewarded with praise is evident, since nothing can be admired when it ceases to exist; but surely, though they cannot aspire to honour, they may be exempted from ignominy, and adopted in that order of men which deserves our kindness, though not our reverence. These papers of the day, the Ephemeræ of learning, have uses more adequate to the purposes of common life than more pompous and durable volumes. If it is necessary for every man to be more acquainted with his contemporaries than with past generations, and to rather know the events which may immediately affect his fortune or quiet, than the revolutions of ancient kindoms, in which he has neither possessions nor expectations; if it be pleasing to hear of the preferment and dismission of statesmen, the birth of heirs, and the marriage of beauties, the humble author of journals and gazettes must be considered as a liberal dispenser of beneficial knowledge.

Even the abridger, compiler, and translator, though their labours cannot be ranked with those of the diurnal historiographer, yet must not be rashly doomed to annihilation. Every size of readers requires a genius of correspondent capacity; some delight in abstracts and epitomes, because they want room in their memory for long details, and content themselves with effects, without inquiry after causes; some minds are overpowered by splendour of sentiment, as some eyes are offended by a glaring light; such will gladly contemplate an author in an humble imitation, as we look without pain upon the sun in the water.

As every writer has his use, every writer ought to have his patrons; and since no man, however high he may now stand, can be certain that he shall not be soon thrown down from his elevation by criticism or caprice, the common interest of learning requires that her sons should cease from intestine hostilities, and, instead of sacrificing each other to malice and contempt, endeavour to avert persecution from the meanest of their fraternity.

No. 146.] Saturday, Aug. 10, 1751.

Sunt illic duo, tresve, qui revolvant
Nostrarum tineas ineptiarum;
Sed cum sponsio, fabulæque alassæ
De Scorpo fuerint, et Incitato. MART.

'Tis possible that one or two
These fooleries of mine may view;
But then the bettings must be o'er,
Nor Crab or Childers talk'd of more. F. LEWIS.

None of the projects or designs which exercise the mind of man are equally subject to obstructions and disappointments with the pursuit of fame. Riches cannot easily be denied to them who have something of greater value to offer in exchange; he whose fortune is endangered by litigation, will not refuse to augment the wealth of the lawyer; he whose days are darkened by anguor, or whose nerves are excruciated by pain, is compelled to pay tribute to the science of healing. But praise may be always omitted without inconvenience. When once a man has made celebrity necessary to his happiness, he has put it in the power of the weakest and most timorous malignity, if not to take away his satisfaction, at least to withhold it. His enemies may indulge their pride by airy negligence, and gratify their malice by quiet neutrality. They that could never have injured a character by invectives, may combine to annihilate it by silence; as the women of Rome threatened to put an end to conquest and dominion, by supplying no children to the commonwealth.

When a writer has with long toil produced a work intended to burst upon mankind with unexpected lustre, and withdraw the attention of the learned world from every other controversy or inquiry, he is seldom contented to wait long without the enjoyment of his new praises. With an imagination full of his own importance, he walks out like a monarch in disguise to learn the various opinions of his readers. Prepared to feast upon admiration; composed to encounter censures without emotion; and determined not to suffer his quiet to be injured by a sensibility too exquisite of praise or blame, but to laugh with equal contempt at vain objections and injudicious commendations, he enters the places of mingled conversation, sits down to his tea in an obscure corner, and while he appears to examine a file of antiquated journals, catches the conversation of the whole room. He listens, but hears no mention of his book, and therefore supposes that he has disappointed his curiosity by delay; and that as men of learning would naturally begin their conversation with such a wonderful novelty, they had digressed to other subjects before his arrival. The company disperses, and their places are supplied by others equally ignorant, or equally careless. The same expectation carries him to another place, from which the same disappointment drives him soon away. His impatience then grows violent and tumultuous; he ranges over the town with restless curiosity, and hears in one quarter of a cricket-match, in another of a pickpocket; is told by some of an unexpected bankruptcy; by others of a turtle-feast; is sometimes provoked by importunate inquiries after the white bear, and sometimes with praises of the dancing-dog; he is afterward entreated to give his judgment upon a wager about the height of the Monument; invited to see a foot-race in the adjacent villages; desired to read a ludicrous advertisement; or consulted about the most effectual method of making inquiry after a favourite cat. The whole world is busied in affairs, which he thinks below the notice of reasonable creatures, and which are nevertheless sufficient to withdraw all regard from his labours and his merits.

He resolves at last to violate his own modesty, and to recal the talkers from their folly by an inquiry after himself. He finds every one provided with an answer; one has seen the work advertised, but never met with any that had read it; another has been so often imposed upon by specious titles, that he never buys a book till its character is established; a third wonders what any man can hope to produce after so many writers of greater eminence; the next has inquired after the author, but can hear no account of him, and therefore suspects the name to be fictitious; and another knows him to be a man condemned by indigence to write too frequently what he does not understand.

Many are the consolations with which the unhappy author endeavours to allay his vexation, and fortify his patience. He has written with too little indulgence to the understanding of common readers; he has fallen upon an age in which solid knowledge, and delicate refinement, have given way to a low merriment, and idle buffoonery, and therefore no writer can hope for distinction, who has any higher purpose than to raise laughter. He finds that his enemies, such as superiority will always raise, have been industrious, while his performance was in the press, to vilify and blast it; and that the bookseller, whom he had resolved to enrich, has rivals that obstruct the circulation of his copies. He at last reposes upon the consideration, that the noblest works of learning and genius have always made their way slowly against ignorance and prejudice; and that reputation, which is never to be lost, must be gradually obtained, as animals of longest life are observed not soon to attain their full stature and strength.

By such arts of voluntary delusion does every man endeavour to conceal his own unimportance from himself. It is long before we are convinced of the small proportion which every individual bears to the collective body of mankind; or learn how few can be interested in the fortune of any

single man; how little vacancy is left in the world for any new object of attention; to how small extent the brightest blaze of merit can be spread amidst the mists of business and of folly; and how soon it is clouded by the intervention of other novelties. Not only the writer of books, but the commander of armies, and the deliverer of nations, will easily outlive all noisy and popular reputation; he may be celebrated for a time by the public voice; but his actions and his name will soon be considered as remote and unaffecting, and be rarely mentioned but by those whose alliance gives them some vanity to gratify by frequent commemoration.

It seems not to be sufficiently considered how little renown can be admitted in the world. Mankind are kept perpetually busy by their fears or desires, and have not more leisure from their own affairs, than to acquaint themselves with the accidents of the current day. Engaged in contriving some refuge from calamity, or in shortening the way to some new possession, they seldom suffer their thoughts to wander to the past or future; none but a few solitary students have leisure to inquire into the claims of ancient heroes or sages; and names which hoped to range over kingdoms and continents, shrink at last into cloisters or colleges.

Nor is it certain, that even of these dark and narrow habitations, these last retreats of fame, the possession will be long kept. Of men devoted to literature, very few extend their views beyond some particular science, and the greater part seldom inquire, even in their own profession, for any authors but those whom the present mode of study happens to force upon their notice; they desire not to fill their minds with unfashionable knowledge, but contentedly resign to oblivion those books which they now find censured or neglected.

The hope of fame is necessarily connected with such considerations as must abate the ardour of confidence, and repress the vigour of pursuit. Whoever claims renown from any kind of excellence, expects to fill the place which is now possessed by another; for there are already names of every class sufficient to employ all that will desire to remember them; and surely he that is pushing his predecessors into the gulf of obscurity, cannot but sometimes suspect, that he must himself sink in like manner, and, as he stands upon the same precipice, be swept away with the same violence.

It sometimes happens that fame begins when life is at an end: but far the greater number of candidates for applause have owed their reception in the world to some favourable casualties, and have therefore immediately sunk into neglect, when death stripped them of their casual influence, and neither fortune nor patronage operated in their favour. Among those who have better claims to regard, the honour paid to their memory is commonly proportionate to the reputation which they enjoyed in their lives; though still growing fainter, as it is at a greater distance from the first emission; and since it is so difficult to obtain the notice of contemporaries, how little is it to be hoped from future times? What can merit effect by its own force, when the help of art or of friendship can scarcely support it?

No. 147.] TUESDAY, AUG. 13, 1751.

Tu nihil invita dices faciesve Minerva.—HOR.

——You are of too quick a sight,
Not to discern which way your talent lies.
ROSCOMMON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As little things grow great by continual accumulation, I hope you will not think the dignity of your character impaired by an account of a ludicrous persecution, which, though it produces no scenes of horror or of ruin, yet, by incessant importunity of vexation, wears away my happiness, and consumes those years, which nature seems particularly to have assigned to cheerfulness, in silent anxiety and helpless resentment.

I am the eldest son of a gentleman, who having inherited a large estate from his ancestors and feeling no desire either to increase or lessen it, has from the time of his marriage generally resided at his own seat; where, by dividing his time among the duties of a father, a master, and a magistrate, the study of literature, and the offices of civility, he finds means to rid himself of the day, without any of those amusements which all those with whom my residence in this place has made me acquainted, think necessary to lighten the burden of existence.

When my age made me capable of instruction my father prevailed upon a gentleman, long known at Oxford for the extent of his learning and purity of his manners, to undertake my education. The regard with which I saw him treated, disposed me to consider his instructions as important, and I therefore soon formed a habit of attention, by which I made very quick advances in different kinds of learning, and heard, perhaps too often, very flattering comparisons of my own proficiency with that of others, either less docile by nature, or less happily forwarded by instruction. I was caressed by all that exchanged visits with my father, and as young men are with little difficulty taught to judge favourably of themselves, began to think that close application was no longer necessary, and that the time was now come when I was at liberty to read only for amusement, and was to receive the reward of my fatigues in praise and admiration.

While I was thus banqueting upon my own

erfections, and longing in secret to escape from utorage, my father's brother came from London to pass a summer at his native place. A ucrative employment which he possessed, and fondness for the conversation and diversions f the gay part of mankind, had so long kept im from rural excursions, that I had never een him since my infancy. My curiosity was herefore strongly excited by the hope of oberving a character more nearly, which I had itherto reverenced only at a distance.

From all private and intimate conversation, I as long withheld by the perpetual confluence f visitants with whom the first news of my ncle's arrival crowded the house; but was mply recompensed by seeing an exact and unctilious practice of the arts of a courtier, in ll the stratagems of endearment, the gradations f respect, and variations of courtesy. I remarked with what justice of distribution he deided his talk to a wide circle; with what adress he offered to every man an occasion of indulging some favourite topic, or displaying me particular attainment; the judgment with hich he regulated his inquiries after the abnt; and the care with which he showed all e companions of his early years how strongly ey were infixed in his memory, by the menon of past incidents, and the recital of puerile indnesses, dangers and frolics. I soon disvered that he possessed some science of grausness and attraction which books had not ught, and of which neither I nor my father id any knowledge; that he had the power of bliging those whom he did not benefit; that he ffused, upon his cursory behaviour and most ifling actions, a gloss of softness and delicacy which every one was dazzled; and that, by me occult method of captivation, he animated e timorous, softened the supercilious, and ened the reserved. I could not but repine at e inelegance of my own manners, which left e no hopes but not to offend, and at the ineffiy of rustic benevolence, which gained no ends but by real service.

My uncle saw the veneration with which I ught every accent of his voice, and watched ery motion of his hand; and the awkward dilince with which I endeavoured to imitate his abrace of fondness, and his bow of respect. He as like others, easily flattered by an imitator whom he could not fear ever to be rivalled, d repaid my assiduities with compliments and ofessions. Our fondness was so increased by nutual endeavour to please each other, that en we returned to London, he declared himf unable to leave a nephew so amiable and accomplished behind him; and obtained my her's permission to enjoy my company for a months, by a promise to initiate me in the s of politeness, and introduce me into public

The courtier had little inclination to fatigue, and therefore, by travelling very slowly, afforded me time for more loose and familiar conversation; but I soon found, that by a few inquiries which he was not well prepared to satisfy, I had made him weary of his young companion. His element was a mixed assembly, where ceremony and healths, compliments and common topics kept the tongue employed with very little assistance from memory or reflection; but in the chariot where he was necessitated to support a regular tenor of conversation, without any relief from a new comer, or any power of starting into gay digressions, or destroying argument by a jest, he soon discovered that poverty of ideas which had been hitherto concealed under the tinsel of politeness. The first day he entertained me with the novelties and wonders with which I should be astonished at my entrance into London, and cautioned me with apparent admiration of his own wisdom, against the arts by which rusticity is frequently deluded. The same detail and the same advice he would have repeated on the second day; but as I every moment diverted the discourse to the history of the towns by which we passed, or some other subject of learning or of reason, he soon lost his vivacity, grew peevish and silent, wrapped his cloak about him, composed himself to slumber, and reserved his gayety for fitter auditors.

At length I entered London, and my uncle was reinstated in his superiority. He awaked at once to loquacity as soon as our wheels rattled on the pavement, and told me the name of every street as we crossed it, and owner of every house as we passed by. He presented me to my aunt, a lady of great eminence for the number of her acquaintances, and splendour of her assemblies; and either in kindness or revenge consulted with her in my presence, how I might be most advantageously dressed for my first appearance, and most expeditiously disencumbered from villatick bashfulness. My indignation at familiarity thus contemptuous flushed in my face; they mistook anger for shame, and alternately exerted their eloquence upon the benefits of public education, and the happiness of an assurance early acquired.

Assurance is indeed the only qualification to which they seem to have annexed merit, and assurance therefore is perpetually recommended to me, as the supply of every defect, and the ornament of every excellence. I never sit silent in company when secret history is circulating, but I am reproached for want of assurance. If I fail to return the stated answer to a compliment; if I am disconcerted by unexpected raillery; if I blush when I am discovered gazing on a beauty, or hesitate when I find myself embarrassed in an argument; if I am unwilling to talk of what I do not understand, or timorous in undertaking offices which I cannot gracefully perform; if I suffer a more lively tattler to recount the casualties of a game, or a nimbler fop

pick up a fan, I am censured between pity and contempt as a wretch doomed to grovel in obscurity for want of assurance.

I have found many young persons harassed in the same manner, by those to whom age has given nothing but the assurance which they recommend; and therefore cannot but think it useful to inform them, that cowardice and delicacy are not to be confounded; and that he whose stupidity has armed him against the shafts of ridicule, will always act and speak with greater audacity than they whose sensibility represses their ardour, and who dare never let their confidence outgrow their abilities.

No. 148.] SATURDAY, AUG. 17, 1751.

Me pater sævis oneret catenis,
Quod viro clemens misero peperci:
Me vel extremos Numidarum in agros
Classe relegat. HOR.

Me let my father load with chains,
Or banish to Numidia's farthest plains;
My crime, that I, a loyal wife,
In kind compassion spared my husband's life.
FRANCIS.

POLITICIANS remark, that no oppression is so heavy or lasting as that which is inflicted by the perversion and exorbitance of legal authority. The robber may be seized, and the invader repelled, whenever they are found; they who pretend no right but that of force, may by force be punished or suppressed. But when plunder bears the name of impost, and murder is perpetrated by a judicial sentence, fortitude is intimidated, and wisdom confounded; resistance shrinks from an alliance with rebellion, and the villain remains secure in the robes of the magistrate.

Equally dangerous and equally detestable are the cruelties often exercised in private families, under the venerable sanction of parental authority; the power which we are taught to honour from the first moments of reason; which is guarded from insult and violation by all that can impress awe upon the mind of man; and which therefore may wanton in cruelty without control, and trample the bounds of right with innumerable transgressions, before duty and piety will dare to seek redress, or think themselves at liberty to recur to any other means of deliverance than supplications by which insolence is elated, and tears by which cruelty is gratified.

It was for a long time imagined by the Romans, that no son could be the murderer of his father; and they had therefore no punishment appropriated to parricide. They seem likewise to have believed with equal confidence, that no father could be cruel to his child; and therefore they allowed every man the supreme judicature in his own house, and put the lives of his offspring into his hands. But experience informed them by degrees that they had determined too hastily in favour of human nature; they found that instinct and habit were not able to contend with avarice or malice; that the nearest relation might be violated; and that power, to whomsoever intrusted, might be ill employed. They were therefore obliged to supply and to change their institutions; to detect the parricide by a new law, and to transfer capital punishments from the parent to the magistrate.

There are indeed many houses which it is impossible to enter familiarly, without discovering that parents are by no means exempt from the intoxications of dominion; and that he who is in no danger of hearing remonstrances but from his own conscience, will seldom be long without the art of controlling his convictions, and modifying justice by his own will.

If in any situation the heart were inaccessible to malignity, it might be supposed to be sufficiently secured by parental relation. To have voluntarily become to any being the occasion of its existence, produces an obligation to make that existence happy. To see helpless infancy stretching out her hands and pouring out her cries in testimony of dependence, without any powers to alarm jealousy, or any guilt to alienate affection, must surely awaken tenderness in every human mind; and tenderness once excited will be hourly increased by the natural contagion of felicity, by the repercussion of communicated pleasure, by the consciousness of the dignity of benefaction. I believe no generous or benevolent man can see the vilest animal courting his regard, and shrinking at his anger, playing his gambols of delight before him, calling on him in distress, and flying to him in danger without more kindness than he can persuade himself to feel for the wild and unsocial inhabitants of the air and water. We naturally endear to ourselves those to whom we impart any kind of pleasure, because we imagine their affection and esteem secured to us by the benefits which they receive.

There is indeed another method by which the pride of superiority may be likewise gratified. He that has extinguished all the sensations of humanity, and has no longer any satisfaction in the reflection that he is loved as the distributor of happiness, may please himself with exciting terror as the inflicter of pain: he may delight his solitude with contemplating the extent of his power and the force of his commands; by imagining the desires that flutter on the tongue which is forbidden to utter them, or the discontent which preys on the heart in which fear confines it: he may amuse himself with new contrivances of detection, multiplications of prohibition, and varieties of punishment; and

swell with exultation when he considers how little of the homage that he receives he owes to choice.

That princes of this character have been known, the history of all absolute kingdoms will inform us: and since as Aristotle observes, ἡ οἰκονομικὴ μοναρχία, *the government of a family is naturally monarchical*, it is, like other monarchies, too often arbitrarily administrated. The regal and parental tyrants differ only in the extent of their dominions, and the number of their slaves. The same passions cause the same miseries; except that seldom any prince, however despotic, has so far shaken off all awe of the public eye, as to venture upon those freaks of injustice which are sometimes indulged under the secrecy of a private dwelling. Capricious injunctions, partial decisions, unequal allotments, distributions of reward not by merit but by fancy, and punishments regulated not by the degree of the offence but by the humour of the judge, are too frequent where no power is known but that of a father.

That he delights in the misery of others, no man will confess, and yet what other motive can make a father cruel? The king may be instigated by one man to the destruction of another; he may sometimes think himself endangered by the virtues of a subject; he may dread the successful general or the popular orator; his avarice may point out golden confiscations; and his guilt may whisper that he can only be secure by cutting off all power of revenge.

But what can a parent hope from the oppression of those who were born to his protection, of those who can disturb him with no competition, who can enrich him with no spoils? Why cowards are cruel may be easily discovered, but for what reason, not more infamous than cowardice, can that man delight in oppression who has nothing to fear?

The unjustifiable severity of a parent is loaded with this aggravation, that those whom he injures are always in his sight. The injustice of a prince is often exercised upon those of whom he never had any personal or particular knowledge; and the sentence which he pronounces, whether of banishment, imprisonment, or death, removes from his view the man whom he condemns. But the domestic oppressor dooms himself to gaze upon those faces which he clouds with terror and with sorrow; and beholds every moment the effects of his own barbarities. He that can bear to give continual pain to those who surround him, and can walk with satisfaction in the gloom of his own presence; he that can see submissive misery without relenting, and meet without emotion the eye that implores mercy or demands justice, will scarcely be amended by remonstrance or admonition; he has found means of stopping the avenues of tenderness, and arming his heart against the force of reason.

Even though no consideration should be paid to the great law of social beings, by which every individual is commanded to consult the happiness of others, yet the harsh parent is less to be vindicated than any other criminal, because he less provides for the happiness of himself. Every man, however little he loves others, would willingly be loved; every man hopes to live long, and therefore hopes for that time at which he shall sink back to imbecility, and must depend for ease and cheerfulness upon the officiousness of others. But how has he obviated the inconveniences of old age, who alienates from him the assistance of his children, and whose bed must be surrounded in his last hours, in the hours of languor and dejection, of impatience and of pain, by strangers to whom his life is indifferent, or by enemies to whom his death is desirable?

Piety will indeed in good minds overcome provocation, and those who have been harassed by brutality will forget the injuries which they have suffered, so far as to perform the last duties with alacrity and zeal. But surely no resentment can be equally painful with kindness thus undeserved, nor can severer punishment be imprecated upon a man not wholly lost in meanness and stupidity, than, through the tediousness of decrepitude, to be reproached by the kindness of his own children, to receive not the tribute but the alms of attendance, and to owe every relief of his miseries, not to gratitude but to mercy.

No. 149.] TUESDAY, AUG. 20, 1751.

Quod non sit Pylades hoc tempore, non sit Orestes
Miraris? Pylades, Marce, bibebat idem.
Nec melior panis, turdusve dabatur Oresti:
Sed par, atque eadem cœna duobus erat.
Te Cadmæa Tyros, me pinguis Gallia vestit:
Vis te purpureum, Marce, sagatus amem?
Ut præstem Pyladen, aliquis mihi præstet Orestem;
Hoc non fit verbis; Marce, ut ameris, ama.

MART. VI. II.

You wonder now that no man sees
Such friends as those of ancient Greece.
Here lay the point:—Orestes' meat
Was just the same his friend did eat
Nor can it yet be found, his wine
Was better, Pylades, than thine.
In home-spun russet I am dress'd;
Your cloth is always of the best;
But, honest Marcus, if you please
To choose me for your Pylades,
Remember, words alone are vain;
Love—if you would be loved again.—F. LEWIS

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

No depravity of the mind has been more frequently or justly censured than ingratitude.

There is indeed sufficient reason for looking on those that can return evil for good, and repay kindness and assistance with hatred or neglect, as corrupted beyond the common degrees of wickedness; nor will he, who has once been clearly detected in acts of injury to his benefactor, deserve to be numbered among social beings; he has endeavoured to destroy confidence, to intercept sympathy, and to turn every man's attention wholly on himself.

There is always danger lest the honest abhorrence of a crime should raise the passions with too much violence against the man to whom it is imputed. In proportion as guilt is more enormous it ought to be ascertained by stronger evidence. The charge against ingratitude is very general; almost every man can tell what favours he has conferred upon insensibility, and how much happiness he has bestowed without return; but perhaps if these patrons and protectors were confronted with any whom they boast of having befriended, it would often appear that they consulted only their pleasure or vanity, and repaid themselves their petty donatives by gratifications of insolence and indulgence of contempt.

It has happened that much of my time has been passed in a dependent state, and consequently I have received many favours in the opinion of those at whose expense I have been maintained; yet I do not feel in my heart any burning gratitude or tumultuous affection; and as I would not willingly suppose myself less susceptible of virtuous passions than the rest of mankind, I shall lay the history of my life before you, that you may, by your judgment of my conduct, either reform, or confirm, my present sentiments.

My father was the second son of a very ancient and wealthy family. He married a lady of equal birth, whose fortune joined to his own might have supported his posterity in honour; but being gay and ambitious, he prevailed on his friends to procure him a post, which gave him an opportunity of displaying his elegance and politeness. My mother was equally pleased with splendour and equally careless of expense; they both justified their profusion to themselves by endeavouring to believe it necessary to the extension of their acquaintance, and improvement of their interest; and whenever any place became vacant, they expected to be repaid. In the midst of these hopes my father was snatched away by an apoplexy; and my mother who had no pleasure but in dress, equipage, assemblies, and compliments, finding that she could live no longer in her accustomed rank, sunk into dejection, and in two years wore out her life with envy and discontent.

I was sent with a sister one year younger than myself to the elder brother of my father. We were not yet capable of observing how much fortune influences affection, but flattered ourselves on the road with the tenderness and regard with which we should be treated by our uncle. Our reception was rather frigid than malignant; we were introduced to our young cousins, and for the first month more frequently consoled than upbraided; but in a short time we found our prattle repressed, our dress neglected, our endearments unregarded, and our requests referred to the housekeeper.

The forms of decency were now violated, and every day produced new insults. We were soon brought to the necessity of receding from our imagined equality with our cousins, to whom we sunk into humble companions without choice or influence, expected only to echo their opinions, facilitate their desires, and accompany their rambles. It was unfortunate that our early introduction into polite company, and habitual knowledge of the arts of civility, had given us such an appearance of superiority to the awkward bashfulness of our relations, as naturally drew respect and preference from every stranger; and my aunt was forced to assert the dignity of her own children while they were sculking in corners for fear of notice, and hanging down their heads in silent confusion, by relating the indiscretion of our father, displaying her own kindness, lamenting the misery of birth without estate, and declaring her anxiety for our future provision, and the expedients which she had formed to secure us from those follies, or crimes, to which the conjunction of pride and want often gives occasion. In a short time care was taken to prevent such vexatious mistakes; we were told that fine clothes would only fill our heads with false expectations, and our dress was therefore accommodated to our fortune.

Childhood is not easily dejected or mortified. We felt no lasting pain from insolence or neglect; but, finding that we were favoured and commended by all whose interest did not prompt them to discountenance us, preserved our vivacity and spirit to years of greater sensibility. It then became irksome and disgusting to live without any principle of action but the will of another; and we often met privately in the garden to lament our condition, and to ease our hearts with mutual narratives of caprice, peevishness, and affront.

There are innumerable modes of insult and tokens of contempt, for which it is not easy to find a name, which vanish to nothing in an attempt to describe them, and yet may by continual repetition make day pass after day in sorrow and in terror. Phrases of cursory compliment and established salutation may, by a different modulation of the voice, or cast of the countenance, convey contrary meanings, and be changed from indications of respect to expressions of scorn. The dependant who cultivates delicacy in himself, very little consults his own

tranquillity. My unhappy vigilance is every moment discovering some petulance of accent, or arrogance of mien, some vehemence of interrogation, or quickness of reply, that recals my poverty to my mind, and which I feel more acutely as I know not how to resent it.

You are not however to imagine that I think myself discharged from the duties of gratitude, only because my relations do not adjust their looks, or tune their voices, to my expectation. The insolence of benefaction terminates not in negative rudeness or obliquities of insult. I am often told in express terms of the miseries from which charity has snatched me, while multitudes are suffered by relations equally near to devolve upon the parish: and have more than once heard it numbered among other favours, that I am admitted to the same table with my cousins.

That I sit at the first table I must acknowledge, but I sit there only that I may feel the stings of inferiority. My inquiries are neglected, my opinion is overborne, my assertions are controverted, and, as insolence always propagates itself, the servants overlook me, in imitation of their master: if I call modestly I am not heard; if loudly, my usurpation of authority is checked by a general frown. I am often obliged to look uninvited upon delicacies, and sometimes desired to rise upon very slight pretences.

The incivilities to which I am exposed would give me less pain, were they not aggravated by the tears of my sister, whom the young ladies are hourly tormenting with every art of feminine persecution. As it is said of the supreme magistrate of Venice, that he is a prince in one place and a slave in another, my sister is a servant to her cousins in their apartments, and a companion only at the table. Her wit and beauty draw so much regard away from them, that they never suffer her to appear with them in any place where they solicit notice or expect admiration: and when they are visited by neighbouring ladies, and pass their hours in domestic amusements, she is sometimes called to fill a vacancy, insulted with contemptuous freedoms, and dismissed to her needle when her place is supplied. The heir has of late, by the instigation of his sisters, begun to harass with clownish jocularity; he seems inclined to make his first rude essays of waggery upon her; and by the connivance, if not encouragement, of his father, treats her with such licentious brutality as I cannot bear, though I cannot punish it.

I beg to be informed, Mr. Rambler, how much we can be supposed to owe to beneficence exerted on terms like these? to beneficence which pollutes its gifts with contumely, and may be truly said to pander to pride? I would willingly be told whether insolence does not reward its own liberalities, and whether he that exacts servility can, with justice, at the same time expect affection?

I am, Sir, &c.

HYPERIDULUS.

No. 150.] SATURDAY, AUG. 24, 1751.

———*O munera nondum*
Intellecta Deum! LUCAN.

———Thou chiefest good!
Bestowed by Heaven, but seldom understood.
ROWE.

As daily experience makes it evident that misfortunes are unavoidably incident to human life, that calamity will neither be repelled by fortitude, nor escaped by flight; neither awed by greatness, nor eluded by obscurity; philosophers have endeavoured to reconcile us to that condition which they cannot teach us to mend, by persuading us that most of our evils are made afflictive only by ignorance or perverseness, and that nature has annexed to every vicissitude of external circumstances some advantage sufficient to overbalance all its inconveniences.

This attempt may, perhaps, be justly suspected of resemblance to the practice of physicians, who when they cannot mitigate pain, destroy sensibility, and endeavour to conceal by opiates the inefficacy of their other medicines. The panegyrists of calamity have more frequently gained applause to their wit then acquiescence to their arguments; nor has it appeared that the most musical oratory or subtle ratiocination has been able long to overpower the anguish of oppression, the tediousness of languor, or the longings of want.

Yet it may be generally remarked, that, where much has been attempted, something has been performed: though the discoveries or acquisitions of man are not always adequate to the expectations of his pride, they are at least sufficient to animate his industry. The antidotes with which philosophy has medicated the cup of life, though they cannot give it salubrity and sweetness, have at least allayed its bitterness, and contempered its malignity; the balm which she drops upon the wounds of the mind, abates their pain, though it cannot heal them.

By suffering willingly what we cannot avoid, we secure ourselves from vain and immoderate disquiet; we preserve for better purposes that strength which would be unprofitably wasted in wild efforts of desperation, and maintain that circumspection which may enable us to seize every support, and improve every alleviation. This calmness will be more easily obtained, as the attention is more powerfully withdrawn from the contemplation of unmingled unabated evil, and diverted to those accidental benefits which prudence may confer on every state.

Seneca has attempted, not only to pacify us in misfortune, but almost to allure us to it, by representing it as necessary to the pleasures of the mind. "He that never was acquainted with adversity," says he, "has seen the world but on one side, and is ignorant of half the scenes of nature." He invites his pupil to calamity, as the Syrens allured the passenger to their coasts by promising that he shall return πλείονα ἰδὼς, with increase of knowledge, with enlarged views and multiplied ideas.

Curiosity is, in great and generous minds, the first passion and the last; and perhaps always predominates in proportion to the strength of the contemplative faculties. He who easily comprehends all that is before him, and soon exhausts any single subject, is always eager for new inquiries; and, in proportion as the intellectual eye takes in a wider prospect, it must be gratified with variety by more rapid flights and bolder excursions: nor perhaps can there be proposed to those who have been accustomed to the pleasures of thought, a more powerful incitement to any undertaking, than the hope of filling their fancy with new images, of clearing their doubts, and enlightening their reason.

When Jason, in Valerius Flaccus, would incline the young prince Acastus to accompany him in the first essay of navigation, he disperses his apprehensions of danger by representations of the new tracts of earth and heaven, which the expedition would spread before their eyes; and tells him with what grief he will hear, at their return of the countries which they shall have seen, and the toils which they have surmounted.

O quantum terræ, quantum cognoscere cœli,
Permissum est! pelagus quantos aperimus in usus!
Nunc forsan grave reris opus: sed lata recurret
Cum ratis, et caram cum jam mihi reddet Iolcon;
Quis pudor heu nostros tibi tunc audire labores!
Quam referam visas tua per suspiria gentes!

Led by our stars, what tracts immense we trace!
From seas remote, what funds of science rais'd!
A pain to thought! But when th' heroic band
Returns applauded to their native land,
A life domestic you will then deplore,
And sigh, while I describe the various shore.

EDW. CAVE.

Acastus was soon prevailed upon by his curiosity to set rocks and hardships at defiance, and commit his life to the winds; and the same motives have in all ages had the same effect upon those whom the desire of fame or wisdom has distinguished from the lower orders of mankind.

If, therefore, it can be proved that distress is necessary to the attainment of knowledge, and that a happy situation hides from us so large a part of the field of meditation, the envy of many who repine at the sight of affluence and splendour will be much diminished; for, such is the delight of mental superiority, that none on whom nature or study have conferred it, would purchase the gifts of fortune by its loss.

It is certain, that however the rhetoric of Seneca may have dressed adversity with extrinsic ornaments, he has justly represented it as affording some opportunities of observation, which cannot be found in continual success; he has truly asserted, that to escape misfortune is to want instruction, and that to live at ease is to live in ignorance.

As no man can enjoy happiness without thinking that he enjoys it, the experience of calamity is necessary to a just sense of better fortune; for the good of our present state is merely comparative, and the evil which every man feels will be sufficient to disturb and harass him, if he does not know how much he escapes. The lustre of diamonds is invigorated by the interposition of darker bodies; the lights of a picture are created by the shades. The highest pleasure which nature has indulged to sensitive perception is that of rest after fatigue; yet, that state which labour heightens into delight, is of itself only ease, and is incapable of satisfying the mind without the superaddition of diversified amusements.

Prosperity, as is truly asserted by Seneca, very much obstructs the knowledge of ourselves. No man can form a just estimate of his own powers by unactive speculation. That fortitude which has encountered no dangers, that prudence which has surmounted no difficulties, that integrity which has been attacked by no temptations, can at best be considered but as gold not yet brought to the test, of which therefore the true value cannot be assigned.

"He that traverses the lists without an adversary, may receive," says the philosopher, "the reward of victory, but he has no pretensions to the honour." If it be the highest happiness of man to contemplate himself with satisfaction, and to receive the gratulations of his own conscience; he whose courage has made way amidst the turbulence of opposition, and whose vigour has broken through the snares of distress, has many advantages over those that have slept in the shades of indolence, and whose retrospect of time can entertain them with nothing but day rising upon day, and year gliding after year.

Equally necessary is some variety of fortune to a nearer inspection of the manners, principles, and affections of mankind. Princes, when they would know the opinions or grievances of their subjects, find it necessary to steal away from guards and attendants, and mingle on equal terms among the people. To him who is known to have the power of doing good or harm, nothing is shown in its natural form. The behaviour of all that approach him is regulated by his humour, their narratives are adapted to his inclination, and their reasonings determined by his opinions; whatever can alarm suspicion or excite resentment is carefully suppressed, and

nothing appears but uniformity of sentiments and ardour of affection. It may be observed, that the unvaried complaisance which ladies have the right of exacting, keeps them generally unskilled in human nature; prosperity will always enjoy the female prerogatives, and therefore must be always in danger of female ignorance. Truth is scarcely to be heard, but by those from whom it can serve no interest to conceal it.

No. 151.] TUESDAY, AUG. 27, 1751.

Ἀμφὶ δ' ἀνθρώπων φρεσὶν ἀμπλακίαι
ἀναρίθμητοι κρίμνανται·
τοῦτο δ' ἀμήχανον εὑρεῖν,
Ὅ,τι νῦν, καὶ ἐν τέλει
τῷ φέρτατον ἀνδρὶ τυχεῖν. PINDAR.

But wrapt in error is the human mind,
And human bliss is ever insecure:
Know we what fortune yet remains behind?
Know we how long the present shall endure?
WEST.

THE writers of medicine and physiology have traced, with great appearance of accuracy, the effects of time upon the human body, by marking the various periods of the constitution, and the several stages by which animal life makes its progress from infancy to decrepitude. Though their observations have not enabled them to discover how manhood may be accelerated, or old age retarded, yet surely if they be considered only as the amusements of curiosity, they are of equal importance with conjectures on things more remote, with catalogues of the fixed stars, and calculations of the bulk of planets.

It had been a task worthy of the moral philosophers to have considered with equal care the climacterics of the mind; to have pointed out the time at which every passion begins and ceases to predominate, and noted the regular variations of desire, and the succession of one appetite to another.

The periods of mental change are not to be stated with equal certainty; our bodies grow up under the care of nature, and depend so little on our own management, that something more than negligence is necessary to discompose their structure, or impede their vigour. But our minds are committed in a great measure first to the direction of others, and afterwards to ourselves. It would be difficult to protract the weakness of infancy beyond the usual time; but the mind may be very easily hindered from its share of improvement; and the bulk and strength of manhood must, without the assistance of education and instruction, be informed only with the understanding of a child.

Yet, amidst all the disorder and inequality which variety of discipline, example, conversation, and employment, produce in the intellectual advances of different men, there is still discovered, by a vigilant spectator, such a general and remote similitude, as may be expected in the same common nature affected by external circumstances indefinitely varied. We all enter the world in equal ignorance. gaze round about us on the same objects, and have our first pains and pleasures, our first hopes and fears, our first aversions and desires, from the same causes: and though, as we proceed farther, life opens wider prospects to our view, and accidental impulses determine us to different paths; yet as every mind, however vigorous or abstracted, is necessitated, in its present state of union, to receive its informations, and execute its purposes by the intervention of the body, the uniformity of our corporeal nature communicates itself to our intellectual operations; and those whose abilities or knowledge incline them most to deviate from the general round of life, are recalled from eccentricity by the laws of their existence.

If we consider the exercises of the mind, it will be found that in each part of life some particular faculty is more eminently employed. When the treasures of knowledge are first opened before us, while novelty blooms alike on either hand, and every thing equally unknown and unexamined seems of equal value, the power of the soul is principally exerted in a vivacious and desultory curiosity. She applies by turns to every object, enjoys it for a short time, and flies with equal ardour to another. She delights to catch up loose and unconnected ideas, but starts away from systems and complications, which would obstruct the rapidity of her transitions, and detain her long in the same pursuit.

When a number of distinct images are collected by these erratic and hasty surveys, the fancy is busied in arranging them; and combines them into pleasing pictures with more resemblance to the realities of life, as experience advances, and new observations rectify the former. While the judgment is yet uninformed, and unable to compare the draughts of fiction with their originals, we are delighted with improbable adventures, impracticable virtues, and inimitable characters; but, in proportion as we have more opportunities of acquainting ourselves with living nature, we are sooner disgusted with copies in which there appears no resemblance. We first discard absurdity and impossibility, then exact greater and greater degrees of probability, but at last become cold and insensible to the charms of falsehood, however specious, and, from the imitations of truth, which are never perfect, transfer our affections to truth itself.

Now commences the reign of judgment or

reason; we begin to find little pleasure but in comparing arguments, stating propositions, disentangling perplexities, clearing ambiguities, and deducing consequences. The painted vales of imagination are deserted, and our intellectual activity is exercised in winding through the labyrinths of fallacy, and toiling with firm and cautious steps up the narrow tracts of demonstration. Whatever may lull vigilance, or mislead attention, is contemptuously rejected, and every disguise in which error may be concealed, is carefully observed, till, by degrees, a certain number of incontestible or unsuspected propositions are established, and at last concatenated into arguments, or compacted into systems.

At length weariness succeeds to labour, and the mind lies at ease in the contemplation of her own attainments, without any desire of new conquests or excursions. This is the age of recollection and narrative; the opinions are settled, and the avenues of apprehension shut against any new intelligence; the days that are to follow must pass in the inculcation of precepts already collected, and assertion of tenets already received; nothing is henceforward so odious as opposition, so insolent as doubt, or so dangerous as novelty.

In like manner the passions usurp the separate command of the successive periods of life. To the happiness of our first years nothing more seems necessary than freedom from restraint: every man may remember that if he was left to himself, and indulged in the disposal of his own time, he was once content without the superaddition of any actual pleasure. The new world is itself a banquet; and, till we have exhausted the freshness of life, we have always about us sufficient gratifications: the sunshine quickens us to play, and the shade invites us to sleep.

But we soon become unsatisfied with negative felicity, and are solicited by our senses and appetites to more powerful delights, as the taste of him who has satisfied his hunger must be excited by artificial stimulations. The simplicity of natural amusement is now past, and art and contrivance must improve our pleasures; but, in time, art like nature is exhausted, and the senses can no longer supply the cravings of the intellect.

The attention is then transferred from pleasure to interest, in which pleasure is perhaps included, though diffused to a wider extent, and protracted through new gradations. Nothing now dances before the eyes but wealth and power, nor rings in the ear, but the voice of fame; wealth, to which, however variously denominated, every man at some time or other aspires; power, which all wish to obtain within their circle of action; and fame which no man, however high or mean, however wise or ignorant, was yet able to despise. Now prudence and foresight exert their influence; no hour is devoted wholly to any present enjoyment, no act or purpose terminates in itself, but every motion is referred to some distant end; the accomplishment of one design begins another, and the ultimate wish is always pushed off to its former distance.

At length fame is observed to be uncertain, and power to be dangerous; the man whose vigour and alacrity begin to forsake him, by degrees contracts his designs, remits his former multiplicity of pursuits, and extends no longer his regard to any other honour than the reputation of wealth, or any other influence than his power. Avarice is generally the last passion of those lives of which the first part has been squandered in pleasure, and the second devoted to ambition. He that sinks under the fatigue of getting wealth, lulls his age with the milder business of saving it.

I have in this view of life considered men as actuated only by natural desires, and yielding to their own inclinations, without regard to superior principles, by which the force of external agents may be counteracted, and the temporary prevalence of passions restrained. Nature will indeed always operate, human desires will be always ranging; but these motions, though very powerful, are not resistless; nature may be regulated, and desires governed; and, to contend with the predominance of successive passions, to be endangered first by one affection, and then by another, is the condition upon which we are to pass our time, the time of our preparation for that state which shall put an end to experiment, to disappointment, and to change.

No. 152.] SATURDAY, AUG. 31, 1751.

—Tristia mœstum
Vultum verba decent, iratum plena minarum.
HOR.

Disastrous words can best disaster show
In angry phrase the angry passions glow.
ELPHINSTON.

"IT was the wisdom," says Seneca, "of ancient times to consider what is most useful as most illustrious." If this rule be applied to works of genius, scarcely any species of composition deserves more to be cultivated than the epistolar style, since none is of more various or frequent use, through the whole subordination of human life.

It has yet happened, that among the numerous writers which our nation has produced equal perhaps always in force and genius, and of late in elegance and accuracy, to those of any other country, very few have endeavoured to distinguish themselves by the publication of letters, except such as were written in the discharge of public trusts, and during the tran-

tion of great affairs; which, though they afford precedents to the minister, and memorials to the historian, are of no use as examples of the familiar style, or models of private correspondence.

If it be inquired by foreigners, how this deficiency has happened in the literature of a country, where all indulge themselves with so little danger in speaking and writing, may we not without either bigotry or arrogance inform them, that it must be imputed to our contempt of trifles, and our due sense of the dignity of the public? We do not think it reasonable to fill the world with volumes from which nothing can be learned, nor expect that the employments of the busy, or the amusements of the gay, should give way to narratives of our private affairs, complaints of absence, expressions of fondness, or declarations of fidelity.

A slight perusal of the innumerable letters by which the wits of France have signalized their names, will prove that other nations need not be discouraged from the like attempts by the consciousness of inability; for surely it is not very difficult to aggravate trifling misfortunes, to magnify familiar incidents, repeat adulatory professions, accumulate servile hyperboles, and produce all that can be found in the despicable remains of Voiture and Scarron.

Yet, as much of life must be passed in affairs considerable only by their frequent occurrence, and much of the pleasure which our condition allows, must be produced by giving elegance to trifles, it is necessary to learn how to become little without becoming mean, to maintain the necessary intercourse of civility, and fill up the vacuities of actions by agreeable appearances. It had therefore been of advantage, if each of our writers as have excelled in the art of decorating insignificance, had supplied us with a few sallies of innocent gayety, effusions of honest tenderness, or exclamations of unimportant hurry.

Precept has generally been posterior to performance. The art of composing works of genius has never been taught but by the example of those who performed it by natural vigour of imagination, and rectitude of judgment. As we have few letters, we have likewise few criticisms upon the epistolary style. The observations with which Walsh has introduced his pages of inanity, are such as give him little claim to the rank assigned him by Dryden among the critics. "Letters," says he, "are extended as resemblances of conversation, and the chief excellences of conversation, are good-humour and good-breeding." This remark, equally valuable for its novelty and propriety, dilates and enforces with an appearance of complete acquiescence in his own discovery.

No man was ever in doubt about the moral qualities of a letter. It has been always known that he who endeavours to please must appear pleased, and he who would not provoke rudeness must not practise it. But the question among those who establish rules for an epistolary performance is, how gayety or civility may be properly expressed; as among the critics in history it is not contested whether truth ought to be preserved, but by what mode of diction it is best adorned.

As letters are written on all subjects, in all states of mind, they cannot be properly reduced to settled rules, or described by any single characteristic; and we may safely disentangle our minds from critical embarrassments, by determining that a letter has no peculiarity but its form, and that nothing is to be refused admission, which would be proper in any other method of treating the same subject. The qualities of the epistolary style most frequently required, are ease and simplicity, an even flow of unlaboured diction, and an artless arrangement of obvious sentiments. But these directions are no sooner applied to use, than their scantiness and imperfection become evident. Letters are written to the great and to the mean, to the learned and the ignorant, at rest and in distress, in sport and in passion. Nothing can be more improper than ease and laxity of expression, when the importance of the subject impresses solicitude, or the dignity of the person exacts reverence.

That letters should be written with strict conformity to nature is true, because nothing but conformity to nature can make any composition beautiful or just. But it is natural to depart from familiarity of language upon occasions not familiar. Whatever elevates the sentiments will consequently raise the expression; whatever fills us with hope or terror, will produce some perturbation of images and some figurative distortions of phrase. Wherever we are studious to please, we are afraid of trusting our first thoughts, and endeavour to recommend our opinion by studied ornaments, accuracy of method, and elegance of style.

If the personages of the comic scene be allowed by Horace to raise their language in the transports of anger to the turgid vehemence of tragedy, the epistolary writer may likewise without censure comply with the varieties of his matter. If great events are to be related, he may with all the solemnity of an historian deduce them from their causes, connect them with the concomitants, and trace them to their consequences. If a disputed position is to be established, or a remote principle to be investigated, he may detail his reasonings with all the nicety of syllogistic method. If a menace is to be averted, or a benefit implored, he may, without any violation of the edicts of criticism, call every power of rhetoric to his assistance, and try every inlet at which love or pity enters the heart.

Letters that have no other end than the en-

tertainment of the correspondent are more properly regulated by critical precepts, because the matter and style are equally arbitrary, and rules are more necessary, as there is a larger power of choice. In letters of this kind, some conceive art graceful, and others think negligence amiable; some model them by the sonnet, and will allow them no means of delighting but the soft lapse of calm mellifluence; others adjust them by the epigram, and expect pointed sentences and forcible periods. The one party considers exemption from faults as the height of excellence, the other looks upon neglect of excellence as the most disgusting fault; one avoids censure, the other aspires to praise; one is always in danger of insipidity, the other continually on the brink of affectation.

When the subject has no intrinsic dignity, it must necessarily owe its attractions to artificial embellishments, and may catch at all advantages which the art of writing can supply. He that, like Pliny, sends his friend a portion for his daughter, will, without Pliny's eloquence or address, find means of exciting gratitude, and securing acceptance; but he that has no present to make but a garland, a ribbon, or some petty curiosity, must endeavour to recommend it by his manner of giving it.

The purpose for which letters are written when no intelligence is communicated, or business transacted, is to preserve in the minds of the absent either love or esteem: to excite love we must impart pleasure, and to raise esteem we must discover abilities. Pleasure will generally be given, as abilities are displayed by scenes of imagery, points of conceit, unexpected sallies, and artful compliments. Trifles always require exuberance of ornament; the building which has no strength can be valued only for the grace of its decorations. The pebble must be polished with care, which hopes to be valued as a diamond; and words ought surely to be laboured, when they are intended to stand for things.

No. 153.] TUESDAY, SEPT. 3, 1751.

Turba Remi sequitur fortunam, ut semper, et odit Damnatos. JUV.

The fickle crowd with fortune comes and goes;
Wealth still finds followers, and misfortune foes.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THERE are occasions on which all apology is rudeness. He that has an unwelcome message to deliver, may give some proof of tenderness and delicacy, by a ceremonial introduction and gradual discovery, because the mind, upon which the weight of sorrow is to fall, gains time for the collection of its powers; but nothing is more absurd than to delay the communication of pleasure, to torment curiosity by impatience, and to delude hope by anticipation.

I shall therefore forbear the arts by which correspondents generally secure admission; for I have too long remarked the power of vanity, to doubt that I shall be read by you with a disposition to approve, when I declare that my narrative has no other tendency than to illustrate and corroborate your own observations.

I was the second son of a gentleman, whose patrimony had been wasted by a long succession of squanderers, till he was unable to support any of his children, except his heir, in the hereditary dignity of idleness. Being therefore obliged to employ that part of life in study which my progenitors had devoted to the hawk and hound, I was in my eighteenth year despatched to the university, without any rural honours. I had never killed a single woodcock, nor partaken one triumph over a conquered fox.

At the university I continued to enlarge my acquisitions with little envy of the noisy happiness which my elder brother had the fortune to enjoy, and, having obtained my degree, retired to consider at leisure to what profession I should confine that application which had hitherto been dissipated in general knowledge. To deliberate upon a choice which custom and honour forbid to be retracted, is certainly reasonable, yet, to let loose the attention equally to the advantages and inconveniences of every employment is not without danger; new motives are every moment operating on every side; and mechanics have long ago discovered, that contrariety of equal attractions is equivalent to rest.

While I was thus trifling in uncertainty, an old adventurer, who had been once the intimate friend of my father, arrived from the Indies with a large fortune; which he had so much harassed himself in obtaining, that sickness and infirmity left him no other desire than to die in his native country. His wealth easily procured him an invitation to pass his life with us; and, being incapable of any amusement but conversation, he necessarily became familiarized to me, whom he found studious and domestic. Pleased with an opportunity of imparting my knowledge, and eager of any intelligence that might increase it, I delighted his curiosity with historical narratives and explications of nature, and gratified his vanity by inquiries after the products of distant countries, and the customs of their inhabitants.

My brother saw how much I advanced in the favour of our guest, who being without heirs was naturally expected to enrich the family of his friend, but neither attempted to alienate me, nor to ingratiate himself. He was indeed little qualified to solicit the affection of a traveller, for the remissness of his education had left him without any rule of action but his present

humour. He often forsook the old gentleman in the midst of an adventure, because the horn sounded in the court-yard, and would have lost an opportunity, not only of knowing the history but sharing the wealth of the Mogul, for the trial of a new pointer, or the sight of a horse-race.

It was therefore not long before our new friend declared his intention of bequeathing to me the profits of his commerce, as the only man in the family by whom he could expect them to be rationally enjoyed. This distinction drew upon me the envy not only of my brother but my father.

As no man is willing to believe that he suffers by his own fault, they imputed the preference which I had obtained to adulatory compliances, or malignant calumnies. To no purpose did I call upon my patron to attest my innocence, for who will believe what he wishes to be false? In the heat of disappointment they forced their inmate by repeated insults to depart from the house, and I was soon, by the same treatment, obliged to follow him.

He chose his residence in the confines of London, where rest, tranquillity, and medicine, restored him to part of the health which he had lost. I pleased myself with perceiving that I was not likely to obtain an immediate possession of wealth which no labour of mine had contributed to acquire; and that he, who had thus distinguished me, might hope to end his life without a total frustration of those blessings, which whatever be their real value, he had sought with so much diligence, and purchased with so many vicissitudes of danger and fatigue.

He, indeed, left me no reason to repine at his recovery; for he was willing to accustom me early to the use of money; and set apart for my expenses such a revenue as I had scarcely dared to image. I can yet congratulate myself that fortune has seen her golden cup once tasted without inebriation. Neither my modesty nor prudence were overwhelmed by affluence; my elevation was without insolence, and my expense without profusion. Employing the influence which money always confers to the improvement of my understanding, I mingled in parties of gayety, and in conferences of learning, appeared in every place where instruction was to be found, and imagined that, ranging through all the diversities of life, I had acquainted myself fully with human nature, and learned all that was to be known of the ways of men.

It happened, however, that I soon discovered how much was wanting to the completion of my knowledge, and found that, according to Seneca's remark, I had hitherto seen the world but on one side. My patron's confidence in his increase of strength tempted him to carelessness and irregularity; he caught a fever by riding in the rain, of which he died delirious on the third day. I buried him, without any of the heir's affected grief or secret exultation; then preparing to take a legal possession of his fortune, opened his closet, where I found a will made at his first arrival, by which my father was appointed the chief inheritor, and nothing was left me but a legacy sufficient to support me in the prosecution of my studies.

I had not yet found such charms in prosperity as to continue it by any acts of forgery or injustice, and made haste to inform my father of the riches which had been given him, not by the preference of kindness, but by the delays of indolence, and cowardice of age. The hungry family flew like vultures on their prey, and soon made my disappointment public by the tumult of their claims, and the splendour of their sorrow.

It was now my part to consider how I should repair the disappointment. I could not but triumph in my long list of friends, which comprised almost every name that power or knowledge entitled to eminence, and, in the prospect of the innumerable roads to honour and preferment, which I had laid open to myself by the wise use of temporary riches. I believed nothing necessary but that I should continue that acquaintance to which I had been so readily admitted, and which had hitherto been cultivated on both sides with equal ardour.

Full of these expectations, I one morning ordered a chair, with an intention to make my usual circle of morning visits. Where I first stopped I saw two footmen lolling at the door, who told me without any change of posture, or collection of countenance, that their master was at home, and suffered me to open the inner door without assistance. I found my friend standing, and, as I was tattling with my former freedom, was formally entreated to sit down; but did not stay to be favoured with any further condescension.

My next experiment was made at the levee of a statesman, who received me with an embrace of tenderness, that he might with more decency publish my change of fortune to the sycophants about him. After he had enjoyed the triumph of condolence, he turned to a wealthy stock-jobber, and left me exposed to the scorn of those who had lately courted my notice, and solicited my interest.

I was then set down at the door of another, who, upon my entrance, advised me, with great solemnity, to think of some settled provision for life. I left him, and hurried away to an old friend, who professed himself unsusceptible of any impressions from prosperity or misfortune, and begged that he might see me when he was more at leisure.

Of sixty-seven doors, at which I knocked in the first week after my appearance in a mourning dress, I was denied admission at forty-six; was suffered at fourteen to wait in the outer

room till business was despatched; at four, was entertained with a few questions about the weather; at one, heard the footman rated for bringing my name; and at two was informed, in the flow of casual conversation, how much a man of rank degrades himself by mean company.

My curiosity now led me to try what reception I should find among the ladies; but I found that my patron had carried all my powers of pleasing to the grave. I had formerly been celebrated as a wit; and not perceiving any languor in my imagination, I essayed to revive that gayety which had hitherto broken out involuntarily before my sentences were finished. My remarks were now heard with a steady countenance; and if a girl happened to give way to habitual merriment, her forwardness was repressed with a frown by her mother or her aunt.

Wherever I come I scatter infirmities and disease; every lady whom I meet in the Mall is too weary to walk; all whom I entreat to sing are troubled with colds: if I propose cards, they are afflicted with the headach; if I invite them to the gardens, they cannot bear a crowd.

All this might be endured; but there is a class of mortals who think my understanding impaired with my fortune, exalt themselves to the dignity of advice, and, whenever we happen to meet, presume to prescribe my conduct, regulate my economy, and direct my pursuits. Another race, equally impertinent and equally despicable, are every moment recommending to me an attention to my interest, and think themselves entitled, by their superior prudence, to reproach me if I speak or move without regard to profit.

Such, Mr. Rambler, is the power of wealth, that it commands the ear of greatness and the eye of beauty, gives spirit to the dull, and authority to the timorous, and leaves him from whom it departs, without virtue and without understanding, the sport of caprice, the scoff of insolence, the slave of meanness, and the pupil of ignorance.

I am, &c.

No. 154.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 7, 1751.

——Tibi res antiquæ laudis et artis
Ingredior, sanctos ausus recludere fontes.
VIRG.

For thee my tuneful accents will I raise,
And treat of arts disclosed in ancient days;
Once more unlock for thee the sacred spring.
DRYDEN.

THE direction of Aristotle to those that study politics, is, first to examine and understand what has been written by the ancients upon government; then to cast their eyes round upon the world, and consider by what causes the prosperity of communities is visibly influenced, and why some are worse and others better administered.

The same method must be pursued by him who hopes to become eminent in any other part of knowledge. The first task is to search books, the next to contemplate nature. He must first possess himself of the intellectual treasures which the diligence of former ages has accumulated, and then endeavour to increase them by his own collections.

The mental disease of the present generation is impatience of study, contempt of the great masters of ancient wisdom, and a disposition to rely wholly upon unassisted genius and natural sagacity. The wits of these happy days have discovered a way to fame, which the dull caution of our laborious ancestors durst never attempt; they cut the knots of sophistry which it was formerly the business of years to untie, solve difficulties by sudden irradiations of intelligence, and comprehend long processes of argument by immediate intuition.

Men who have flattered themselves into this opinion of their own abilities, look down on all who waste their lives over books as a race of inferior beings, condemned by nature to perpetual pupilage, and fruitlessly endeavouring to remedy their barrenness by incessant cultivation, or succour their feebleness by subsidiary strength. They presume that none would be more industrious than they, if they were not more sensible of deficiencies; and readily conclude, that he who places no confidence in his own powers, owes his modesty only to his weakness.

It is however certain, that no estimate is more in danger of erroneous calculations than those by which a man computes the force of his own genius. It generally happens at our entrance into the world, that by the natural attraction of similitude, we associate with men like ourselves, young, sprightly, and ignorant, and rate our accomplishments by comparison with theirs: when we have once obtained an acknowledged superiority over our acquaintances, imagination and desires easily extend it over the rest of mankind; and if no accident forces us into new emulations, we grow old, and die in admiration of ourselves.

Vanity, thus confirmed in her dominion, readily listens to the voice of idleness, and soothes the slumber of life with continual dreams of excellence and greatness. A man, elated by confidence in his natural vigour of fancy and sagacity of conjecture, soon concludes that he already possesses whatever toil and inquiry can confer. He then listens with eagerness to the wild objections which folly has raised against the common means of improvement; talks of the dark chaos of indigested knowledge; describes the mischievous effects of heterogeneous sciences fermenting in the mind; relates the blunders of lettered ignorance; expatiates on the heroic merit

of those who deviate from prescription, or shake off authority; and gives vent to the inflations of his heart by declaring that he owes nothing to pedants and universities.

All these pretensions, however confident, are very often vain. The laurels which superficial acuteness gains in triumphs over ignorance unsupported by vivacity, are observed by Locke to be lost, whenever real learning and rational diligence appear against her; the sallies of gayety are soon repressed by calm confidence; and the artifices of subtilty are readily detected by those who, having carefully studied the question, are not easily confounded or surprised.

But, though the contemner of books had neither been deceived by others nor himself, and was really born with a genius surpassing the ordinary abilities of mankind; yet surely such gifts of Providence may be more properly urged as incitements to labour, than encouragements to negligence. He that neglects the culture of ground naturally fertile, is more shamefully culpable, than he whose field would scarcely recompense his husbandry.

Cicero remarks, that not to know what has been transacted in former times, is to continue always a child. If no use is made of the labours of past ages, the world must remain always in the infancy of knowledge. The discoveries of every man must terminate in his own advantage, and the studies of every age be employed on questions which the past generation had discussed and determined. We may with as little reproach borrow science as manufactures from our ancestors; and it is as rational to live in caves till our own hands have erected a palace, as to reject all knowledge of architecture which our understandings will not supply.

To the strongest and quickest mind it is far easier to learn than to invent. The principles of arithmetic and geometry may be comprehended by a close attention in a few days; yet who can flatter himself that the study of a long life would have enabled him to discover them, when he sees them yet unknown to so many nations, whom he cannot suppose less liberally endowed with natural reason than the Grecians or Egyptians.

Every science was thus far advanced towards perfection, by the emulous diligence of contemporary students, and the gradual discoveries of one age improving on another. Sometimes unexpected flashes of instruction were struck by the fortuitous collision of happy incidents, or an involuntary concurrence of ideas, in which the philosopher to whom they happened had no other merit than that of knowing their value, and transmitting, unclouded, to posterity, that light which had been kindled by causes out of his power. The happiness of these casual illuminations no man can promise to himself, because no endearments can procure them: and, therefore, whatever be our abilities or application, we must submit to learn from others what perhaps would have lain hid for ever from human penetration, had not some remote inquiry brought it to view; as treasures are thrown up by the ploughman and the digger in the rude exercise of their common occupations.

The man whose genius qualifies him for great undertakings, must at least be content to learn from books the present state of human knowledge; that he may not ascribe to himself the invention of arts generally known; weary his attention with experiments of which the event has been long registered; and waste, in attempts which have already succeeded or miscarried, that time which might have been spent with usefulness and honour upon new undertakings.

But, though the study of books is necessary, it is not sufficient to constitute literary eminence. He that wishes to be counted among the benefactors of posterity, must add by his own toil to the acquisitions of his ancestors, and secure his memory from neglect by some valuable improvement. This can only be effected by looking out upon the wastes of the intellectual world, and extending the power of learning over regions yet undisciplined and barbarous; or by surveying more exactly our ancient dominions, and driving ignorance from the fortresses and retreats where she sculks undetected and undisturbed. Every science has its difficulties, which yet call for solution before we attempt new systems of knowledge; as every country has its forests and marshes, which it would be wise to cultivate and drain, before distant colonies are projected as a necessary discharge of the exuberance of the inhabitants.

No man ever yet became great by imitation. Whatever hopes for the veneration of mankind must have invention in the design or the execution; either the effect must itself be new, or the means by which it is produced. Either truths hitherto unknown must be discovered, or those which are already known enforced by stronger evidence, facilitated by clearer method, or elucidated by brighter illustrations.

Fame cannot spread wide or endure long that is not rooted in nature, and manured by art. That which hopes to resist the blast of malignity, and stand firm against the attacks of time, must contain in itself some original principle of growth. The reputation which arises from the detail of transposition of borrowed sentiments may spread for a while like ivy on the rind of antiquity, but will be torn away by accident or contempt, and suffered to rot unheeded on the ground.

No. 155.] Tuesday, Sept. 10, 1751.

——Steriles transmisimus annos
Hæc ævi mihi prima dies, hæc limina vitæ.
STAT.

——Our barren years are past;
Be this of life the first, of sloth the last.
ELPHINSTON.

No weakness of the human mind has more frequently incurred animadversion, than the negligence with which men overlook their own faults, however flagrant, and the easiness with which they pardon them, however frequently repeated.

It seems generally believed, that, as the eye cannot see itself, the mind has no faculties by which it can contemplate its own state, and that therefore we have not means of becoming acquainted with our real characters; an opinion which, like innumerable other postulates, an inquirer finds himself inclined to admit upon very little evidence, because it affords a ready solution of many difficulties. It will explain why the greatest abilites frequently fail to promote the happiness of those who possess them; why those who can distinguish with the utmost nicety the boundaries of vice and virtue, suffer them to be confounded in their own conduct; why the active and vigilant resign their affairs implicitly to the management of others; and why the cautious and fearful make hourly approaches towards ruin, without one sigh of solicitude or struggle for escape.

When a position teems thus with commodious consequences, who can without regret confess it to be false? Yet it is certain that declaimers have indulged a disposition to describe the dominion of the passions as extended beyond the limits that nature assigned. Self-love is often rather arrogant than blind: it does not hide our faults from ourselves, but persuades us that they escape the notice of others, and disposes us to resent censures lest we should confess them to be just. We are secretly conscious of defects and vices which we hope to conceal from the public eye, and please ourselves with innumerable impostures, by which, in reality, nobody is deceived.

In proof of the dimness of our internal sight, or the general inability of man to determine rightly concerning his own character, it is common to urge the success of the most absurd and incredible flattery, and the resentment always raised by advice, however soft, benevolent, and reasonable. But flattery, if its operation be nearly examined, will be found to owe its acceptance, not to our ignorance but knowledge of our failures, and to delight us rather as it consoles our wants than displays our possessions. He that shall solicit the favour of his patron by praising him for qualities which he can find in himself, will be defeated by the more daring panegyrist who enriches him with adscititious excellence. Just praise is only a debt, but flattery is a present. The acknowledgment of those virtues on which conscience congratulates us, is a tribute that we can at any time exact with confidence; but the celebration of those which we only feign, or desire without any vigorous endeavours to attain them, is received as a confession of sovereignty over regions never conquered, as a favourable decision of disputable claims, and is more welcome as it is more gratuitous.

Advice is offensive, not because it lays us open to unexpected regret, or convicts us of any fault which has escaped our notice, but because it shows us that we are known to others as well as to ourselves; and the officious monitor is persecuted with hatred, not because his accusation is false, but because he assumes that superiority which we are not willing to grant him, and has dared to detect what we desired to conceal.

For this reason advice is commonly ineffectual. If those who follow the call of their desires, without inquiry whither they are going, had deviated ignorantly from the paths of wisdom, and were rushing upon dangers unforeseen, they would readily listen to information that recalls them from their errors, and catch the first alarm by which destruction or infamy is denounced. Few that wander in the wrong way mistake it for the right; they only find it more smooth and flowery, and indulge their own choice rather than approve it: therefore few are persuaded to quit it by admonition or reproof, since it impresses no new conviction, nor confers any powers of action or resistance. He that is gravely informed how soon profusion will annihilate his fortune, hears with little advantage what he knew before, and catches at the next occasion of expense, because advice has no force to suppress his vanity. He that is told how certainly intemperance will hurry him to the grave, runs with his usual speed to a new course of luxury, because his reason is not invigorated, nor his appetite weakened.

The mischief of flattery is, not that it persuades any man that he is what he is not, but that it suppresses the influence of honest ambition, by raising an opinion that honour may be gained without the toil of merit; and the benefit of advice arises commonly, not from any new light imparted to the mind, but from the discovery which it affords of the public suffrages. He that could withstand conscience is frighted at infamy, and shame prevails when reason was defeated.

As we all know our own faults, and know them commonly with many aggravations which human perspicacity cannot discover, there is, perhaps, no man, however hardened by impudence or dissipated by levity, sheltered by hypo-

crisy or blasted by disgrace, who does not intend some time to review his conduct, and to regulate the remainder of his life by the laws of virtue. New temptations indeed attack him, new invitations are offered by pleasure and interest, and the hour of reformation is always delayed; every delay gives vice another opportunity of fortifying itself by habit; and the change of manners, though sincerely intended and rationally planned, is referred to the time when some craving passion shall be fully gratified, or some powerful allurement cease its importunity.

Thus procrastination is accumulated on procrastination, and one impediment succeeds another, till age shatters our resolution, or death intercepts the project of amendment. Such is often the end of salutary purposes, after they have long delighted the imagination, and appeased that disquiet which every mind feels from known misconduct, when the attention is not diverted by business or by pleasure.

Nothing surely can be more unworthy of a reasonable nature, than to continue in a state so opposite to real happiness, as that all the peace of solitude, and felicity of meditation, must arise from resolutions of forsaking it. Yet the world will often afford examples of men, who pass months and years in a continual war with their own convictions, and are daily dragged by habit, or betrayed by passion, into practices which they closed and opened their eyes with purposes to avoid; purposes which though settled in conviction, the first impulse of momentary desire totally overthrows.

The influence of custom is indeed such, that to conquer it will require the utmost efforts of fortitude and virtue; nor can I think any men more worthy of veneration and renown than those who have burst the shackles of habitual vice. This victory, however, has different degrees of glory as of difficulty; it is more heroic as the objects of guilty gratification are more familiar, and the recurrence of solicitation more frequent. He that, from experience of the folly of ambition, resigns his offices, may set himself free at once from temptation to squander his life in courts, because he cannot regain his former station. He who is enslaved by an amorous passion, may quit his tyrant in disgust, and absence will, without the help of reason, overcome by degrees the desire of returning. But those appetites to which every place affords their proper object, and which require no preparatory measures or gradual advances, are more tenaciously adhesive; the wish is so near the enjoyment, that compliance often precedes consideration; and, before the powers of reason can be summoned, the time for employing them is past.

Indolence is, therefore, one of the vices from which those whom it once infects are seldom reformed. Every other species of luxury operates upon some appetite that is quickly satiated, and requires some concurrence of art or accident which every place will not supply; but the desire of ease acts equally at all hours, and the longer it is indulged is the more increased. To do nothing is in every man's power; we can never want an opportunity of omitting duties. The lapse to indolence is soft and imperceptible, because it is only a mere cessation of activity; but the return to diligence is difficult, because it implies a change from rest to motion, from privation to reality.

Facilis descensus Averni:
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis;
Sed re ocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras,
Hoc opus, hic labor est. VIRG.

The gates of hell are open night and day;
Smooth the descent, and easy is the way;
But to return, and view the cheerful skies
In this the task and mighty labour lies.
DRYDEN.

Of this vice, as of all others, every man who indulges it is conscious: we all know our own state, if we could be induced to consider it; and it might perhaps be useful to the conquest of all these ensnarers of the mind, if, at certain stated days, life was reviewed. Many things necessary are omitted, because we vainly imagine that they may be always performed; and what cannot be done without pain will for ever be delayed, if the time of doing it be left unsettled. No corruption is great but by long negligence, which can scarcely prevail in a mind regularly and frequently awakened by periodical remorse. He that thus breaks his life into parts, will find in himself a desire to distinguish every stage of his existence by some improvement, and delight himself with the approach of the day of recollection, as of the time which is to begin a new series of virtue and felicity.

No. 156.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 14, 1751.

Nunquam aliud natura, aliud sapientia dicit.
JUV.

For wisdom ever echoes nature's voice.

EVERY government, say the politicians, is perpetually degenerating towards corruption, from which it must be rescued at certain periods by the resuscitation of its first principles, and the re-establishment of its original constitution. Every animal body, according to the methodic physicians, is, by the predominance of some exuberant quality, continually declining towards disease and death, which must be obviated by a seasonable reduction of the peccant humour to the just equipoise which health requires.

In the same manner the studies of mankind,

all at least which, not being subject to rigorous demonstration, admit the influence of fancy and caprice, are perpetually tending to error and confusion. Of the great principles of truth which the first speculatists discovered, the simplicity is embarrassed by ambitious additions, or the evidence obscured by inaccurate argumentation; and as they descend from one succession of writers to another, like light transmitted from room to room, they lose their strength and splendour, and fade at last in total evanescence.

The systems of learning therefore must be sometimes reviewed, complications analysed into principles, and knowledge disentangled from opinion. It is not always possible, without a close inspection, to separate the genuine shoots of consequential reasoning, which grow out of some radical postulate, from the branches which art has engrafted on it. The accidental prescriptions of authority, when time has procured them veneration, are often confounded with the laws of nature, and those rules are supposed coeval with reason, of which the first rise cannot be discovered.

Criticism has sometimes permitted fancy to dictate the laws by which fancy ought to be restrained, and fallacy to perplex the principles by which fallacy is to be detected; her superintendence of others has betrayed her to negligence of herself; and, like the ancient Scythians, by extending her conquests over distant regions, she has left her throne vacant to her slaves.

Among the laws of which the desire of extending authority, or ardour of promoting knowledge, has prompted the prescription, all which writers have received, had not the same original right to our regard. Some are to be considered as fundamental and indispensable, others only as useful and convenient; some as dictated by reason and necessity, others as enacted by despotic antiquity; some as invincibly supported by their conformity to the order of nature and operations of the intellect; others as formed by accident, or instituted by example, and therefore always liable to dispute and alteration.

That many rules have been advanced without consulting nature or reason, we cannot but suspect, when we find it peremptorily decreed by the ancient masters, that *only three speaking personages should appear at once upon the stage;* a law which, as the variety and intricacy of modern plays has made it impossible to be observed, we now violate without scruple, and, as experience proves, without inconvenience.

The original of this precept was merely accidental. Tragedy was a monody, or solitary song in honour of Bacchus, improved afterwards into a dialogue by the addition of another speaker: but the ancients, remembering that the tragedy was at first pronounced only by one, durst not for some time venture beyond two: at last, when custom and impunity had made them daring, they extended their liberty to the admission of three, but restrained themselves by a critical edict from further exorbitance.

By what accident the number of acts was limited to five, I know not that any author has informed us; but certainly it is not determined by any necessity arising either from the nature of action or propriety of exhibition. An act is only the representation of such a part of the business of the play as proceeds in an unbroken tenor, or without any intermediate pause. Nothing is more evident than that of every real, and by consequence of every dramatic action, the intervals may be more or fewer than five; and indeed the rule is upon the English stage every day broken in effect, without any other mischief than that which arises from an absurd endeavour to observe it in appearance. Whenever the scene is shifted the act ceases, since some time is necessarily supposed to elapse while the personages of the drama change their place.

With no greater right to our obedience have the critics confined the dramatic action to a certain number of hours. Probability requires that the time of action should approach somewhat nearly to that of exhibition, and those plays will always be thought most happily conducted which crowd the greatest variety into the least space. But since it will frequently happen that some delusion must be admitted, I know not where the limits of imagination can be fixed. It is rarely observed that minds, not prepossessed by mechanical criticism, feel any offence from the extension of the intervals between the acts; nor can I conceive it absurd or impossible, that he who can multiply three hours into twelve or twenty-four, might image with equal ease a greater number.

I know not whether he that professes to regard no other laws than those of nature, will not be inclined to receive tragi-comedy to his protection, whom, however generally condemned, her own laurels have hitherto shaded from the fulminations of criticism. For what is there in the mingled drama which impartial reason can condemn? The connection of important with trivial incidents, since it is not only common but perpetual in the world, may surely be allowed upon the stage, which pretends only to be the mirror of life. The impropriety of suppressing passions before we have raised them to the intended agitation, and of diverting the expection from an event which we keep suspended only to raise it, may be speciously urged. But will not experience show this objection to be rather subtile than just? Is it not certain that the tragic and comic affections have been moved alternately with equal force; and that no plays have oftener filled the eye with tears, and the breast with palpitation, than those which are variegated with interludes of mirth?

I do not however think it safe to judge of works of genius merely by the event. The resistless vicissitudes of the heart, this alternate prevalence of merriment and solemnity, may sometimes be more properly ascribed to the vigour of the writer than the justness of the design: and, instead of vindicating tragi-comedy by the success of Shakspeare, we ought, perhaps, to pay new honours to that transcendent and unbounded genius that could preside over the passions in sport; who, to actuate the affections, needed not the slow gradation of common means, but could fill the heart with instantaneous jollity to sorrow, and vary our disposition as he changed his scenes. Perhaps the effects even of Shakspeare's poetry might have been yet greater, had he not counteracted himself; and we might have been more interested in the distresses of his heroes, had we not been so frequently diverted by the jokes of his buffoons.

There are other rules more fixed and obligatory. It is necessary that of every play the chief action should be single; for, since a play represents some transaction through its regular maturation to its final event, two actions equally important must evidently constitute two plays.

As the design of tragedy is to instruct by moving the passions, it must always have a hero, a personage apparently and incontestably superior to the rest, upon whom the attention may be fixed, and the anxiety suspended. For though, of two persons opposing each other with equal abilities and equal virtue, the auditor will inevitably, in time, choose his favourite; yet, as that choice must be without any cogency of conviction, the hopes or fears which it raises will be faint and languid. Of two heroes acting in confederacy against a common enemy, the virtues or dangers will give little emotion, because each claims our concern with the same right, and the heart lies at rest between equal motives.

It ought to be the first endeavour of a writer to distinguish nature from custom; or that which is established because it is right, from that which is right only because it is established; that he may neither violate essential principles by a desire of novelty, nor debar himself from the attainment of beauties within his view, by a needless fear of breaking rules which no literary dictator had authority to enact.

No. 157.] TUESDAY, SEPT. 17, 1751.

—Οἱ αἰδὼς
Γίγνεται ἡ ἄνδρας μέγα σίνεται ἠδ' ὀνίνησι. HOM.

Shame greatly hurts or greatly helps mankind.
ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH one of your correspondents has presumed to mention with some contempt that presence of attention, and easiness of address, which the polite have long agreed to celebrate and esteem, yet I cannot be persuaded to think them unworthy of regard or cultivation; but am inclined to believe that, as we seldom value rightly what we have never known the misery of wanting, his judgment has been vitiated by his happiness; and that a natural exuberance of assurance has hindered him from discovering its excellence and use.

This felicity, whether bestowed by constitution, or obtained by early habitudes, I can scarcely contemplate without envy. I was bred under a man of learning in the country, who inculcated nothing but the dignity of knowledge, and the happiness of virtue. By frequency of admonition, and confidence of assertion, he prevailed upon me to believe, that the splendour of literature would always attract reverence, if not darkened by corruption. I therefore pursued my studies with incessant industry, and avoided every thing which I had been taught to consider either as vicious or tending to vice, because I regarded guilt and reproach as inseparably united, and thought a tainted reputation the greatest calamity.

At the university, I found no reason for changing my opinion: for though many among my fellow-students took the opportunity of a more remiss discipline to gratify their passions; yet virtue preserved her natural superiority, and those who ventured to neglect were not suffered to insult her. The ambition of petty accomplishments found its way into the receptacles of learning, but was observed to seize commonly on those who either neglected the sciences or could not attain them; and I was therefore confirmed in the doctrines of my old master, and thought nothing worthy of my care but the means of gaining or imparting knowledge.

This purity of manners, and intenseness of application, soon extended my renown, and I was applauded, by those whose opinion I then thought unlikely to deceive me, as a young man that gave uncommon hopes of future eminence. My performances in time reached my native province, and my relations congratulated themselves upon the new honours that were added to their family.

I returned home covered with academical laurels, and fraught with criticism and philosophy. The wit and the scholar excited curiosity, and my acquaintance was solicited by innumerable invitations. To please will always be the wish of benevolence, to be admired must be the constant aim of ambition; and I therefore considered myself as about to receive the reward of my honest labours, and to find the efficacy of learning and of virtue.

The third day after my arrival I dined at the house of a gentleman who had summoned a multitude of his friends to the annual celebration of

his wedding-day. I set forward with great exultation, and thought myself happy that I had an opportunity of displaying my knowledge to so numerous an assembly. I felt no sense of my own insufficiency, till, going up stairs to the dining-room, I heard the mingled roar of obstreperous merriment. I was, however, disgusted rather than terrified, and went forward without dejection. The whole company rose at my entrance; but when I saw so many eyes fixed at once upon me, I was blasted with a sudden imbecility, I was quelled by some nameless power which I found impossible to be resisted. My sight was dazzled, my cheeks glowed, my perceptions were confounded; I was harassed by the multitude of eager salutations, and returned the common civilities with hesitation and impropriety; the sense of my own blunders increased my confusion, and before the exchange of ceremonies allowed me to sit down, I was ready to sink under the oppression of surprise; my voice grew weak, and my knees trembled.

The assembly then resumed their places, and I sat with my eyes fixed upon the ground. To the questions of curiosity, or the appeals of complaisance, I could seldom answer but with negative monosyllables, or professions of ignorance; for the subjects on which they conversed were such as are seldom discussed in books, and were therefore out of my range of knowledge. At length an old clergyman, who rightly conjectured the reason of my conciseness, relieved me by some questions about the present state of natural knowledge, and engaged me, by an appearance of doubt and opposition, in the explication and defence of the Newtonian philosophy.

The consciousness of my own abilities roused me from depression, and long familiarity with my subject enabled me to discourse with ease and volubility; but, however I might please myself, I found very little added by my demonstrations to the satisfaction of the company; and my antagonist, who knew the laws of conversation too well to detain their attention long upon an unpleasing topic, after he had commended my acuteness and comprehension, dismissed the controversy, and resigned me to my former insignificance and perplexity.

After dinner I received from the ladies, who had heard that I was a wit, an invitation to the tea-table. I congratulated myself upon an opportunity to escape from the company, whose gayety began to be tumultuous, and among whom several hints had been dropped of the uselessness of universities, the folly of book-learning, and the awkwardness of scholars. To the ladies, therefore, I flew, as to a refuge from clamour, insult and rusticity; but found my heart sink as I approached their apartment, and was again disconcerted by the ceremonies of entrance, and confounded by the necessity of encountering so many eyes at once.

When I sat down I considered that something pretty was always said to ladies, and resolved to recover my credit by some elegant observation or graceful compliment. I applied myself to the recollection of all that I had read or heard in praise of beauty, and endeavoured to accommodate some classical compliment to the present occasion. I sunk into profound meditation, revolved the characters of the heroines of old, considered whatever the poets have sung in their praise, and, after having borrowed and invented, chosen and rejected, a thousand sentiments, which, if I had uttered them, would not have been understood, I was awakened from my dream of learned gallantry by the servant who distributed the tea.

There are not many situations more incessantly uneasy than that in which the man is placed who is watching an opportunity to speak, without courage to take it when it is offered, and who, though he resolves to give a specimen of his abilities, always finds some reason or other for delaying it to the next minute. I was ashamed of silence, yet could find nothing to say of elegance or importance equal to my wishes. The ladies, afraid of my learning, thought themselves not qualified to propose any subject of prattle to a man so famous for dispute, and there was nothing on either side but impatience and vexation.

In this conflict of shame, as I was re-assembling my scattered sentiments, and, resolving to force my imagination to some sprightly sally, had just found a very happy compliment, by too much attention to my own meditations, I suffered the saucer to drop from my hand. The cup was broken, the lap-dog was scalded, a brocaded petticoat was stained, and the whole assembly was thrown into disorder. I now considered all hopes of reputation as at an end, and while they were consoling and assisting one another, stole away in silence.

The misadventures of this unhappy day are not yet at an end; I am afraid of meeting the meanest of them that triumphed over me in this state of stupidity and contempt, and feel the same terrors encroaching upon my heart at the sight of those who have once impressed them. Shame, above any other passion, propagates itself. Before those who have seen me confused, I never appear without new confusion; and the remembrance of the weakness which I formerly discovered, hinders me from acting or speaking with my natural force.

But is this misery, Mr. Rambler, never to cease? Have I spent my life in study only to become the sport of the ignorant, and debarred myself from all the common enjoyments of youth to collect ideas which must sleep in silence, and form opinions which I must not divulge? Inform me, dear Sir, by what means I may rescue my faculties from these shackles of cowardice, how I may rise to a level with my

fellow-beings, recal myself from this languor of involuntary subjection to the free exertion of my intellects, and add to the power of reasoning the liberty of speech.

I am, Sir, &c.

VERECUNDULUS.

No. 158.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 21, 1751.

Grammatici certant, et adhuc sub judice lis est.
HOR.

——Critics yet contend,
And of their vain disputings find no end.
FRANCIS.

CRITICISM, though dignified from the earliest ages by the labours of men eminent for knowledge and sagacity, and, since the revival of polite literature, the favourite study of European scholars, has not yet attained the certainty and stability of science. The rules hitherto received are seldom drawn from any settled principle or self-evident postulate, or adapted to the natural and invariable constitution of things; but will be found, upon examination, the arbitrary edicts of legislators, authorised only by themselves, who, out of various means by which the same end may be attained, selected such as happened to occur to their own reflection, and then, by a law which idleness and timidity were too willing to obey, prohibited new experiments of wit, restrained fancy from the indulgence of her innate inclination to hazard and adventure, and condemned all future flights of genius to pursue the path of the Meonian eagle.

This authority may be more justly opposed, as it is apparently derived from them whom they endeavour to control; for we owe few of the rules of writing to the acuteness of critics, who have generally no other merit than that, having read the works of great authors with attention, they have observed the arrangement of their matter, or the graces of their expression, and then expected honour and reverence for precepts which they never could have invented: so that practice has introduced rules, rather than rules have directed practice.

For this reason the laws of every species of writing have been settled by the ideas of him who first raised it to reputation, without inquiry whether his performances were not yet susceptible of improvement. The excellences and faults of celebrated writers have been equally recommended to posterity; and, so far as blind reverence prevailed, that even the number of their books has been thought worthy of imitation.

The imagination of the first authors of lyric poetry was vehement and rapid, and their knowledge various and extensive. Living in an age when science had been little cultivated, and when the minds of their auditors, not being accustomed to accurate inspection, were easily dazzled by glaring ideas, they applied themselves to instruct, rather by short sentences and striking thoughts, than by regular argumentation and, finding attention more successfully excited by sudden sallies and unexpected exclamations, than by the more artful and placid beauties of methodical deduction, they loosed their genius to its own course, passed from one sentiment to another without expressing the intermediate ideas, and roved at large over the ideal world with such lightness and agility, that their footsteps are scarcely to be traced.

From this accidental peculiarity of the ancient writers, the critics deduce the rules of lyric poetry, which they have set free from all the laws by which other compositions are confined, and allow to neglect the niceties of transition, to start into remote digressions, and to wander without restraint from one scene of imagery to another.

A writer of later times has, by the vivacity of his essays, reconciled mankind to the same licentiousness in short dissertations; and he therefore who wants skill to form a plan, or diligence to pursue it, needs only entitle his performance an essay, to acquire the right of heaping together the collections of half his life, without order, coherence, or propriety.

In writing, as in life, faults are endured without disgust when they are associated with transcendent merit, and may be sometimes recommended to weak judgments by the lustre which they obtained from their union with excellence; but it is the business of those who presume to superintend the taste or morals of mankind, to separate delusive combinations, and distinguish that which may be praised from that which can only be excused. As vices never promote happiness, though, when overpowered by more active and more numerous virtues, they cannot totally destroy it; so confusion and irregularity produces no beauty, though they cannot always obstruct the brightness of genius and learning. To proceed from one truth to another, and connect distant propositions by regular consequences, is the great prerogative of man. Independent and unconnected sentiments flashing upon the mind in quick succession, may, for a time, delight by their novelty; but they differ from systematical reasoning, as single notes from harmony, as glances of lightning from the radiance of the sun.

When rules are thus drawn, rather from precedents than reason, there is danger not only from the faults of an author, but from the errors of those who criticise his works; since they may often mislead their pupils by false representations, as the Ciceronians of the sixteenth century were betrayed into barbarisms by corrupt copies of their darling writer.

It is established at present, that the proœmial

lines of a poem, in which the general subject is proposed, must be void of glitter and embellishment. "The first lines of Paradise Lost," says Addison, "are perhaps as plain, simple, and unadorned, as any of the whole poem; in which particular the author has conformed himself to the example of Homer, and the precept of Horace."

This observation seems to have been made by an implicit adoption of the common opinion, without consideration either of the precept or example. Had Horace been consulted, he would have been found to direct only what should be comprised in the proposition, not how it should be expressed; and to have commended Homer in opposition to a meaner poet, not for the gradual elevation of his diction, but the judicious expansion of his plan; for displaying unpromised events, not for producing unexpected elegances:

——*Speciosa dehinc miracula promat,*
Antiphaten, Scyllamque et cum Cyclope Charybdim.

But from a cloud of smoke he breaks to light,
And pours his specious miracles to sight;
Antiphates his hideous feast devours,
Charybdis barks, and Polyphemus roars.
FRANCIS.

If the exordial verses of Homer be compared with the rest of the poem, they will not appear remarkable for plainness or simplicity, but rather eminently adorned and illuminated:

Ἀνδρά μοι ἔννεπε Μοῦσα πολύτροπον, ὃς μάλα πολλὰ
Πλάγχθη, ἐπεὶ Τροίης ἱερὸν πτολίεθρον ἔπερσε·
Πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα, καὶ νόον ἔγνω·
Πολλὰ δ' ὅγ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμόν,
Ἀρνύμενος ἥν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἑταίρων·
Ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὣς ἑτάρους ἐρρύσατο ἱέμενός περ·
Αὐτῶν γὰρ σφετέρῃσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὄλοντο·
Νήπιοι, οἳ κατὰ βοῦς ὑπερίονος Ἠελίοιο
Ἤσθιον· αὐτὰρ ὁ τοῖσιν ἀφείλετο νόστιμον ἦμαρ.
Τῶν ἀμόθεν γε, θεά, θύγατερ Διὸς εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν.

The man for wisdom's various arts renown'd,
Long exercised in woes, O Muse! resound;
Who, when his arms had wrought the destined fall
Of sacred Troy, and razed her heaven-built wall,
Wandering from clime to clime, observant stray'd,
Their manners noted, and their states survey'd:
On stormy seas unnumber'd toils he bore,
Safe with his friends to gain his natal shore.
Vain toils! their impious folly dared to prey
On herds devoted to the god of day:
The god vindictive doom'd them never more
(Ah! men unbless'd) to touch that natal shore.
O snatch some portion of these acts from fate,
Celestial Muse! and to our world relate. POPE.

The first verses of the Iliad are in like manner particularly splendid, and the proposition of the Eneid closes with dignity and magnificence not often to be found even in the poetry of Virgil.

The intent of the introduction is to raise expectation and suspend it: something therefore must be discovered, and something concealed; and the poet, while the fertility of his invention is yet unknown, may properly recommend himself by the grace of his language.

He that reveals too much, or promises too little; he that never irritates the intellectual appetite, or that immediately satiates it, equally defeats his own purpose. It is necessary to the pleasure of the reader, that the events should not be anticipated; and how then can his attention be invited, but by grandeur of expression?

No. 159.] TUESDAY, SEPT. 24, 1751.

Sunt verba et voces, quibus hunc lenire dolorem
Possis et magnam morbi deponere partem. HOR.

The power of words, and soothing sounds, appease
The raging pain, and lessen the disease. FRANCIS.

THE imbecility with which Verecundulus complains that the presence of a numerous assembly freezes his faculties, is particularly incident to the studious part of mankind, whose education necessarily secludes them in their earlier years from mingled converse, till, at their dismission from schools and academies, they plunge at once into the tumult of the world, and coming forth from the gloom of solitude, are overpowered by the blaze of public life.

It is perhaps kindly provided by nature, that, as the feathers and strength of a bird grow together, and her wings are not completed till she is able to fly, so some proportion should be preserved in the human kind between judgment and courage; the precipitation of inexperience is therefore restrained by shame, and we remain shackled by timidity till we have learned to speak and act with propriety.

I believe few can review the days of their youth without recollecting temptations which shame rather than virtue enabled them to resist; and opinions which, however erroneous in their principles and dangerous in their consequences, they have panted to advance at the hazard of contempt and hatred, when they found themselves irresistibly depressed by a languid anxiety, which seized them at the moment of utterance, and still gathered strength from their endeavours to resist it.

It generally happens that assurance keeps an even pace with ability; and the fear of miscarriage, which hinders our first attempts, is gradually dissipated as our skill advances towards certainty of success. That bashfulness therefore, which prevents disgrace, that short and temporary shame which secures us from the danger of lasting reproach, cannot be properly counted among our misfortunes.

Bashfulness, however it may incommode for a moment, scarcely ever produces evils of long continuance; it may flush the cheek, flutter in the heart, deject the eyes, and enchain the tongue, but its mischiefs soon pass off without remembrance. It may sometimes exclude pleasure, but seldom opens any avenue to sorrow or remorse. It is observed somewhere, that *few have repented of having forborne to speak.*

To excite opposition, and inflame malevolence, is the unhappy privilege of courage made arrogant by consciousness of strength. No man finds in himself any inclination to attack or oppose him who confesses his superiority by blushing in his presence. Qualities exerted with apparent fearfulness receive applause from every voice, and support from every hand. Diffidence may check resolution and obstruct performance, but compensates its embarrassments by more important advantages: it conciliates the proud, and softens the severe, averts envy from excellence, and censure from miscarriage.

It may indeed happen that knowledge and virtue remain too long congealed by this frigorific power, as the principles of vegetation are sometimes obstructed by lingering frosts. He that enters late into a public station, though with all the abilities requisite to the discharge of his duty, will find his powers at first impeded by a timidity which he himself knows to be vicious, and must struggle long against dejection and reluctance, before he obtains the full command of his own attention, and adds the gracefulness of ease to the dignity of merit.

For this disease of the mind I know not whether any remedies of much efficacy can be found. To advise a man unaccustomed to the eyes of multitudes to mount a tribunal without perturbation, to tell him whose life was passed in the shades of contemplation, that he must not be disconcerted or perplexed in receiving and returning the compliments of a splendid assembly, is to advise an inhabitant of Brazil or Sumatra not to shiver at an English winter, or him who has always lived upon a plain to look upon a precipice without emotion. It is to suppose custom instantaneously controllable by reason, and to endeavour to communicate, by precept, that which only time and habit can bestow.

He that hopes by philosophy and contemplation alone to fortify himself against that awe which all, at their first appearance on the stage of life, must feel from the spectators, will, at the hour of need, be mocked by his resolution; and I doubt whether the preservatives which Plato relates Alcibiades to have received from Socrates, when he was about to speak in public, proved sufficient to secure him from the powerful fascination.

Yet, as the effects of time may by art and industry be accelerated or retarded, it cannot be improper to consider how this troublesome instinct may be opposed when it exceeds its just proportion, and, instead of repressing petulance and temerity, silences eloquence, and debilitates force; since, though it cannot be hoped that anxiety should be immediately dissipated, it may be at least somewhat abated; and the passions will operate with less violence when Reason rises against them, than while she either slumbers in neutrality, or, mistaking her interest, lends them her assistance.

No cause more frequently produces bashfulness than too high an opinion of our own importance. He that imagines an assembly filled with his merit, panting with expectation, and hushed with attention, easily terrifies himself with the dread of disappointing them, and strains his imagination in pursuit of something that may vindicate the veracity of fame, and show that his reputation was not gained by chance. He considers, that what he shall say or do will never be forgotten; that renown or infamy is suspended upon every syllable, and that nothing ought to fall from him which will not bear the test of time. Under such solicitude, who can wonder that the mind is overwhelmed, and, by struggling with attempts above her strength, quickly sinks into languishment and despondency!

The most useful medicines are often unpleasing to the taste. Those who are oppressed by their own reputation, will, perhaps, not be comforted by hearing that their cares are unnecessary. But the truth is, that no man is much regarded by the rest of the world. He that considers how little he dwells upon the condition of others, will learn how little the attention of others is attracted by himself. While we see multitudes passing before us, of whom, perhaps, not one appears to deserve our notice, or excite our sympathy, we should remember, that we likewise are lost in the same throng; that the eye which happens to glance upon us is turned in a moment on him that follows us; and that the utmost which we can reasonably hope or fear is, to fill a vacant hour with prattle, and be forgotten.

No. 160.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 28, 1751.

——*Inter se convenit ursis.* JUV.

Beasts of each kind their fellows spare;
Bear lives in amity with bear.

"THE world," says Locke, "has people of all sorts." As in the general hurry produced by the superfluities of some, and necessities of others, no man needs to stand still for want of employment, so in the innumerable gradations of ability, and endless varieties of study and in-

clination, no employment can be vacant for want of a man qualified to discharge it.

Such is probably the natural state of the universe; but it is so much deformed by interest and passion, that the benefit of his adaptation of men to things is not always perceived. The folly or indigence of those who set their services to sale, inclines them to boast of qualifications which they do not possess, and attempt business which they do not understand; and they who have the power of assigning to others the task of life, are seldom honest or seldom happy in their nominations. Patrons are corrupted by avarice, cheated by credulity, or overpowered by resistless solicitation. They are sometimes too strongly influenced by honest prejudices of friendship, or the prevalence of virtuous compassion. For, whatever cool reason may direct, it is not easy for a man of tender and scrupulous goodness to overlook the immediate effect of his own actions, by turning his eyes upon remoter consequences, and to do that which must give present pain, for the sake of obviating evil yet unfelt, or securing advantage in time to come. What is distant is in itself obscure, and, when we have no wish to see it, easily escapes our notice, or takes such a form as desire or imagination bestows upon it.

Every man might, for the same reason, in the multitudes that swarm about him, find some kindred mind with which he could unite in confidence and friendship; yet we see many straggling single about the world, unhappy for want of an associate, and pining with the necessity of confining their sentiments to their own bosoms.

This inconvenience arises, in like manner, from struggles of the will against the understanding. It is not often difficult to find a suitable companion, if every man would be content with such as he is qualified to please. But if vanity tempts him to forsake his rank, and post himself among those with whom no common interest or mutual pleasure can ever unite him, he must always live in a state of unsocial separation, without tenderness and without trust.

There are many natures which can never approach within a certain distance, and which, when any irregular motive impels them towards contact, seem to start back from each other by some invincible repulsion. There are others which immediately cohere whenever they come into the reach of mutual attraction, and with very little formality of preparation mingle intimately as soon as they meet. Every man, whom either business or curiosity has thrown at large into the world, will recollect many instances of fondness and dislike, which have forced themselves upon him without the intervention of his judgment; of dispositions to court some and avoid others, when he could assign no reason for the preference, or none adequate to the violence of his passions; of influence that acted instantaneously upon his mind, and which no arguments or persuasions could ever overcome.

Among those with whom time and intercourse have made us familiar, we feel our affections divided in different proportions without much regard to moral or intellectual merit. Every man knows some whom he cannot induce himself to trust, though he has no reason to suspect that they would betray him; those to whom he cannot complain, though he never observed them to want compassion; those in whose presence he never can be gay, though excited by invitations to mirth and freedom; and those from whom he cannot be content to receive instruction, though they never insulted his ignorance by contempt or ostentation.

That much regard is to be had to those instincts of kindness and dislike, or that reason should blindly follow them, I am far from intending to inculcate: it is very certain, that by indulgence we may give them strength which they have not from nature; and almost every example of ingratitude and treachery proves, that by obeying them we may commit our happiness to those who are very unworthy of so great a trust. But it may deserve to be remarked, that since few contend much with their inclinations, it is generally vain to solicit the good-will of those whom we perceive thus involuntarily alienated from us; neither knowledge nor virtue will reconcile antipathy; and though officiousness may for a time be admitted, and diligence applauded, they will at last be dismissed with coldness, or discouraged by neglect.

Some have indeed an occult power of stealing upon the affections, of exciting universal benevolence, and disposing every heart to fondness and friendship. But this is a felicity granted only to the favourite of nature. The greater part of mankind find a different reception from different dispositions; they sometimes obtain unexpected caresses from those whom they never flattered with uncommon regard, and sometimes exhaust all their arts of pleasing without effect. To these it is necessary to look round, and attempt every breast in which they find virtue sufficient for the foundation of friendship; to enter into the crowd, and try whom chance will offer to their notice, till they fix on some temper congenial to their own, as the magnet rolled in the dust collects the fragments of its kindred metal from a thousand particles of other substances.

Every man must have remarked the facility with which the kindness of others is sometimes gained by those to whom he never could have imparted his own. We are, by our occupations, education, and habits of life, divided almost into different species, which regard one another, for the most part with scorn and malignity. Each of these classes of the human race has desires, fears, and conversation, vexations and merriment, peculiar to itself; cares which another

cannot feel; pleasures which he cannot partake; and modes of expressing every sensation which he cannot understand. That frolic which shakes one man with laughter, will convulse another with indignation; the strain of jocularity which in one place obtains treats and patronage, would in another be heard with indifference, and in a third with abhorrence.

To raise esteem we must benefit others, to procure love we must please them. Aristotle observes, that old men do not readily form friendships, because they are not easily susceptible of pleasure. He that can contribute to the hilarity of the vacant hour, or partake with equal gust the favourite amusement; he whose mind is employed on the same objects, and who therefore never harasses the understanding with unaccustomed ideas, will be welcomed with ardour, and left with regret, unless he destroys those recommendations by faults with which peace and security cannot consist.

It were happy, if in forming friendships, virtue could concur with pleasure; but the greatest part of human gratifications approach so nearly to vice, that few who make the delight of others their rule of conduct, can avoid disingenuous compliances; yet certainly he that suffers himself to be driven or allured from virtue, mistakes his own interest, since he gains succour by means for which his friend, if ever he becomes wise, must scorn him, and for which at last he must scorn himself.

No. 161.] TUESDAY, OCT. 1, 1751.

Οἵη γὰρ φύλλων γενέη, τοίηδε καὶ ἀνδρῶν. HOM.

Frail as the leaves that quiver on the sprays,
Like them man flourishes, like them decays.

MR. RAMBLER.

SIR,

You have formerly observed that curiosity often terminates in barren knowledge, and that the mind is prompted to study and inquiry rather by the uneasiness of ignorance than the hope of profit. Nothing can be of less importance to any present interest, than the fortune of those who have been long lost in the grave, and from whom nothing now can be hoped or feared. Yet, to rouse the zeal of a true antiquary, little more is necessary than to mention a name which mankind have conspired to forget; he will make his way to remote scenes of action through obscurity and contradiction, as Tully sought amidst bushes and brambles the tomb of Archimedes.

It is not easy to discover how it concerns him that gathers the produce, or receives the rent of an estate, to know through what families the land has passed, who is registered in the Conqueror's survey as its possessor, how often it has been forfeited by treason, or how often sold by prodigality. The power or wealth of the present inhabitants of a country cannot be much increased by an inquiry after the names of those barbarians, who destroyed one another twenty centuries ago, in contests for the shelter of woods, or convenience of pasturage. Yet we see that no man can be at rest in the enjoyment of a new purchase, till he has learned the history of his grounds from the ancient inhabitants of the parish, and that no nation omits to record the actions of their ancestors, however bloody, savage, and rapacious.

The same disposition, as different opportunities call it forth, discovers itself in great or little things. I have always thought it unworthy of a wise man to slumber in total inactivity, only because he happens to have no employment equal to his ambition or genius; it is therefore my custom to apply my attention to the objects before me; and as I cannot think any place wholly unworthy of notice that affords a habitation to a man of letters, I have collected the history and antiquities of the several garrets in which I have resided.

Quantulacunque estis, vos ego magna voco.

How small to others, but how great to me.

Many of these narratives my industry has been able to extend to a considerable length; but the woman with whom I now lodge has lived only eighteen months in the house, and can give no account of its ancient revolutions; the plasterer having, at her entrance, obliterated, by his white-wash, all the smoky memorials which former tenants had left upon the ceiling, and perhaps drawn the veil of oblivion over politicians, philosophers, and poets.

When I first cheapened my lodgings, the landlady told me, that she hoped I was not an author, for the lodgers on the first floor had stipulated that the upper rooms should not be occupied by a noisy trade. I very readily promised to give no disturbance to her family, and soon despatched a bargain on the usual terms.

I had not slept many nights in my new apartment before I began to inquire after my predecessors, and found my landlady, whose imagination is filled chiefly with her own affairs, very ready to give me information.

Curiosity, like all other desires, produces pain as well as pleasure. Before she began her narrative, I had heated my head with expectations of adventures and discoveries, of elegance in disguise, and learning in distress; and was somewhat mortified when I heard that the first tenant was a tailor, of whom nothing was remembered but that he complained of his room for want of light; and, after having lodged in it a month, and paid only a week's rent, pawned a piece of cloth which he was trusted to cut out,

out, and was forced to make a precipitate retreat from this quarter of the town.

The next was a young woman newly arrived from the country, who lived for five weeks with great regularity, and became by frequent treats very much the favourite of the family, but at last received visits so frequently from a cousin in Cheapside, that she brought the reputation of the house into danger, and was therefore dismissed with good advice.

The room then stood empty for a fortnight; my landlady began to think that she had judged hardly, and often wished for such another lodger. At last, an elderly man of a grave aspect read the bill, and bargained for the room at the very first price that was asked. He lived in close retirement, seldom went out till evening, and then returned early, sometimes cheerful, and at other times dejected. It was remarkable, that whatever he purchased, he never had small money in his pocket; and, though cool and temperate on other occasions, was always vehement and stormy till he received his change. He paid his rent with great exactness, and seldom failed once a week to requite my landlady's civility with a supper. At last, such is the fate of human felicity, the house was alarmed at midnight by the constable, who demanded to search the garrets. My landlady assuring him that he had mistaken the door, conducted him up stairs, where he found the tools of a coiner; but the tenant had crawled along the roof to an empty house, and escaped; much to the joy of my landlady, who declares him a very honest man, and wonders why any body should be hanged for making money when such numbers are in want of it. She however confesses that she shall, for the future, always question the character of those who take her garret without beating down the price.

The bill was then placed again in the window, and the poor woman was teased for seven weeks by innumerable passengers, who obliged her to climb with them every hour up five stories, and then disliked the prospect, hated the noise of a public street, thought the stairs narrow, objected to a low ceiling, required the walls to be hung with fresher paper, asked questions about the neighbourhood, could not think of living so far from their acquaintance, wished the windows had looked to the south rather than the west, told how the door and chimney might have been better disposed, bid her half the price that she asked, or promised to give her earnest the next day, and came no more.

At last, a short meagre man, in a tarnished waistcoat, desired to see the garret, and, when he had stipulated for two long shelves, and a larger table, hired it at a low rate. When the affair was completed, he looked round him with great satisfaction, and repeated some words which the woman did not understand. In two days he brought a great box of books, took possession of his room and lived very inoffensively, except that he frequently disturbed the inhabitants of the next floor by unseasonable noises. He was generally in bed at noon; but from evening to midnight he sometimes talked aloud with great vehemence, sometimes stamped as in rage, sometimes threw down his poker, then clattered his chairs, then sat down in deep thought, and again burst out into loud vociferations; sometimes he would sigh as oppressed with misery, and sometimes shake with convulsive laughter. When he encountered any of the family, he gave way or bowed, but rarely spoke, except that as he went up stairs he often repeated,

——Ος ὑπέρτατα δώματα ναίει.

This habitant th' aerial regions boast:

hard words, to which his neighbours listened so often that they learned them without understanding them. What was his employment she did not venture to ask him, but at last heard a printer's boy inquire for the author.

My landlady was very often advised to beware of this strange man, who, though he was quiet for the present, might perhaps become outrageous in the hot months; but as she was punctually paid, she could not find any sufficient reason for dismissing him, till one night he convinced her, by setting fire to his curtains, that it was not safe to have an author for her inmate.

She had then for six weeks a succession of tenants who left the house on Saturday, and, instead of paying their rent, stormed at their landlady. At last she took in two sisters, one of whom had spent her little fortune in procuring remedies for a lingering disease, and was now supported and attended by the other: she climbed with difficulty to the apartment, where she languished eight weeks without impatience, or lamentation, except for the expense and fatigue which her sister suffered, and then calmly and contentedly expired. The sister followed her to the grave, paid the few debts which they had contracted, wiped away the tears of useless sorrow, and returning to the business of common life, resigned to me the vacant habitation.

Such, Mr. Rambler, are the changes which have happened in the narrow space where my present fortune has fixed my residence. So true it is, that amusement and instruction are always at hand for those who have skill and willingness to find them; and so just is the observation of Juvenal, that a single house will show whatever is done or suffered in the world.

I am, Sir, &c.

No. 162.] Tuesday, Oct. 5, 1751.

Orbus es, et locuples, et Bruto consule natus:
Esse tibi veras credis amicitias?
Sunt veræ; sed quas juvenis, quas pauper habebas.
Qui novus est, mortem diligit ille tuam.—MART.

What! old, and rich, and childless too,
And yet believe your friends are true?
Truth might perhaps to those belong,
To those who loved you poor and young:
But, trust me, for the new you have
They'll love you dearly—in your grave.
F. LEWIS.

One of the complaints uttered by Milton's Samson, in the anguish of blindness, is, that he shall pass his life under the direction of others; that he cannot regulate his conduct by his own knowledge, but must lie at the mercy of those who undertake to guide him.

There is no state more contrary to the dignity of wisdom than perpetual and unlimited dependance, in which the understanding lies useless, and every motion is received from external impulse. Reason is the great distinction of human nature, the faculty by which we approach to some degree of association with celestial intelligences; but as the excellence of every power appears only in its operations, not to have reason, and to have it useless and unemployed, is nearly the same.

Such is the weakness of man, that the essence of things is seldom so much regarded as external and accidental appendages. A small variation of trifling circumstances, a slight change of form by an artificial dress, or a casual difference of appearance by a new light and situation, will conciliate affection or excite abhorrence, and determine us to pursue or to avoid. Every man considers a necessity of compliance with any will but his own as the lowest state of ignominy and meanness; few are so far lost in cowardice or negligence as not to rouse at the first insult of tyranny, and exert all their force against him who usurps their property, or invades any privilege of speech or action. Yet we see often those who never wanted spirit to repel encroachment or oppose violence, at last, by a gradual relaxation of vigilance, delivering up, without capitulation, the fortress which they defended against assault, and laying down unbidden the weapons which they grasped the harder for every attempt to wrest them from their hands. Men eminent for spirit and wisdom often resign themselves to voluntary pupilage, and suffer their lives to be modelled by officious ignorance, and their choice to be regulated by presumptuous stupidity.

This unresisting acquiescence in the determination of others, may be the consequence of application to some study remote from the beaten track of life, some employment which does not allow leisure for sufficient inspection of those petty affairs by which nature has decreed a great part of our duration to be filled. To a mind thus withdrawn from common objects, it is more eligible to repose on the prudence of another, than to be exposed every moment to slight interruptions. The submission which such confidence requires is paid without pain, because it implies no confession of inferiority. The business from which we withdraw our cognizance is not above our abilities, but below our notice. We please our pride with the effects of our influence thus weakly exerted, and fancy ourselves placed in a higher orb, from which we regulate subordinate agents by a slight and distant superintendance. But whatever vanity or abstraction may suggest, no man can safely do that by others which might be done by himself: he that indulges negligence will quickly become ignorant of his own affairs; and he that trusts without reserve will at last be deceived.

It is, however, impossible but that, as the attention tends strongly towards one thing, it must retire from another: and he that omits the care of domestic business, because he is engrossed by inquiries of more importance to mankind, has, at least, the merit of suffering in a good cause. But there are many who can plead no such extenuation of their folly; who shake off the burden of their station, not that they may soar with less incumbrance to the heights of knowledge or virtue, but that they may loiter at ease and sleep in quiet; and who select for friendship and confidence not the faithful and the virtuous, but the soft, the civil, and compliant.

This openness to flattery is the common disgrace of declining life. When men feel weakness increasing on them, they naturally desire to rest from the struggles of contradiction, the fatigue of reasoning, the anxiety of circumspection; when they are hourly tormented with pains and diseases, they are unable to bear any new disturbance, and consider all opposition as an addition to misery, of which they feel already more than they can patiently endure. Thus desirous of peace, and thus fearful of pain, the old man seldom inquires after any other qualities in those whom he caresses, than quickness in conjecturing his desires, activity in supplying his wants, dexterity in intercepting complaints before they approach near enough to disturb him, flexibility to his present humour, submission to hasty petulance, and attention to wearisome narrations. By these arts alone many have been able to defeat the claims of kindred and of merit, and to enrich themselves with presents and legacies.

Thrasybulus inherited a large fortune, and augmented it by the revenues of several lucrative employments, which he discharged with honour and dexterity. He was at last wise enough to consider, that life should not be devoted wholly to accumulation; and, therefore,

retiring to his estate, applied himself to the education of his children, and the cultivation of domestic happiness.

He passed several years in this pleasing amusement, and saw his care amply recompensed; his daughters were celebrated for modesty and elegance, and his sons for learning, prudence, and spirit. In time, the eagerness with which the neighbouring gentlemen courted his alliance obliged him to resign his daughters to other families; the vivacity and curiosity of his sons hurried them out of rural privacy into the open world, from whence they had not soon an inclination to return. This, however, he had always hoped; he pleased himself with the success of his schemes, and felt no inconvenience from solitude till an apoplexy deprived him of his wife.

Thrasybulus had now no companion; and the maladies of increasing years having taken from him much of the power of procuring amusement for himself, he thought it necessary to procure some inferior friend who might ease him of his economical solicitudes, and divert him by cheerful conversation. All these qualities he soon recollected in Vafer, a clerk in one of the offices over which he had formerly presided. Vafer was invited to visit his old patron, and being by his station acquainted with the present modes of life, and by constant practice dexterous in business, entertained him with so many novelties, and so readily disentangled his affairs, that he was desired to resign his clerkship, and accept a liberal salary in the house of Thrasybulus.

Vafer, having always lived in a state of dependence, was well versed in the arts by which favour is obtained, and could, without repugnance or hesitation, accommodate himself to every caprice, and echo every opinion. He never doubted but to be convinced, nor attempted opposition but to flatter Thrasybulus with the pleasure of a victory. By this practice he found his way into his patron's heart; and, having first made himself agreeable, soon became important. His insidious diligence, by which the laziness of age was gratified, engrossed the management of affairs; and his petty offices of civility, and occasional intercessions, persuaded the tenants to consider him as their friend and benefactor, and to entreat his enforcement of their representations of hard years, and his countenance to petitions for abatement of rent.

Thrasybulus had now banqueted on flattery, till he could no longer bear the harshness of remonstrance or the insipidity of truth. All contrariety to his own opinion shocked him like a violation of some natural right, and all recommendation of his affairs to his own inspection was dreaded by him as a summons to torture. His children were alarmed by the sudden riches of Vafer, but their complaints were heard by their father with impatience, as the result of a conspiracy against his quiet, and a design to condemn him, for their own advantage, to groan out his last hours in perplexity and drudgery. The daughters retired with tears in their eyes, but the son continued his importunites till he found his inheritance hazarded by his obstinacy. Vafer triumphed over all their efforts, and continuing to confirm himself in authority, at the death of his master purchased an estate, and bade defiance to inquiry and justice.

No. 163.] TUESDAY, OCT. 8, 1751.

Mitte superba pati fastidia, spemque caducam
Despice; vive tibi, nam moriere tibi.—SENECA.

Bow to no patron's insolence; rely
On no frail hopes, in freedom live and die.
F. LEWIS.

NONE of the cruelties exercised by wealth and power upon indigence and dependance is more mischievous in its consequences, or more frequently practised with wanton negligence, than the encouragement of expectations which are never to be gratified, and the elation and depression of the heart by needless vicissitudes of hopes and disappointment.

Every man is rich or poor, according to the proportion between his desires and enjoyments; any enlargement of wishes is therefore equally destructive to happiness with the diminution of possessions; and he that teaches another to long for what he never shall obtain, is no less an enemy to his quiet, than if he had robbed him of part of his patrimony.

But representations thus refined exhibit no adequate idea of the guilt of pretended friendship; of artifices by which followers are attracted only to decorate the retinue of pomp, and swell the shout of popularity, and to be dismissed with contempt and ignominy, when their leader has succeeded or miscarried, when he is sick of show, and weary of noise. While a man, infatuated with the promises of greatness, wastes his hours and days in attendance and solicitation, the honest opportunities of improving his condition pass by without his notice; he neglects to cultivate his own barren soil, because he expects every moment to be placed in regions of spontaneous fertility, and is seldom roused from his delusion, but by the gripe of distress which he cannot resist, and the sense of evils which cannot be remedied.

The punishment of Tantalus in the infernal regions affords a just image of hungry servility, flattered with the approach of advantage, doomed to lose it before it comes into his reach, always within a few days of felicity, and always sinking back to his former wants;

Καὶ μὴν Τάνταλον εἰσιδὸν, χαλέπ' ἄλγε' ἔχοντα,
Ἑστηότ' ἐν λίμνῃ· ἡ δὲ προσίπλαζε γενείῳ·
Στεῦτο δὲ διψάων, πίεῖν δ' οὐκ ἔχεν ἐλέσθαι·
Ὁσσάκι γὰρ κύψει' ὁ γέρων, πίειν μενταίνων,
Τοσσάχ' ὕδωρ ἀπολέσκετ' ἀναβροχέν· ἀμφὶ δὲ ποσσὶ
Γαῖα μέλαινα φάνεσκε, καταζώννασκε δὲ δαίμων.
Δένδρεα δ' ὑψιπέτηλα κατακρῦβεν χέε καρπὸν,
Ὄγχναι, καὶ ῥοιαὶ, καὶ μηλέαι ἀγλαόκαρποι,
Συκαῖ τε γλυκεραὶ, καὶ ἐλαῖαι τηλεθόωσαι·
Τῶν ὁπότ' ἰθύσαι ὁ γέρων ἐπὶ χερσὶ μάσασθαι,
Τόσσ' ἄνεμος ῥίπτασκε ποτὶ νέφεα σκιόεντα.

"I saw," says Homer's Ulysses, "the severe punishment of Tantalus. In a lake, whose water approached to his lips, he stood burning with thirst, without the power to drink. Whenever he inclined his head to the stream, some deity commanded it to be dry, and the dark earth appeared at his feet. Around him lofty trees spread their fruits to view: the pear, the pomegranate, and the apple, the green olive, and the luscious fig, quivered before him, which, whenever he extended his hand to seize them, were snatched by the winds into clouds and obscurity."

This image of misery was perhaps originally suggested to some poet by the conduct of his patron, by the daily contemplation of splendour which he never must partake, by fruitless attempts to catch at interdicted happiness, and by the sudden evanescence of his reward, when he thought his labours almost at an end. To groan with poverty, when all about him was opulence, riot, and superfluity, and to find the favours which he had long been encouraged to hope, and had long endeavoured to deserve, squandered at last on nameless ignorance, was to thirst with water flowing before him, and to see the fruits, for which his hunger was hastening, scattered by the wind. Nor can my correspondent, whatever he may have suffered, express with more justness or force the vexations of dependance.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM one of those mortals who have been courted and envied as the favourites of the great. Having often gained the prize of composition at the university, I began to hope that I should obtain the same distinction in every other place, and determined to forsake the profession to which I was destined by my parents, and in which the interest of my family would have procured me a very advantageous settlement. The pride of wit fluttered in my heart; and when I prepared to leave the college, nothing entered my imagination but honours, caresses, and rewards; riches without labour, and luxury without expense.

I however delayed my departure for a time, to finish the performance by which I was to draw the first notice of mankind upon me. When it was completed I hurried to London, and considered every moment that passed before its publication, as lost in a kind of neutral existence, and cut off from the golden hours of happiness and fame. The piece was at last printed and disseminated by a rapid sale; I wandered from one place of concourse to another, feasted from morning to night on the repetition of my own praises, and enjoyed the various conjectures of critics, the mistaken candour of my friends, and the impotent malice of my enemies. Some had read the manuscript, and rectified its inaccuracies; others had seen it in a state so imperfect, that they could not forbear to wonder at its present excellence; some had conversed with the author at the coffee-house; and others gave hints that they had lent him money.

I knew that no performance is so favourably read as that of a writer who suppresses his name, and therefore resolved to remain concealed, till those by whom literary reputation is established had given their suffrages too publicly to retract them. At length my bookseller informed me that Aurantius, the standing patron of merit, had sent inquiries after me, and invited me to his acquaintance.

The time which I had long expected was now arrived. I went to Aurantius with a beating heart, for I looked upon our interview as the critical moment of my destiny. I was received with civilities, which my academic rudeness made me unable to repay; but when I had recovered from my confusion, I prosecuted the conversation with such liveliness and propriety, that I confirmed my new friend in his esteem of my abilities, and was dismissed with the utmost ardour of profession, and raptures of fondness.

I was soon summoned to dine with Aurantius, who had assembled the most judicious of his friends to partake of the entertainment. Again I exerted my powers of sentiment and expression, and again found every eye sparkling with delight, and every tongue silent with attention. I now became familiar at the table of Aurantius, but could never, in his most private or jocund hours, obtain more from him than general declarations of esteem, or endearments of tenderness, which included no particular promise, and therefore conferred no claim. This frigid reserve somewhat disgusted me, and when he complained of three days' absence, I took care to inform him with how much importunity of kindness I had been detained by his rival Pollio.

Aurantius now considered his honour as endangered by the desertion of a wit; and, lest I should have an inclination to wander, told me that I could never find a friend more constant and zealous than himself; that indeed he had

made no promises, because he hoped to surprise me with advancement, but had been silently promoting my interest, and should continue his good offices, unless he found the kindness of others more desired.

If you, Mr. Rambler, have ever ventured your philosophy within the attraction of greatness, you know the force of such language introduced with a smile of gracious tenderness, and impressed at the conclusion with an air of solemn sincerity. From that instant I gave myself up wholly to Aurantius; and, as he immediately resumed his former gayety, expected every morning a summons to some employment of dignity and profit. One month succeeded another, and, in defiance of appearances, I still fancied myself nearer to my wishes, and continued to dream of success, and wake to disappointment. At last the failure of my little fortune compelled me to abate the finery which I hitherto thought necessary to the company with whom I associated, and the rank to which I should be raised. Aurantius, from the moment in which he discovered my poverty, considered me as fully in his power, and afterwards rather permitted my attendance than invited it; thought himself at liberty to refuse my visits, whenever he had other amusements within reach, and often suffered me to wait, without pretending any necessary business. When I was admitted to his table, if any man of rank equal to his own was present, he took occasion to mention my writings, and commend my ingenuity, by which he intended to apologize for the confusion of distinctions, and the improper assortment of his company; and often called upon me to entertain his friends with my productions, as a sportsman delights the squires of his neighbourhood with the curvets of his horse, or the obedience of his spaniels.

To complete my mortification, it was his practice to impose tasks upon me, by requiring me to write upon such subjects as he thought susceptible of ornament and illustration. With these extorted performances he was little satisfied, because he rarely found in them the ideas which his own imagination had suggested, and which he therefore thought more natural than mine.

When the pale of ceremony is broken, rudeness and insult soon enter the breach. He now found that he might safely harass me with vexation, that he had fixed the shackles of patronage upon me, and that I could neither resist him nor escape. At last, in the eighth year of my servitude, when the clamour of creditors was vehement, and my necessity known to be extreme, he offered me a small office, but hinted his expectation that I should marry a young woman with whom he had been acquainted.

I was not so far depressed by my calamities as to comply with this proposal; but, knowing that complaints and expostulations would but gratify his insolence, I turned away with that contempt with which I shall never want spirit to treat the wretch who can outgo the guilt of a robber without the temptation of his profit, and who lures the credulous and thoughtless to maintain the show of his levee, and the mirth of his table, at the expense of honour, happiness, and life.

I am, Sir, &c.

LIBERALIS.

No. 164.] SATURDAY, OCT. 12, 1751.

——*Viti..m, Gaure, Catonis habes.*—MART.

Gaurus pretends to Cato's fame;
And proves—by Cato's vice, his claim.

DISTINCTION is so pleasing to the pride of man, that a great part of the pain and pleasure of life arises from the gratification or disappointment of an incessant wish for superiority, from the success or miscarriage of secret competitions, from victories and defeats, of which, though they appear to us of great importance, in reality none are conscious except ourselves.

Proportionate to the prevalence of this love of praise is the variety of means by which its attainment is attempted. Every man, however hopeless his pretensions may appear, to all but himself, has some project by which he hopes to rise to reputation; some art by which he imagines that the notice of the world will be attracted; some quality, good or bad, which discriminates him from the common herd of mortals, and by which others may be persuaded to love, or compelled to fear him. The ascents of honour, however steep, never appear inaccessible; he that despairs to scale the precipices by which learning and valour have conducted their favourites, discovers some by-path, or easier acclivity, which, though it cannot bring him to the summit, will yet enable him to overlook those with whom he is now contending for eminence; and we seldom require more to the happiness of the present hour, than to surpass him that stands next before us.

As the greater part of human kind speak and act wholly by imitation, most of those who aspire to honour and applause propose to themselves some example which serves as the model of their conduct and the limit of their hopes. Almost every man, if closely examined, will be found to have enlisted himself under some leader whom he expects to conduct him to renown, to have some hero or other, living or dead, in his view, whose character he endeavours to assume, and whose performances he labours to equal.

When the original is well chosen, and judiciously copied, the imitator often arrives at excellence, which he could never have attained without direction; for few are born with abilities

discover new possibilities of excellence, and to distinguish themselves by means never tried before.

But folly and idleness often contrive to gratify pride at a cheaper rate: not the qualities which are most illustrious, but those which are of easiest attainment, are selected for imitation; and the honours and rewards which public gratitude has paid to the benefactors of mankind, are expected by wretches who can only imitate them in their vices and defects, or adopt some petty singularities, of which those from whom they are borrowed were secretly ashamed.

No man rises to such a height as to become conspicuous, but he is on one side censured by undiscerning malice, which reproaches him for his best actions, and slanders his apparent and incontestible excellences; and idolized on the other by ignorant admiration, which exalts his faults and follies into virtues. It may be observed, that he by whose intimacy his acquaintances imagine themselves dignified, generally diffuses among them his mien and his habits; and, indeed, without more vigilance than is generally applied to the regulation of the minuter parts of behaviour, it is not easy, when we converse much with one whose general character excites our veneration, to escape all contagion of his peculiarities, even when we do not deliberately think them worthy of our notice, and when they would have excited laughter or disgust, had they not been protected by their alliance to nobler qualities, and accidentally consorted with knowledge or with virtue.

The faults of a man loved or honoured sometimes steal secretly and imperceptibly upon the wise and virtuous, but, by injudicious fondness or thoughtless vanity, are adopted with design. There is scarce any failing of mind or body, any error of opinion, or depravity of practise, which, instead of producing shame and discontent, its natural effects, has not at one time or other gladdened vanity with the hopes of praise, and been displayed with ostentatious industry by those who sought kindred minds among the wits or heroes, and could prove their relation only by similitude of deformity.

In consequence of this perverse ambition, every habit which reason condemns may be indulged and avowed. When a man is upbraided with his faults, he may indeed be pardoned if he endeavours to run for shelter to some celebrated name; but it is not to be suffered that, from the retreats to which he fled from infamy, he should issue again with the confidence of conquests, and call upon mankind for praise. Yet we see men that waste their patrimony in luxury, destroy their health with debauchery, and enervate their minds with idleness, because there have been some whom luxury never could sink into contempt, nor idleness hinder from the praise of genius.

This general inclination of mankind to copy characters in the gross, and the force which the recommendation of illustrious examples adds to the allurements of vice, ought to be considered by all whose character excludes them from the shades of secrecy, as incitements to scrupulous caution and universal purity of manners. No man, however enslaved to his appetites, or hurried by his passions, can, while he preserves his intellects unimpaired, please himself with promoting the corruption of others. He whose merit has enlarged his influence, would surely wish to exert it for the benefit of mankind. Yet such will be the effect of his reputation, while he suffers himself to indulge in any favourite fault, that they who have no hope to reach his excellence will catch at his failings, and his virtues will be cited to justify the copiers of his vices.

It is particularly the duty of those who consign illustrious names to posterity, to take care lest their readers be misled by ambiguous examples. That writer may be justly condemned as an enemy to goodness, who suffers fondness or interest to confound right with wrong, or to shelter the faults which even the wisest and the best have committed from that ignominy which guilt ought always to suffer, and with which it should be more deeply stigmatized when dignified by its neighbourhood to uncommon worth, since we shall be in danger of beholding it without abhorrence, unless its turpitude be laid open, and the eye secured from the deception of surrounding splendour.

No. 165.] TUESDAY, OCT. 15, 1751.

Ἦν νίος, ἀλλὰ πίνης, νῦν γηρᾷν, πλούσιός ὠμι.
Ὦ μόνος ἐκ πάντων οἰκτρὸς ἐν ἀμφοτέροις,
Ὅς τότε μὲν χρῆσθαι δυνάμην, ὁπότ' οὐδὲ ἐν ἔχον.
Νῦν δ' ὁπότε χρῆσθαι μὴ δύναμαι, τότ' ἔχω.

ANTIPHILUS.

Young was I once and poor, now rich and old;
A harder case than mine was never told;
Bless'd with the power to use them—I had none;
Loaded with *riches* now—the power is gone.

F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THE writers who have undertaken the unpromising task of moderating desire, exert all the power of their eloquence to show that happiness is not the lot of man, and have, by many arguments and examples, proved the instability of every condition by which envy or ambition are excited. They have set before our eyes all the calamities to which we are exposed from the frailty of nature, the influence of accident, or the stratagems of malice; they have terrified

greatness with conspiracies, and riches with anxieties, wit with criticism, and beauty with disease.

All the force of reason, and all the charms of language, are indeed necessary to support positions which every man hears with a wish to confute them. Truth finds an easy entrance into the mind when she is introduced by desire, and attended by pleasure; but when she intrudes uncalled, and brings only fear and sorrow in her train, the passes of the intellect are barred against her by prejudice and passion; if she sometimes forces her way by the batteries of argument, she seldom long keeps possession of her conquests, but is ejected by some favoured enemy, or at best obtains only a nominal sovereignty, without influence and without authority.

That life is short we are all convinced, and yet suffer not that conviction to repress our projects or limit our expectations; that life is miserable we all feel, and yet we believe that the time is near when we shall feel it no longer. But to hope happiness and immortality is equally vain. Our state may indeed be more or less embittered, as our duration may be more or less contracted; yet the utmost felicity which we can ever attain will be little better than alleviation of misery, and we shall always feel more pain from our wants than pleasure from our enjoyments. The incident which I am going to relate will show, that to destroy the effect of all our success, it is not necessary that any signal calamity should fall upon us, that we should be harassed by implacable persecution, or excruciated by irremediable pains; the brightest hours of prosperity have their clouds, and the stream of life, if it is not ruffled by obstructions, will grow putrid by stagnation.

My father resolving not to imitate the folly of his ancestors, who had hitherto left the younger sons encumbrances on the eldest, destined me to a lucrative profession; and I, being careful to lose no opportunity of improvement, was, at the usual time in which young men enter the world, well qualified for the exercise of the business which I had chosen.

My eagerness to distinguish myself in public, and my impatience of the narrow scheme of life to which my indigence confined me, did not suffer me to continue long in the town where I was born. I went away as from a place of confinement, with a resolution to return no more, till I should be able to dazzle with my splendour those who now looked upon me with contempt, to reward those who had paid honours to my dawning merit, and to show all who had suffered me to glide by them unknown and neglected, how much they mistook their interest in omitting to propitiate a genius like mine.

Such were my intentions when I sallied forth into the unknown world, in quest of riches and honours, which I expected to procure in a very short time; for what could withhold them from industry and knowledge? He that indulges hope will always be disappointed. Reputation I very soon obtained; but as merit is much more cheaply acknowledged than rewarded, I did not find myself yet enriched in proportion to my celebrity.

I had, however, in time, surmounted the obstacles by which envy and competition obstruct the first attempts of a new claimant, and saw my opponents and censurers tacitly confessing their despair of success, by courting my friendship and yielding to my influence. They who once pursued me, were now satisfied to escape from me; and they who had before thought me presumptuous in hoping to overtake them, had now their utmost wish, if they were permitted, at no great distance, quietly to follow me.

My wants were not madly multiplied as my acquisitions increased, and the time came, at length, when I thought myself enabled to gratify all reasonable desires, and when, therefore, I resolved to enjoy that plenty and serenity which I had been hitherto labouring to procure, to enjoy them while I was yet neither crushed by age into infirmity, nor so habituated to a particular manner of life as to be unqualified for new studies or entertainments.

I now quitted my profession, and, to set myself at once free from all importunities to resume it, changed my residence, and devoted the remaining part of my time to quiet and amusement. Amidst innumerable projects of pleasure which restless idleness incited me to form, and of which most, when they came to the moment of execution, were rejected for others of no longer continuance, some accident revived in my imagination the pleasing ideas of my native place. It was now in my power to visit those from whom I had been so long absent, in such a manner as was consistent with my former resolution, and I wondered how it could happen that I had so long delayed my own happiness.

Full of the admiration which I should excite, and the homage which I should receive, I dressed my servants in a more ostentatious livery, purchased a magnificent chariot, and resolved to dazzle the inhabitants of the little town with an unexpected blaze of greatness.

While the preparations that vanity required were made for my departure, which, as workmen will not easily be hurried beyond their ordinary rate, I thought very tedious, I solaced my impatience with imaging the various censures that my appearance would produce; the hopes which some would feel from my bounty; the terror which my power would strike on others; the awkward respect with which I should be accosted by timorous officiousness; and the distant reverence with which others, less familiar to splendour and dignity, would be contented

to gaze upon me. I deliberated a long time, whether I should immediately descend to a level with my former acquaintances, or make my condescension more grateful by a gentle transition from haughtiness and reserve. At length I determined to forget some of my companions, till they discovered themselves by some indubitable token, and to receive the congratulations of others upon my good fortune with indifference, to show that I always expected what I had now obtained. The acclamations of the populace I purposed to reward with six hogsheads of ale, and a roasted ox, and then recommended to them to return to their work.

At last all the trappings of grandeur were fitted, and I began the journey of triumph, which I could have wished to have ended in the same moment; but my horses felt none of their master's ardour, and I was shaken four days upon rugged roads. I then entered the town; and, having graciously let fall the glasses that my person might be seen, passed slowly through the street. The noise of the wheels brought the inhabitants to their doors, but I could not perceive that I was known by them. At last I alighted, and my name, I suppose, was told by my servants, for the barber stepped from the opposite house, and seized me by the hand with honest joy in his countenance, which, according to the rule that I had prescribed to myself, I repressed with a frigid graciousness. The fellow, instead of sinking into dejection, turned away with contempt, and left me to consider how the second salutation should be received. The next friend was better treated, for I soon found that I must purchase by civility that regard which I had expected to enforce by insolence.

There was yet no smoke of bonfires, no harmony of bells, no shout of crowds, nor riot of joy; the business of the day went forward as before; and, after having ordered a splendid supper, which no man came to partake, and which my chagrin hindered me from tasting, I went to bed, where the vexation of disappointment overpowered the fatigue of my journey and kept me from sleep.

I rose so much humbled by these mortifications, as to inquire after the present state of the town, and found that I had been absent too long to obtain the triumph which had flattered my expectation. Of the friends whose compliments I expected, some had long ago moved to distant provinces, some had lost in the maladies of age all sense of another's prosperity, and some had forgotten our former intimacy amidst care and distresses. Of three whom I had resolved to punish for their former offences by a longer continuance of neglect, one was, by his own industry, raised above my scorn, and two were sheltered from it in the grave. All those whom I loved, feared or hated, all whose envy or whose kindness I had hopes of contemplating with pleasure, were swept away, and their place was filled by a new generation with other views and other competitions; and among many proofs of the impotence of wealth, I found that it conferred upon me very few distinctions in my native place.

I am, Sir, &c.

SEROTINUS.

No. 166.] SATURDAY, OCT. 19, 1751.

Pauper eris semper, si pauper es, Æmiliane:
Dantur opes nullis nunc nisi divitibus. MART.

Once poor, my friend still poor you must remain;
The rich alone have all the means of gain.

EDW. CAVE.

No complaint has been more frequently repeated in all ages than that of the neglect of merit associated with poverty, and the difficulty with which valuable or pleasing qualities force themselves into view, when they are obscured by indigence. It has been long observed that native beauty has little power to charm without the ornaments which fortune bestows, and that to want the favour of others is often sufficient to hinder us from obtaining it.

Every day discovers that mankind are not yet convinced of their error, or that their conviction is without power to influence their conduct; for poverty still continues to produce contempt, and still obstructs the claims of kindred and of virtue. The eye of wealth is elevated towards higher stations, and seldom descends to examine the actions of those who are placed below the level of its notice, and who in distant regions and lower situations are struggling with distress, or toiling for bread. Among the multitudes overwhelmed with insuperable calamity, it is common to find those whom a very little assistance would enable to support themselves with decency, and who yet cannot obtain from near relations, what they see hourly lavished in ostentation, luxury, or frolic.

There are natural reasons why poverty does not easily conciliate affection. He that has been confined from his infancy to the conversation of the lowest classes of mankind, must necessarily want those accomplishments which are the usual means of attracting favour; and though truth, fortitude, and probity, give an indisputable right to reverence and kindness, they will not be distinguished by common eyes, unless they are brightened by elegance of manners, but are cast aside like unpolished gems, of which none but the artist knows the intrinsic value, till their asperities are smoothed, and their incrustations rubbed away.

The grossness of vulgar habits obstructs the efficacy of virtue, as impurity and harshness of

style impair the force of reason, and rugged numbers turn off the mind from artifice of disposition, and fertility of invention. Few have strength of reason to overrule the perceptions of sense: and yet fewer have curiosity or benevolence to struggle long against the first impression; he therefore who fails to please in his salutation and address, is at once rejected, and never obtains an opportunity of showing his latent excellences, or essential qualities.

It is, indeed, not easy to prescribe a successful manner of approach to the distressed or necessitous, whose condition subjects every kind of behaviour equally to miscarriage. He whose confidence of merit incites him to meet, without any apparent sense of inferiority, the eyes of those who flattered themselves with their own dignity, is considered as an insolent leveller, impatient of the just prerogatives of rank and wealth, eager to usurp the station to which he has no right, and to confound the subordinations of society; and who would contribute to the exaltation of that spirit which even want and calamity are not able to restrain from rudeness and rebellion.

But no better success will commonly be found to attend servility and dejection, which often give pride the confidence to treat them with contempt. A request made with diffidence and timidity is easily denied, because the petitioner himself seems to doubt its fitness.

Kindness is generally reciprocal; we are desirous of pleasing others, because we receive pleasure from them; but by what means can the man please, whose attention is engrossed by his distresses, and who has no leisure to be officious; whose will is restrained by his necessities, and who has no power to confer benefits; whose temper is perhaps vitiated by misery, and whose understanding is impeded by ignorance?

It is yet a more offensive discouragement, that the same actions performed by different hands produce different effects, and, instead of rating the man by his performances, we rate too frequently the performance by the man. It sometimes happens in the combinations of life, that important services are performed by inferiors; but though their zeal and activity may be paid by pecuniary rewards, they seldom excite that flow of gratitude, or obtain that accumulation of recompence, with which all think it their duty to acknowledge the favour of those who descend to their assistance from a higher elevation. To be obliged, is to be in some respect inferior to another; and few willingly indulge the memory of an action which raises one whom they have always been accustomed to think below them, but satisfy themselves with faint praise and penurious payment, and then drive it from their own minds, and endeavour to conceal it from the knowledge of others.

It may be always objected to the services of those who can be supposed to want a reward, that they were produced not by kindness, but interest; they are therefore, when they are no longer wanted, easily disregarded as arts of insinuation, or stratagems of selfishness. Benefits which are received as gifts from wealth, are exacted as debts from indigence; and he that in a high station is celebrated for superfluous goodness, would in a meaner condition have barely been confessed to have done his duty.

It is scarcely possible for the utmost benevolence to oblige, when exerted under the disadvantages of great inferiority: for, by the habitual arrogance of wealth, such expectations are commonly formed as no zeal or industry can satisfy; and what regard can he hope, who has done less than was demanded from him?

There are indeed kindnesses conferred which were never purchased by precedent favours, and there is an affection not arising from gratitude or gross interest, by which similar natures are attracted to each other, without prospect of any other advantage than the pleasure of exchanging sentiments, and the hope of confirming their esteem of themselves by the approbation of each other. But this spontaneous fondness seldom rises at the sight of poverty, which every one regards with habitual contempt, and of which the applause is no more courted by vanity, than the countenance is solicited by ambition. The most generous and disinterested friendship must be resolved at last into the love of ourselves; he therefore whose reputation or dignity inclines us to consider his esteem as a testimonial of desert, will always find our hearts open to his endearments. We every day see men of eminence followed with all the obsequiousness of dependance, and courted with all the blandishments of flattery, by those who want nothing from them but professions of regard, and who think themselves liberally rewarded by a bow, a smile, or an embrace.

But those prejudices which every mind feels more or less in favour of riches, ought, like other opinions, which only custom and example have impressed upon us, to be in time subjected to reason. We must learn how to separate the real character from extraneous adhesion and casual circumstances, to consider closely him whom we are about to adopt or to reject; to regard his inclinations as well as his actions; to trace out those virtues which lie torpid in the heart for want of opportunity, and those vices that lurk unseen by the absence of temptation: that when we find worth faintly shooting in the shades of obscurity, we may let in light and sunshine upon it, and ripen barren volition into efficacy and power.

No. 167.] Tuesday, Oct. 22, 1751.

Candida perpetuo reside, Concordia, lecto,
Tamque pari semper sit Venus æqua jugo.
Diligat ipsa senem quondam: sed et illa marito,
Tunc quoque cum fuerit, non videatur anus.

MART.

Their nuptial bed may smiling Concord dress,
And Venus still the happy union bless!
Wrinkled with age, may mutual love and truth
To their dim eyes recall the bloom of youth.

F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,

It is not common to envy those with whom we cannot easily be placed in comparison. Every man sees without malevolence the progress of another in the tracts of life, which he has himself no desire to tread, and hears, without inclination to cavils or contradiction, the renown of those whose distance will not suffer them to draw the attention of mankind from his own merit. The sailor never thinks it necessary to contest the lawyer's abilities; nor would the Rambler, however jealous of his reputation, be much disturbed by the success of rival wits at Agra or Ispahan.

We do not therefore ascribe to you any superlative degree of virtue, when we believe that we may inform you of our change of condition without danger of malignant fascination; and that when you read of the marriage of your correspondents Hymenæus and Tranquilla, you will join your wishes to those of their other friends for the happy event of a union in which caprice and selfishness had so little part.

There is at least this reason why we should be less deceived in our connubial hopes than many who enter into the same state, that we have allowed our minds to form no unreasonable expectations, nor vitiated our fancies, in the soft hours of courtship, with visions of felicity which human power cannot bestow, or of perfection which human virtue cannot attain. That impartiality with which we endeavour to inspect the manners of all whom we have known was never so much overpowered by our passion, but that we discovered some faults and weaknesses in each other; and joined our hands in conviction, that as there are advantages to be enjoyed in marriage, there are inconveniences likewise to be endured; and that, together with confederate intellects and auxiliar virtues, we must find different opinions and opposite inclinations.

We however flatter ourselves, for who is not flattered by himself as well as by others on the day of marriage? that we are eminently qualified to give mutual pleasure. Our birth is without any such remarkable disparity as can give either an opportunity of insulting the other with pompous names and splendid alliances, or of calling in, upon any domestic controversy, the overbearing assistance of powerful relations. Our fortune was equally suitable, so that we meet without any of those obligations which always produce reproach or suspicion of reproach, which, though they may be forgotten in the gayeties of the first month, no delicacy will always suppress, or of which the suppression must be considered as a new favour, to be repaid by tameness and submission, till gratitude takes the place of love, and the desire of pleasing degenerates by degrees into the fear of offending.

The settlements caused no delay; for we did not trust our affairs to the negotiation of wretches who would have paid their court by multiplying stipulations. Tranquilla scorned to detain any part of her fortune from him into whose hands she delivered up her person; and Hymenæus thought no act of baseness more criminal than his who enslaves his wife by her own generosity, who, by marrying without a jointure, condemns her to all the dangers of accident and caprice, and at last boasts his liberality, by granting what only the indiscretion of her kindness enabled him to withhold. He therefore received on the common terms, the portion which any other woman might have brought him, and reserved all the exuberance of acknowledgment for those excellences which he has yet been able to discover only in Tranquilla.

We did not pass the weeks of courtship like those who consider themselves as taking the last draught of pleasure, and resolve not to quit the bowl without a surfeit, or who know themselves about to set happiness to hazard, and endeavour to lose their sense of danger in the ebriety of perpetual amusement, and whirl round the gulf before they sink. Hymenæus often repeated a medical axiom, that *the succours of sickness ought not to be wasted in health.* We know that however our eyes may yet sparkle, and our hearts bound at the presence of each other, the time of listlessness and satiety, of peevishness and discontent, must come at last, in which we shall be driven for relief to shows and recreations; that the uniformity of life must be sometimes diversified, and the vacuities of conversation sometimes supplied. We rejoice in the reflection that we have stores of novelty yet unexhausted, which may be opened when repletion shall call for change, and gratifications yet untasted, by which life, when it shall become vapid or bitter, may be restored to its former sweetness and sprightliness, and again irritate the appetite, and again sparkle in the cup.

Our time will probably be less tasteless than that of those whom the authority and avarice of parents unite almost without their consent in their early years, before they have accumulat-

ed any fund of reflection, or collected materials for mutual entertainment. Such we have often seen rising in the morning to cards, and retiring in the afternoon to doze, whose happiness was celebrated by their neighbours, because they happened to grow rich by parsimony, and to be kept quiet by insensibility, and agreed to eat and to sleep together.

We have both mingled with the world, and are therefore no strangers to the faults and virtues, the designs and competitions, the hopes and fears of our contemporaries. We have both amused our leisure with books, and can therefore recount the events of former times, or cite the dictates of ancient wisdom. Every occurrence furnishes us with some hint which one or the other can improve, and if it should happen that memory or imagination fail us, we can retire to no idle or unimproving solitude.

Though our characters, beheld at a distance, exhibit this general resemblance, yet a nearer inspection discovers such a dissimilitude of our habitudes and sentiments, as leaves each some peculiar advantages, and affords that *concordia discors*, that suitable disagreement which is always necessary to intellectual harmony. There may be a total diversity of ideas which admits no participation of the same delight, and there may likewise be such a conformity of notions as leaves neither any thing to add to the decisions of the other. With such contrariety there can be no peace, with such similarity there can be no pleasure. Our reasonings, though often formed upon different views, terminate generally in the same conclusion. Our thoughts, like rivulets issuing from distant springs, are each impregnated in its course with various mixtures, and tinged by infusions unknown to the other, yet, at last, easily unite into one stream, and purify themselves by the gentle effervescence of contrary qualities.

These benefits we receive in a greater degree as we converse without reserve, because we have nothing to conceal. We have no debts to be paid by imperceptible deductions from avowed expenses, no habits to be indulged by the private subserviency of a favoured servant, no private interviews with needy relations, no intelligence with spies placed upon each other. We considered marriage as the most solemn league of perpetual friendship, a state from which artifice and concealment are to be banished for ever, and in which every act of dissimulation is a breach of faith.

The impetuous vivacity of youth, and that ardour of desire, which the first sight of pleasure naturally produces, have long ceased to hurry us into irregularity and vehemence; and experience has shown us that few gratifications are too valuable to be sacrificed to complaisance. We have thought it convenient to rest from the fatigue of pleasure, and now only continue that course of life into which we had before entered, confirmed in our choice by mutual approbation, supported in our resolution by mutual encouragement, and assisted in our efforts by mutual exhortation. Such, Mr. Rambler, is our prospect of life, a prospect which, as it is beheld with more attention, seems to open more extensive happiness, and spreads, by degrees, into the boundless regions of eternity. But if all our prudence has been vain, and we are doomed to give one instance more of the uncertainty of human discernment, we shall comfort ourselves amidst our disappointments, that we were not betrayed by such delusions as caution could not escape, since we sought happiness only in the arms of virtue. We are, Sir,

Your humble servants,

HYMENÆUS,
TRANQUILLA.

No. 168.] SATURDAY, OCT. 26, 1751.

——*Decipit*
Frons prima multos, rara mens intelligit
Quod interiore condidit cura angulo. PHÆDRUS.

The tinsel glitter, and the specious mien,
Delude the most; few pry behind the scene.

IT has been observed by Boileau, that "a mean or common thought, expressed in pompous diction, generally pleases more than a new or noble sentiment delivered in low and vulgar language; because the number is greater of those whom custom has enabled to judge of words, than whom study has qualified to examine things."

This solution might satisfy, if such only were offended with meanness of expression as are unable to distinguish propriety of thought, and to separate propositions or images from the vehicles by which they are conveyed to the understanding. But this kind of disgust is by no means confined to the ignorant or superficial; it operates uniformly and universally upon readers of all classes; every man, however profound or abstracted, perceives himself irresistibly alienated by low terms; they who profess the most zealous adherence to truth are forced to admit that she owes part of her charms to her ornaments; and loses much of her power over the soul when she appears disgraced by a dress uncouth or ill-adjusted.

We are all offended by low terms, but are not disgusted alike by the same compositions, because we do not all agree to censure the same terms as low. No word is naturally or intrinsically meaner than another; our opinion therefore of words, as of other things arbitrarily and capriciously established, depends wholly upon accident and custom. The cottager thinks those apartments splendid and spacious, which an in-

habitant of palaces will despise for their inelegance; and to him who has passed most of his hours with the delicate and polite, many expressions will seem sordid, which another, equally acute, may hear without offence but a mean term never fails to displease him to whom it appears mean, as poverty is certainly and invariably despised, though he who is poor in the eyes of some, may, by others, be envied for his wealth.

Words become low by the occasions to which they are applied, or the general character of them who use them; and the disgust which they produce arises from the revival of those images with which they are commonly united. Thus, if, in the most solemn discourse, a phrase happens to occur which has been successfully employed in some ludicrous narrative, the gravest auditor finds it difficult to refrain from laughter, when they who are not prepossessed by the same accidental association, are utterly unable to guess the reason of his merriment. Words which convey ideas of dignity in one age, are banished from elegant writing or conversation in another, because they are in time debased by vulgar mouths, and can be no longer heard without the involuntary recollection of unpleasing images.

When Macbeth is confirming himself in the horrid purpose of stabbing his king, he breaks out amidst his emotions into a wish natural for a murderer:

——Come, thick night!
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes;
Nor Heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry, Hold, hold!

In this passage is exerted all the force of poetry; that force which calls new powers into being, which embodies sentiment, and animates matter; yet, perhaps, scarce any man now peruses it without some disturbance of his attention from the counteraction of the words to the ideas. What can be more dreadful than to implore the presence of night, invested, not in common obscurity, but in the smoke of hell? Yet the efficacy of this invocation is destroyed by the insertion of an epithet now seldom heard but in the stable, and *dun* night may come or go without any other notice than contempt.

If we start into raptures when some hero of the Iliad tells us that δέυ μαίνεται, his lance rages with eagerness to destroy; if we are alarmed at the terror of the soldiers commanded by Cæsar to hew down the sacred grove, who dreaded, says Lucan, lest the axe aimed at the oak should fly back upon the striker:

Si robora sacra ferirent,
In sua credebant redituras membra secures,

None dares with impious steel the grove to rend
Lest on himself the destined stroke descend;

we cannot surely but sympathise with the horrors of a wretch about to murder his master, his friend, his benefactor, who suspects that the weapon will refuse its office, and start back from the breast which he is preparing to violate. Yet this sentiment is weakened by the name of an instrument used by butchers and cooks in the meanest employments; we do not immediately conceive that any crime of importance is to be committed with a *knife;* or who does not, at last, from the long habit of connecting a knife with sordid offices, feel aversion rather than terror?

Macbeth proceeds to wish, in the madness of guilt, that the inspection of Heaven may be intercepted, and that he may, in the involutions of infernal darkness, escape the eye of Providence. This is the utmost extravagance of determined wickedness: yet this is so debased by two unfortunate words, that while I endeavour to impress on my reader the energy of the sentiment, I can scarcely check my risibility, when the expression forces itself upon my mind; for who, without some relaxation of his gravity, can hear of the avengers of guilt *peeping through a blanket.*

These imperfections of diction are less obvious to the reader, as he is less acquainted with common usages; they are therefore wholly imperceptible to a foreigner, who learns our language from books, and will strike a solitary academic less forcibly than a modish lady.

Among the numerous requisites that most concur to complete an author, few are of more importance than an early entrance into the living world. The seeds of knowledge may be planted in solitude, but must be cultivated in public. Argumentation may be taught in colleges, and theories formed in retirement; but the artifice of embellishment, and the powers of attraction, can be gained only by general converse.

An acquaintance with prevailing customs and fashionable elegance is necessary likewise for other purposes. The injury that grand imagery suffers from unsuitable language, personal merit may fear from rudeness and indelicacy. When the success of Æneas depended on the favour of the queen upon whose coasts he was driven, his celestial protectress thought him not sufficiently secured against rejection by his piety or bravery but decorated him for the interview with preternatural beauty. Whoever desires, for his writings or himself, what none can reasonably contemn, the favour of mankind, must add grace to strength, and make his thoughts agreeable as well as useful. Many complain of neglect who never tried to attract regard. It cannot be expected that the patrons of science or virtue should be solicitous to discover excellences, which they who possess them shade and disguise. Few have abilities so much needed by the rest of the world as to be caressed on their own terms; and he that will not condescend to recommend himself

by external embellishments, must submit to the fate of just sentiments meanly expressed, and be ridiculed and forgotten before he is understood.

No. 169.] Tuesday, Oct. 29, 1751.

Nec pluteum cædit, nec demorsos sapit ungues.
PERSIUS.

No blood from bit'en nails those poems drew;
But churn'd, like spittle from the lips they flew.
DRYDEN.

Natural historians assert that whatever is formed for long duration arrives slowly to its maturity. Thus the firmest timber is of tardy growth, and animals generally exceed each other in longevity, in proportion to the time between their conception and their birth.

The same observation may be extended to the offspring of the mind. Hasty compositions, however they please at first by flowery luxuriance, and spread in the sunshine of temporary favour, can seldom endure the change of seasons, but perish at the first blast of criticism, or frost of neglect. When Apelles was reproached with the paucity of his productions, and the incessant attention with which he retouched his pieces, he condescended to make no other answer than that *he painted for perpetuity.*

No vanity can more justly incur contempt and indignation than that which boasts of negligence and hurry. For who can bear with patience the writer who claims such superiority to the rest of his species, as to imagine that mankind are at leisure for attention to his extemporary sallies, and that posterity will repoſit his casual effusions among the treasures of ancient wisdom?

Men have sometimes appeared of such transcendent abilities, that their slightest and most cursory performances excel all that labour and study can enable meaner intellects to compose; as there are regions of which the spontaneous products cannot be equalled in other soils by care and culture. But it is no less dangerous for any man to place himself in this rank of understanding, and fancy that he is born to be illustrious without labour, than to omit the cares of husbandry, and expect from his ground the blossoms of Arabia.

The greatest part of those who congratulate themselves upon their intellectual dignity, and usurp the privileges of genius, are men whom only themselves would ever have marked out as enriched by uncommon liberalities of nature, or entitled to veneration and immortality on easy terms. This ardour of confidence is usually found among those who, having not enlarged their notions by books or conversation, are persuaded, by the partiality which we all feel in our own favour, that they have reached the summit of excellence, because they discover none higher than themselves; and who acquiesce in the first thoughts that occur, because their scantiness of knowledge allows them little choice; and the narrowness of their views affords them no glimpse of perfection, of that sublime idea which human industry has from the first ages been vainly toiling to approach. They see a little, and believe that there is nothing beyond their sphere of vision, as the Patuecos of Spain, who inhabited a small valley, conceived the surrounding mountains to be the boundaries of the world. In proportion as perfection is more distinctly conceived, the pleasure of contemplating our own performances will be lessened; it may therefore be observed, that they who most deserve praise are often afraid to decide in favour of their own performances; they know how much is still wanting to their completion, and wait with anxiety and terror the determination of the public. "I please every one else," says Tully, "but never satisfy myself."

It has often been inquired, why, notwithstanding the advances of latter ages in science, and the assistance which the infusion of so many new ideas has given us, we still fall below the ancients in the art of composition. Some part of their superiority may be justly ascribed to the graces of their language, from which the most polished of the present European tongues are nothing more than barbarous degenerations. Some advantage they might gain merely by priority, which put them in possession of the most natural sentiments, and left us nothing but servile repetition or forced conceits. But the greater part of their praise seems to have been the just reward of modesty and labour. Their sense of human weakness confined them commonly to one study, which their knowledge of the extent of every science engaged them to prosecute with indefatigable diligence.

Among the writers of antiquity I remember none except Statius who ventures to mention the speedy production of his writings, either as an extenuation of his faults, or a proof of his facility. Nor did Statius, when he considered himself as a candidate for lasting reputation, think a closer attention unnecessary, but amidst all his pride and indigence, the two great hasteners of modern poems, employed twelve years upon the Thebaid, and thinks his claim to renown proportionate to his labour.

Thebais, multa cruciata lima,
Tentat, audaci fide, Mantuanæ
Gaudia famæ.

Polished with endless toil, my lays
At length aspire to Mantuan praise.

Ovid indeed apologizes in his banishment for the imperfection of his letters, but mentions his want of leisure to polish them, as an addition to his calamities; and was so far from imagining

revisals and corrections unnecessary, that at his departure from Rome he threw his Metamorphoses into the fire, lest he should be disgraced by a book which he could not hope to finish.

It seems not often to have happened that the same writer aspired to reputation in verse and prose; and of those few that attempted such diversity of excellence, I know not that even one succeeded. Contrary characters they never imagined a single mind able to support, and therefore no man is recorded to have undertaken more than one kind of dramatic poetry.

What they had written, they did not venture in their first fondness to thrust into the world, but, considering the impropriety of sending forth inconsiderately that which cannot be recalled, deferred the publication, if not nine years, according to the direction of Horace, yet till their fancy was cooled after the raptures of invention and the glare of novelty had ceased to dazzle the judgment.

There were in those days no weekly or diurnal writers; *multa dies, et multa litura*, much time, and many rasures, were considered as indispensable requisites; and that no other method of attaining lasting praise has been yet discovered, may be conjectured from the blotted manuscripts of Milton now remaining, and from the tardy emission of Pope's compositions, delayed more than once till the incidents to which they alluded were forgotten, till his enemies were secure from his satire, and, what to an honest mind must be more painful, his friends were deaf to his encomiums.

To him, whose eagerness of praise hurries his productions soon into the light, many imperfections are unavoidable, even where the mind furnishes the materials, as well as regulates their disposition, and nothing depends upon search or information. Delay opens new veins of thought, the subject dismissed for a time appears with a new train of dependent images, the accidents of reading or conversation supply new ornaments or allusions, or mere intermission of the fatigue of thinking enables the mind to collect new force, and make new excursions. But all those benefits come too late for him, who, when he was weary with labour, snatched at the recompence, and gave his work to his friends and his enemies as soon as impatience and pride persuaded him to conclude it.

One of the most pernicious effects of haste is obscurity. He that teems with a quick succession of ideas, and perceives how one sentiment produces another, easily believes that he can clearly express what he so strongly comprehends; he seldom suspects his thoughts of embarrassment, while he preserves in his own memory the series of connection, or his diction of ambiguity, while only one sense is present to his mind. Yet if he has been employed on an abstruse or complicated argument, he will find, when he has a while withdrawn his mind, and returns as a new reader to his work, that he has only a conjectural glimpse of his own meaning, and that to explain it to those whom he desires to instruct, he must open his sentiments, disentangle his method, and alter his arrangement.

Authors and lovers always suffer some infatuation, from which only absence can set them free; and every man ought to restore himself to the full exercise of his judgment, before he does that which he cannot do improperly, without injuring his honour and his quiet.

No. 170.] SATURDAY, Nov. 2, 1751.

Confiteor: si quid prodest delicta fateri. OVID.

I grant the charge: forgive the fault confess'd.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM one of those beings from whom many, that melt at the sight of all other misery, think it meritorious to withhold relief; one whom the rigour of virtuous indignation dooms to suffer without complaint, and perish without regard; and whom I myself have formerly insulted in the pride of reputation and security of innocence.

I am of a good family, but my father was burdened with more children than he could decently support. A wealthy relation, as he travelled from London to his country-seat, condescending to make him a visit, was touched with compassion of his narrow fortune, and resolved to ease him of part of his charge, by taking the care of a child upon himself. Distress on one side, and ambition on the other, were too powerful for parental fondness, and the little family passed in review before him, that he might make his choice. I was then ten years old, and, without knowing for what purpose, I was called to my great cousin, endeavoured to recommend myself by my best courtesy, sung him my prettiest song, told the last story that I had read, and so much endeared myself by my innocence, that he declared his resolution to adopt me, and to educate me with his own daughters.

My parents felt the common struggles at the thought of parting, and *some natural tears they dropp'd, but wiped them soon.* They considered, not without that false estimation of the value of wealth which poverty long continued always produces, that I was raised to higher rank than they could give me, and to hopes of more ample fortune than they could bequeath. My mother sold some of her ornaments to dress me in such a manner as might secure me from contempt at my first arrival; and, when she dismissed me, pressed me to her bosom with an embrace that I still feel, gave me some precepts of piety, which, however neglected, I have not forgotten,

and uttered prayers for my final happiness, of which I have not yet ceased to hope that they will at last be granted.

My sisters envied my new finery, and seemed not much to regret our separation; my father conducted me to the stage-coach with a kind of cheerful tenderness; and in a very short time I was transported to splendid apartments, and a luxurious table, and grew familiar to show, noise, and gayety.

In three years my mother died, having implored a blessing on her family with her last breath. I had little opportunity to indulge a sorrow which there was none to partake with me, and therefore soon ceased to reflect much upon my loss. My father turned all his care upon his other children, whom some fortunate adventures and unexpected legacies enabled him, when he died four years after my mother, to leave in a condition above their expectations.

I should have shared the increase of his fortune, and had once a fortune assigned me in his will; but my cousin assuring him that all care for me was needless, since he had resolved to place me happily in the world, directed him to divide my part amongst my sisters.

Thus I was thrown upon dependance without resource. Being now at an age in which young women are initiated into company, I was no longer to be supported in my former character but at considerable expense; so that partly lest I should waste money, and partly lest my appearance might draw too many compliments and assiduities, I was insensibly degraded from my equality, and enjoyed few privileges above the head servant but that of receiving no wages.

I felt every indignity, but knew that resentment would precipitate my fall. I therefore endeavoured to continue my importance by little services and active officiousness, and, for a time, preserved myself from neglect, by withdrawing all pretences to competition, and studying to please rather than to shine. But my interest, notwithstanding this expedient, hourly declined, and my cousin's favourite maid began to exchange repartees with me, and consult me about alterations of a cast gown.

I was now completely depressed; and though I had seen mankind enough to know the necessity of outward cheerfulness, I often withdrew to my chamber to vent my grief, or turn my condition in my mind, and examine by what means I might escape from perpetual mortification. At last my schemes and sorrows were interrupted by a sudden change of my relation's behaviour, who one day took an occasion, when we were left together in a room, to bid me suffer myself no longer to be insulted, but assume the place which he always intended me to hold In the family. He assured me that his wife's preference of her own daughters should never hurt me; and, accompanying his professions with a purse of gold, ordered me to bespeak a rich suit at the mercer's, and to apply privately to him for money when I wanted it, and insinuate that my other friends supplied me, which he would take care to confirm.

By this stratagem, which I did not then understand, he filled me with tenderness and gratitude, compelled me to repose on him as my only support, and produced a necessity of private conversation. He often appointed interviews at the house of an acquaintance, and sometimes called on me with a coach, and carried me abroad. My sense of his favour, and the desire of retaining it, disposed me to unlimited complaisance, and, though I saw his kindness grow every day more fond, I did not suffer any suspicion to enter my thoughts. At last the wretch took advantage of the familiarity which he enjoyed as my relation, and the submission which he exacted as my benefactor, to complete the ruin of an orphan, whom his own promises had made indigent, whom his indulgence had melted, and his authority subdued.

I know not why it should afford subject of exultation, to overpower on any terms the resolution, or surprise the caution of a girl; but of all the boasters that deck themselves in the spoils of innocence and beauty, they surely have the least pretensions to triumph, who submit to owe their success to some casual influence. They neither employ the graces of fancy, nor the force of understanding, in their attempts; they cannot please their vanity with the art of their approaches, the delicacy of their adulations, the elegance of their address, or the efficacy of their eloquence; nor applaud themselves as possessed of any qualities by which affection is attracted. They surmount no obstacles, they defeat no rivals, but attack only those who cannot resist, and are often content to possess the body, without any solicitude to gain the heart.

Many of these despicable wretches does my present acquaintance with infamy and wickedness enable me to number among the heroes of debauchery; reptiles whom their own servants would have despised, had they not been their servants, and with whom beggary would have disdained intercourse, had she not been allured by hopes of relief. Many of the beings which are now rioting in taverns, or shivering in the streets, have been corrupted, not by arts of gallantry which stole gradually upon the affections and laid prudence asleep, but by the fear of losing benefits which were never intended, or of incurring resentment which they could not escape; some have been frighted by masters, and some awed by guardians into ruin.

Our crime had its usual consequence, and he soon perceived that I could not long continue in his family. I was distracted at the thought of the reproach which I now believed inevitable. He comforted me with hopes of eluding all dis

covery, and often upbraided me with the anxiety which perhaps none but himself saw in my countenance; but at last mingled his assurances of protection and maintenance with menaces of total desertion, if, in the moments of perturbation, I should suffer his secret to escape, or endeavour to throw on him any part of my infamy.

Thus passed the dismal hours, till my retreat could no longer be delayed. It was pretended that my relations had sent for me to a distant country, and I entered upon a state which shall be described in my next letter.

I am, Sir, &c.

MISELLA.

No. 171.] TUESDAY, Nov. 5, 1751.

——*Tædet cæli convexa tueri.* VIRG.

Dark is the sun, and loathsome is the day.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

MISELLA now sits down to continue her narrative. I am convinced that nothing would more powerfully preserve youth from irregularity, or guard inexperience from seduction, than a just description of the condition into which the wanton plunges herself, and therefore hope that my letter may be a sufficient antidote to my example.

After the distraction, hesitation, and delays which the timidity of guilt naturally produces, I was removed to lodgings in a distant part of the town, under one of the characters commonly assumed upon such occasions. Here being by my circumstances condemned to solitude, I passed most of my hours in bitterness and anguish. The conversation of the people with whom I was placed was not at all capable of engaging my attention, or dispossessing the reigning ideas. The books which I carried to my retreat were such as heightened my abhorrence of myself; for I was not so far abandoned as to sink voluntarily into corruption, or endeavour to conceal from my own mind the enormity of my crime.

My relation remitted none of his fondness, but visited me so often, that I was sometimes afraid lest his assiduity should expose him to suspicion. Whenever he came he found me weeping, and was therefore less delightfully entertained than he expected. After frequent expostulations upon the unreasonableness of my sorrow, and innumerable protestations of everlasting regard, he at last found that I was more affected with the loss of my innocence than the danger of my fame, and, that he might not be disturbed by my remorse, began to lull my conscience with the opiates of irreligion. His arguments were such as my course of life has since exposed me often to the necessity of hearing, vulgar, empty, and fallacious; yet, they at first confounded me by their novelty, filled me with doubt and perplexity, and interrupted that peace which I began to feel from the sincerity of my repentance, without substituting any other support. I listened awhile to his impious gabble; but its influence was soon overpowered by natural reason and early education, and the convictions which this new attempt gave me of his baseness completed my abhorrence. I have heard of barbarians, who, when tempests drive ships upon their coast, decoy them to the rocks that they may plunder their lading—and have always thought that wretches, thus merciless in their depredations, ought to be destroyed by a general insurrection of all social beings; yet, how light is this guilt to the crime of him, who, in the agitations of remorse, cuts away the anchor of piety, and, when he has drawn aside credulity from the paths of virtue, hides the light of heaven which would direct her to return! I had hitherto considered him as a man equally betrayed with myself by the concurrence of appetite and opportunity; but I now saw with horror that he was contriving to perpetuate his gratification, and was desirous to fit me to his purpose, by complete and radical corruption.

To escape, however, was not yet in my power. I could support the expenses of my condition, only by the continuance of his favour. He provided all that was necessary, and in a few weeks congratulated me upon my escape from the danger which we had both expected with so much anxiety. I then began to remind him of his promise to restore me with my fame uninjured to the world. He promised me in general terms, that nothing should be wanting which his power could add to my happiness, but forbore to release me from my confinement. I knew how much my reception in the world depended upon my speedy return, and was therefore outrageously impatient of his delays, which I now perceived to be only artifices of lewdness. He told me at last, with an appearance of sorrow, that all hopes of restoration to my former state were for ever precluded; that chance had discovered my secret, and malice divulged it; and that nothing now remained, but to seek a retreat more private, where curiosity or hatred could never find us.

The rage, anguish, and resentment, which I felt at this account are not to be expressed. I was in so much dread of reproach and infamy, which he represented as pursuing me with full cry, that I yielded myself implicitly to his disposal, and was removed, with a thousand studied precautions, through by-ways and dark passages to another house, where I harassed him with perpetual solicitations for a small annuity that

might enable me to live in the country in obscurity and innocence.

This demand he at first evaded with ardent professions, but in time appeared offended at my importunity and distrust; and having one day endeavoured to sooth me with uncommon expressions of tenderness, when he found my discontent immoveable, left me with some inarticulate murmurs of anger. I was pleased that he was at last roused to sensibility, and, expecting that at his next visit he would comply with my request, lived with great tranquillity upon the money in my hands, and was so much pleased with this pause of persecution, that I did not reflect how much his absence had exceeded the usual intervals, till I was alarmed with the danger of wanting subsistence. I then suddenly contracted my expenses, but was unwilling to supplicate for assistance. Necessity, however, soon overcame my modesty or my pride, and I applied to him by a letter, but had no answer. I writ in terms more pressing, but without effect. I then sent an agent to inquire after him, who informed me, that he had quitted his house, and was gone with his family to reside for some time upon his estate in Ireland.

However shocked at this abrupt departure, I was yet unwilling to believe that he could wholly abandon me, and therefore, by the sale of my clothes, I supported myself, expecting that every post would bring me relief. Thus I passed seven months between hope and dejection, in a gradual approach to poverty and distress, emaciated with discontent, and bewildered with uncertainty. At last, my landlady, after many hints of the necessity of a new lover, took the opportunity of my absence to search my boxes, and, missing some of my apparel, seized the remainder for rent, and led me to the door.

To remonstrate against legal cruelty was vain: to supplicate obdurate brutality was hopeless. I went away I knew not whither, and wandered about without any settled purpose, unacquainted with the usual expedients of misery, unqualified for laborious offices, afraid to meet an eye that had seen me before, and hopeless of relief from those who were strangers to my former condition. Night came on in the midst of my distraction, and I still continued to wander till the menaces of the watch obliged me to shelter myself in a covered passage.

Next day, I procured a lodging in the backward garret of a mean house, and employed my landlady to inquire for a service. My applications were generally rejected for want of a character. At length I was received at a draper's; but when it was known to my mistress that I had only one gown, and that of silk, she was of opinion that I looked like a thief, and without warning hurried me away. I then tried to support myself by my needle; and, by my landlady's recommendation, obtained a little work from a shop, and for three weeks lived without repining; but when my punctuality had gained me so much reputation, that I was trusted to make up a head of some value, one of my fellow-lodgers stole the lace, and I was obliged to fly from a prosecution.

Thus driven again into the streets, I lived upon the least that could support me, and at night accommodated myself under pent-houses as well as I could. At length I became absolutely pennyless, and, having strolled all day without sustenance, was, at the close of evening, accosted by an elderly man, with an invitation to a tavern. I refused him with hesitation; he seized me by the hand, and drew me into a neighbouring house, where when he saw my face pale with hunger, and my eyes swelling with tears, he spurned me from him, and bade me cant and whine in some other place; he for his part would take care of his pockets.

I still continued to stand in the way, having scarcely strength to walk further, when another soon addressed me in the same manner. When he saw the same tokens of calamity, he considered that I might be obtained at a cheap rate, and therefore quickly made overtures, which I had no longer firmness to reject. By this man I was maintained four months in penurious wickedness, and then abandoned to my former condition, from which I was delivered by another keeper.

In this abject state I have now passed four years, the drudge of extortion and the sport of drunkenness; sometimes the property of one man, and sometimes the common prey of accidental lewdness; at one time tricked up for sale by the mistress of a brothel; at another begging in the streets to be relieved from hunger by wickedness; without any hope in the day but of finding some whom folly or excess may expose to my allurements, and without any reflections at night, but such as guilt and terror impress upon me.

If those who pass their days in plenty and security, could visit for an hour the dismal receptacles to which the prostitute retires from her nocturnal excursions, and see the wretches that lie crowded together, mad with intemperance, ghastly with famine, nauseous with filth, and noisome with disease; it would not be very easy for any degree of abhorrence to harden them against compassion, or to repress the desire which they must immediately feel to rescue such numbers of human beings from a state so dreadful.

It is said, that in France they annually evacuate their streets, and ship their prostitutes and vagabonds to their colonies. If the women that infest this city had the same opportunity of escaping from their miseries, I believe very little force would be necessary; for who among them can dread any change? Many of us in

deed are wholly unqualified for any but most servile employments, and those perhaps would require the care of a magistrate to hinder them from following the same practices in another country; but others are only precluded by infamy from reformation, and would gladly be delivered on any terms from the necessity of guilt, and the tyranny of chance. No place but a populous city can afford opportunities for open prostitution, and where the eye of justice can attend to individuals, those who cannot be made good may be restrained from mischief. For my part, I should exult at the privilege of banishment, and think myself happy in any region that should restore me once again to honesty and peace.

I am, Sir, &c.

MISELLA.

No. 172.] SATURDAY, Nov. 9, 1751.

Sæpe rogare soles qualis sim, Prisce, futurus
Si fiam locuples; simque repente potens.
Quemquam posse putas mores narrare futuros?
Dic mihi, si fias tu leo, qualis eris. MART.

Priscus, you've often asked me how I'd live,
Should fate at once both wealth and honour give.
What soul his future conduct can forsee?
Tell me what sort of lion you would be.

F. LEWIS.

NOTHING has been longer observed, than that a change of fortune causes a change of manners; and that it is difficult to conjecture from the conduct of him whom we see in a low condition, how he would act, if wealth and power were put into his hands. But it is generally agreed, that few men are made better by affluence or exaltation; and that the powers of the mind, when they are unbound and expanded by the sunshine of felicity, more frequently luxuriate into follies than blossom into goodness.

Many observations have concurred to establish this opinion, and it is not likely soon to become obsolete, for want of new occasions to revive it. The greater part of mankind are corrupt in every condition, and differ in high and low stations, only as they have more or fewer opportunities of gratifying their desires, or as they are more or less restrained by human censures. Many vitiate their principles in the acquisition of riches; and who can wonder that what is gained by fraud and extortion is enjoyed with tyranny and excess?

Yet I am willing to believe that the depravation of the mind by external advantages, though certainly not uncommon, yet approaches not so nearly to universality, as some have asserted in the bitterness of resentment, or heat of declamation.

Whoever rises above those who once pleased themselves with equality, will have many malevolent gazers at his eminence. To gain sooner than others that which all pursue with the same ardour, and to which all imagine themselves entitled, will for ever be a crime. When those who started with us in the race of life, leave us so far behind that we have little hope to overtake them, we revenge our disappointment by remarks on the arts of supplantation by which they gained the advantage, or on the folly and arrogance with which they possess it. Of them whose rise we could not hinder, we solace ourselves by prognosticating the fall.

It is impossible for human purity not to betray to an eye, thus sharpened by malignity, some stains which lay concealed and unregarded, while none thought it their interest to discover them; nor can the most circumspect attention, or steady rectitude, escape blame from censors who have no inclination to approve. Riches therefore, perhaps, do not so often produce crimes as incite accusers.

The common charge against those who rise above their original condition, is that of pride. It is certain that success naturally confirms us in a favourable opinion of our own abilities. Scarce any man is willing to allot to accident, friendship, and a thousand causes, which concur in every event without human contrivance or interposition, the part which they may justly claim in his advancement. We rate ourselves by our fortune rather than our virtues, and exorbitant claims are quickly produced by imaginary merit. But captiousness and jealousy are likewise easily offended, and to him who studiously looks for an affront, every mode of behaviour will supply it; freedom will be rudeness, and reserve sullenness; mirth will be negligence, and seriousness formality; when he is received with ceremony, distance and respect are inculcated; if he is treated with familiarity, he concludes himself insulted by condescensions.

It must however be confessed, that as all sudden changes are dangerous, a quick transition from poverty to abundance can seldom be made with safety. He that has long lived within sight of pleasures which he could not reach, will need more than common moderation, not to lose his reason in unbounded riot, when they are first put into his power.

Every possession is endeared by novelty; every gratification is exaggerated by desire. It is difficult not to estimate what is lately gained above its real value; it is impossible not to annex greater happiness to that condition from which we are unwillingly excluded, than nature has qualified us to obtain. For this reason, the remote inheritor of an unexpected fortune may be generally distinguished from those who are enriched in the common course of lineal descent,

by his greater haste to enjoy his wealth, by the finery of his dress, the pomp of his equipage, the splendour of his furniture, and the luxury of his table.

A thousand things which familiarity discovers to be of little value, have power for a time to seize the imagination. A Virginian king, when the Europeans had fixed a lock on his door, was so delighted to find his subjects admitted or excluded with such facility, that it was from morning to evening his whole employment to turn the key. We, among whom locks and keys have been longer in use, are inclined to laugh at this American amusement; yet I doubt whether this paper will have a single reader that may not apply the story to himself, and recollect some hours of his life in which he has been equally overpowered by the transitory charms of trifling novelty.

Some indulgence is due to him whom a happy gale of fortune has suddenly transported into new regions, where unaccustomed lustre dazzles his eyes, and untasted delicacies solicit his appetite. Let him not be considered as lost in hopeless degeneracy, though he for a while forgets the regard due to others, to indulge the contemplation of himself, and in the extravagance of his first raptures expects that his eye should regulate the motions of all that approach him, and his opinion be received as decisive and oraculous. His intoxication will give way to time; the madness of joy will fume imperceptibly away; the sense of his insufficiency will soon return; he will remember that the co-operation of others is necessary to his happiness, and learn to conciliate their regard by reciprocal beneficence.

There is, at least, one consideration which ought to alleviate our censures of the powerful and rich. To imagine them chargeable with all the guilt and folly of their own actions, is to be very little acquainted with the world.

De l'absolu pouvoir vous ignorez l'yvresse,
Et du lache flateur la voix enchanteresse.

Thou hast not known the giddy whirls of fate,
Nor servile flatteries which enchant the great.
MISS A. W.

He that can do much good or harm will not find many whom ambition or cowardice will suffer to be sincere. While we live upon the level with the rest of mankind, we are reminded of our duty by the admonitions of friends and reproaches of enemies; but men who stand in the highest ranks of society, seldom hear of their faults; if by any accident an opprobrious clamour reaches their ears, flattery is always at hand to pour in her opiates, to quiet conviction, and obtund remorse.

Favour is seldom gained but by conformity in vice. Virtue can stand without assistance, and considers herself as very little obliged by countenance and approbation; but vice, spiritless and timorous, seeks the shelter of crowds, and support of confederacy. The sycophant, therefore, neglects the good qualities of his patron, and employs all his art on his weaknesses and follies, regales his reigning vanity, or stimulates his prevalent desires.

Virtue is sufficiently difficult with any circumstances, but the difficulty is increased when reproof and advice are frighted away. In common life, reason and conscience have only the appetites and passions to encounter; but in higher stations they must oppose artifice and adulation. He, therefore, that yields to such temptations, cannot give those who look upon his miscarriage much reason for exultation, since few can justly presume that from the same snare they should have been able to escape.

No. 173.] TUESDAY, Nov. 12, 1751.

———*Quo virtus, quo ferat error.* HOR.

Now say, where virtue stops, and vice begins?

As any action or posture, long continued, will distort and disfigure the limbs; so the mind likewise is crippled and contracted by perpetual application to the same set of ideas. It is easy to guess the trade of an artisan by his knees, his fingers, or his shoulders: and there are few among men of the more liberal professions, whose minds do not carry the brand of their calling, or whose conversation does not quickly discover to what class of the community they belong.

These peculiarities have been of great use, in the general hostility which every part of mankind exercises against the rest, to furnish insults and sarcasms. Every art has its dialect, uncouth and ungrateful to all whom custom has not reconciled to its sound, and which therefore becomes ridiculous by a slight misapplication, or unnecessary repetition.

The general reproach with which ignorance revenges the superciliousness of learning, is that of pedantry; a censure which every man incurs, who has at any time the misfortune to talk to those who cannot understand him, and by which the modest and timorous are sometimes frighted from the display of their acquisitions, and the exertion of their powers.

The name of a pedant is so formidable to young men when they first sally from their colleges, and is so liberally scattered by those who mean to boast their elegance of education, easiness of manners, and knowledge of the world, that it seems to require particular consideration; since, perhaps, if it were once understood, many a heart might be freed from painful apprehensions, and many a tongue delivered from restraint.

Pedantry is the unseasonable ostentation of learning. It may be discovered either in the choice of a subject, or in the manner of treating it. He is undoubtedly guilty of pedantry, who, when he has made himself master of some abstruse and uncultivated part of knowledge, obtrudes his remarks and discoveries upon those whom he believes unable to judge of his proficiency, and from whom, as he cannot fear contradiction, he cannot properly expect applause.

To this error the student is sometimes betrayed by the natural recurrence of the mind to its common employment, by the pleasure which every man receives from the recollection of pleasing images, and the desire of dwelling upon topics on which he knows himself able to speak with justness. But because we are seldom so far prejudiced in favour of each other, as to search out for palliations, this failure of politeness is imputed always to vanity; and the harmless collegiate, who, perhaps, intended entertainment and instruction, or at worst only spoke without sufficient reflection upon the character of his hearers, is censured as arrogant or overbearing, and eager to extend his renown, in contempt of the convenience of society, and the laws of conversation.

All discourse of which others cannot partake, is not only an irksome usurpation of the time devoted to pleasure and entertainment, but, what never fails to excite very keen resentment, an insolent assertion of superiority, and a triumph over less enlightened understandings. The pedant is, therefore, not only heard with weariness, but malignity; and those who conceive themselves insulted by his knowledge, never fail to tell with acrimony how injudiciously it was exerted.

To avoid this dangerous imputation, scholars sometimes divest themselves with too much haste of their academical formality, and, in their endeavours to accommodate their notions and their style to common conceptions, talk rather of any thing than of that which they understand, and sink into insipidity of sentiment and meanness of expression.

There prevails among men of letters an opinion, that all appearance of science is particularly hateful to women; and that therefore, whoever desires to be well received in female assemblies, must qualify himself by a total rejection of all that is serious, rational or important; must consider argument or criticism as perpetually interdicted; and devote all his attention to trifles, and all his eloquence to compliment.

Students often form their notions of the present generation from the writings of the past, and are very early informed of those changes which the gradual diffusion of knowledge, or the sudden caprice of fashion, produces in the world. Whatever might be the state of female literature in the last century, there is now no longer any danger lest the scholar should want an adequate audience at the tea-table; and whoever thinks it necessary to regulate his conversation by antiquated rules, will be rather despised for his futility than caressed for his politeness.

To talk intentionally in a manner above the comprehension of those whom we address, is unquestionable pedantry; but surely complaisance requires, that no man should, without proof, conclude his company incapable of following him to the highest elevation of his fancy, or the utmost extent of his knowledge. It is always safer to err in favour of others than of ourselves, and therefore we seldom hazard much by endeavouring to excel.

It ought at least to be the care of learning, when she quits her exaltation, to descend with dignity. Nothing is more despicable than the airiness and jocularity of a man bred to severe science and solitary meditation. To trifle agreeably is a secret which schools cannot impart; that gay negligence and vivacious levity, which charm down resistance wherever they appear, are never attainable by him who, having spent his first years among the dust of libraries, enters late into the gay world with an unpliant attention and established habits.

It is observed in the panegyric on Fabricius the mechanist, that, though forced by public employments into mingled conversation, he never lost the modesty and seriousness of the convent, nor drew ridicule upon himself by an affected imitation of fashionable life. To the same praise every man devoted to learning ought to aspire. If he attempts the softer arts of pleasing, and endeavours to learn the grateful bow and the familiar embrace, the insinuating accent and the general smile, he will lose the respect due to the character of learning, without arriving at the envied honour of doing nothing with elegance and facility.

Theophrastus was discovered not to be a native of Athens, by so strict an adherence to the Attic dialect, as showed that he had learned it not by custom, but by rule. A man not early formed to habitual elegance, betrays in like manner the effects of his education, by an unnecessary anxiety of behaviour. It is as possible to become pedantic by fear of pedantry, as to be troublesome by ill-timed civility. There is no kind of impertinence more justly censurable, than his who is always labouring to level thoughts to intellects higher than his own; who apologizes for every word which his own narrowness of converse inclines him to think unusual; keeps the exuberance of his faculties under visible restraint; is solicitous to anticipate inquiries by needless explanations; and endeavours to shade his own abilities, lest weak eyes should be dazzled with their lustre.

No. 174.] Saturday, Nov. 15, 1751.

Fœnum habet in cornu; longe fuge; dummodo risum
Excutiat sibi, non hic cuiquam parcet amico. HOR.

Yonder he drives—avoid that furious beast:
If he may have his jest, he never cares
At whose expense; nor friend nor patron spares.
FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Mr. Rambler,

The laws of social benevolence require, that every man should endeavour to assist others by his experience. He that has at last escaped into port from the fluctuations of chance, and the gusts of opposition, ought to make some improvements in the chart of life, by marking the rocks on which he has been dashed, and the shallows where he has been stranded.

The error into which I was betrayed, when custom first gave me up to my own direction, is very frequently incident to the quick, the sprightly, the fearless, and the gay; to all whose ardour hurries them into precipitate execution of their designs, and imprudent declaration of their opinions; who seldom count the cost of pleasure, or examine the distant consequences of any practice that flatters them with immediate gratification.

I came forth into the crowded world with the usual juvenile ambition, and desired nothing beyond the title of a wit. Money I considered as below my care; for I saw such multitudes grow rich without understanding, that I could not forbear to look on wealth as an acquisition easy to industry directed by genius, and therefore threw it aside as a secondary convenience, to be procured when my principal wish should be satisfied, and my claim to intellectual excellence universally acknowledged.

With this view I regulated my behaviour in public, and exercised my meditations in solitude. My life was divided between the care of providing topics for the entertainment of my company, and that of collecting company worthy to be entertained; for I soon found, that wit, like every other power, has its boundaries; that its success depends upon the aptitude of others to receive impressions; and that as some bodies, indissoluble by heat, can set the furnace and crucible at defiance, there are minds upon which the rays of fancy may be pointed without effect, and which no fire of sentiment can agitate or exalt.

It was, however, not long, before I fitted myself with a set of companions who knew how to laugh, and to whom no other recommendation was necessary than the power of striking out a jest. Among those I fixed my residence, and for a time enjoyed the felicity of disturbing the neighbours every night with the obstreperous applause which my sallies forced from the audience. The reputation of our club every day increased, and as my flights and remarks were circulated by my admirers, every day brought new solicitations for admission into our society.

To support this perpetual fund of merriment, I frequented every place of concourse, cultivated the acquaintance of all the fashionable race, and passed the day in a continual succession of visits, in which I collected a treasure of pleasantry for the expenses of the evening. Whatever error of conduct I could discover, whatever peculiarity of manner I could observe, whatever weakness was betrayed by confidence, whatever lapse was suffered by neglect, all was drawn together for the diversion of my wild companions, who when they had been taught the art of ridicule, never failed to signalize themselves by a zealous imitation, and filled the town on the ensuing day with scandal and vexation, with merriment and shame.

I can scarcely believe, when I recollect my own practice, that I could have been so far deluded with petty praise, as to divulge the secrets of trust, and to expose the levities of frankness; to waylay the walks of the cautious, and surprise the security of the thoughtless. Yet it is certain, that for many years I heard nothing but with design to tell it, and saw nothing with any other curiosity than after some failure that might furnish out a jest.

My heart, indeed, acquits me of deliberate malignity, or interested insidiousness. I had no other purpose than to heighten the pleasure of laughter by communication, nor ever raised any pecuniary advantage from the calamities of others. I led weakness and negligence into difficulties, only that I might divert myself with their perplexities and distresses; and violated every law of friendship, with no other hope than that of gaining the reputation of smartness and waggery.

I would not be understood to charge myself with any crimes of the atrocious or destructive kind. I never betrayed an heir to gamesters, or a girl to debauchees; never intercepted the kindness of a patron, or sported away the reputation of innocence. My delight was only in petty mischief and momentary vexations, and my acuteness was employed not upon fraud and oppression, which it had been meritorious to detect, but upon harmless ignorance or absurdity, prejudice or mistake.

This inquiry I pursued with so much diligence and sagacity, that I was able to relate, of every man whom I knew, some blunder or miscarriage; to betray the most circumspect of my friends into follies, by a judicious flattery of his predominant passion; or expose him to contempt, by placing him in circumstances which put his prejudices into action, brought to view

his natural defects, or drew the attention of the company on his airs of affectation.

The power had been possessed in vain if it had never been exerted; and it was not my custom to let any arts of jocularity remain unemployed. My impatience of applause brought me always early to the place of entertainment; and I seldom failed to lay a scheme with the small knot that first gathered round me, by which some of those whom we expected might be made subservient to our sport. Every man has some favourite topic of conversation, on which, by a feigned seriousness of attention, he may be drawn to expatiate without end. Every man has some habitual contortion of body, or established mode of expression, which never fails to raise mirth if it be pointed out to notice. By premonitions of these particularities I secured our pleasantry. Our companion entered with his usual gayety, and began to partake of our noisy cheerfulness, when the conversation was imperceptibly diverted to a subject which pressed upon his tender part, and extorted the expected shrug, the customary exclamation, or the predicted remark. A general clamour of joy then burst from all that were admitted to the stratagem. Our mirth was often increased by the triumph of him that occasioned it; for, as we do not hastily form conclusions against ourselves, seldom any one suspected that he had exhilarated us otherwise than by his wit.

You will hear, I believe, with very little surprise that by this conduct I had in a short time united mankind against me, and that every tongue was diligent in prevention or revenge. I soon perceived myself regarded with malevolence or distrust, but wondered what had been discovered in me either terrible or hateful. I had invaded no man's property; I had rivalled no man's claims; nor had ever engaged in any of those attempts which provoke the jealousy of ambition, or the rage of faction. I had lived but to laugh, and make others laugh; and believed that I was loved by all who caressed, and favoured by all who applauded me. I never imagined that he who, in the mirth of a nocturnal revel, concurred in ridiculing his friend, would consider in a cooler hour, that the same trick might be played against himself; or that, even where there is no sense of danger, the natural pride of human nature rises against him, who, by general censures, lays claim to general superiority.

I was convinced, by a total desertion, of the impropriety of my conduct; every man avoided, and cautioned others to avoid me. Wherever I came, I found silence and dejection, coldness and terror. No one would venture to speak, lest he should lay himself open to unfavourable representations; the company, however numerous, dropped off at my entrance, upon various pretences; and, if I retired to avoid the shame of being left, I heard confidence and mirth revive at my departure.

If those whom I had thus offended could have contented themselves with repaying one insult for another, and kept up the war only by a reciprocation of sarcasms, they might have perhaps vexed, but would never much have hurt me; for no man heartily hates him at whom he can laugh. But these wounds which they give me as they fly, are without cure; this alarm which they spread by their solicitude to escape me, excludes me from all friendship and from all pleasure. I am condemned to pass a long interval of my life in solitude, as a man suspected of infection is refused admission into cities; and must linger in obscurity, till my conduct shall convince the world, that I may be approached without hazard.

I am, &c.

DICACULUS.

No. 175.] TUESDAY, Nov. 19, 1751.

Rari quippe boni, numero vix sunt totidem quot Thebarum portæ, vel divitis ostia Nili. JUV.

Good men are scarce, the just are thinly sown;
They thrive but ill, nor can they last when grown,
And should we count them, and our store compile,
Yet Thebes more gates could show, more mouths the Nile. CREECH.

NONE of the axioms of wisdom which recommend the ancient sages to veneration, seems to have required less extent of knowledge or perspicacity of penetration, than the remark of Bias, that *οἱ πλέονες κακοὶ, the majority are wicked.*

The depravity of mankind is so easily discoverable that nothing but the desert or the cell can exclude it from notice. The knowledge of crimes intrudes uncalled and undesired. They whom their abstraction from common occurrences hinders from seeing iniquity, will quickly have their attention awakened by feeling it. Even he who ventures not into the world, may learn its corruption in his closet. For what are treatises of morality, but persuasives to the practice of duties, for which no arguments would be necessary, but that we are continually tempted to violate or neglect them? What are all the records of history, but narratives of successive villanies, of treasons and usurpations, massacres and wars?

But, perhaps, the excellence of aphorism consists not so much in the expression of som rare or abstruse sentiment, as in the comprehension of some obvious and useful truth in a few words. We frequently fall into error and folly, not because the true principles of action are not known, but because for a time they are not remembered; and he may therefore be justly numbered among the benefactors of mankind, who contracts the great rules of life into short sentences, that may be easily impressed on the

memory, and taught by frequent recollection to recur habitually to the mind.

However those who have passed through half the life of man, may now wonder that any should require to be cautioned against corruption, they will find, that they have themselves purchased their conviction by many disappointments and vexations which an earlier knowledge would have spared them; and may see on every side some entangling themselves in perplexities, and some sinking into ruin, by ignorance or neglect of the maxim of Bias.

Every day sends out, in quest of pleasure and distinction, some heir fondled in ignorance, and flattered into pride. He comes forth with all the confidence of a spirit unacquainted with superiors, and all the benevolence of a mind not yet irritated by opposition, alarmed by fraud, or embittered by cruelty. He loves all, because he imagines himself the universal favourite. Every exchange of salutation produces new acquaintance, and every acquaintance kindles into friendship.

Every season brings a new flight of beauties into the world, who have hitherto heard only of their own charms, and imagine that the heart feels no passion but that of love. They are seen surrounded by admirers whom they credit, because they tell them only what is heard with delight. Whoever gazes upon them is a lover; and whoever forces a sigh, is pining in despair.

He surely is a useful monitor, who inculcates to these thoughtless strangers, that the *majority are wicked*; who informs them, that the train which wealth and beauty draw after them is lured only by the scent of prey; and that, perhaps, among all those who crowd about them with professions and flatteries, there is not one who does not hope for some opportunity to devour or betray them, to glut himself by their destruction, or to share their spoils with a stronger savage.

Virtue, presented singly to the imagination or the reason, is so well recommended by its own graces, and so strongly supported by arguments, that a good man wonders how any can be bad; and they who are ignorant of the force of passion and interest, who never observed the arts of seduction, the contagion of example, the gradual descent from one crime to another, or the insensible depravation of the principles by loose conversation, naturally expect to find integrity in every bosom, and veracity on every tongue.

It is, indeed, impossible not to hear from those who have lived longer, of wrongs and falsehoods, of violence and circumvention; but such narratives are commonly regarded by the young, the heady, and the confident, as nothing more than the murmurs of peevishness, or the dreams of dotage; and, notwithstanding all the documents of hoary wisdom, we commonly plunge into the world fearless and credulous without any foresight of danger, or apprehension of deceit.

I have remarked, in a former paper, that credulity is the common failing of unexperienced virtue; and that he who is spontaneously suspicious, may be justly charged with radical corruption; for, if he has not known the prevalence of dishonesty by information, nor had time to observe it with his own eyes, whence can he take his measures of judgment but from himself?

They who best deserve to escape the snares of artifice, are most likely to be entangled. He that endeavours to live for the good of others, must always be exposed to the arts of them who live only for themselves, unless he is taught by timely precepts the caution required in common transactions, and shown at a distance the pitfalls of treachery.

To youth, therefore, it should be carefully inculcated, that, to enter the road of life without caution or reserve, in expectation of general fidelity and justice, is to launch on the wide ocean without the instruments of steerage, and to hope that every wind will be prosperous, and that every coast will afford a harbour.

To enumerate the various motives to deceit and injury, would be to count all the desires that prevail among the sons of men; since there is no ambition however petty, no wish however absurd, that by indulgence will not be enabled to overpower the influence of virtue. Many there are, who openly and almost professedly regulate all their conduct by their love of money; who have no other reason for action or forbearance, for compliance or refusal, than that they hope to gain more by one than by the other. These are indeed the meanest and cruelest of human beings, a race with whom, as with some pestiferous animals, the whole creation seems to be at war; but who, however detested or scorned, long continue to add heap to heap, and, when they have reduced one to beggary, are still permitted to fasten on another.

Others, yet less rationally wicked, pass their lives in mischief, because they cannot bear the sight of success, and mark out every man for hatred, whose fame or fortune they believe increasing.

Many, who have not advanced to these degrees of guilt, are yet wholly unqualified for friendship, and unable to maintain any constant or regular course of kindness. Happiness may be destroyed not only by union with the man who is apparently the slave of interest, but with him whom a wild opinion of the dignity of perseverance, in whatever cause, disposes to pursue every injury with unwearied and perpetual resentment; with him whose vanity inclines him to consider every man as a rival in every pretension; with him whose airy negligence puts his friend's affairs or secrets in continual hazard, and who thinks his forgetfulness of others

excused by his inattention to himself; and with him whose inconstancy ranges without any settled rule of choice through varieties of friendship, and who adopts and dismisses favourites by the sudden impulse of caprice.

Thus numerous are the dangers to which the converse of mankind exposes us, and which can be avoided only by prudent distrust. He therefore that, remembering this salutary maxim, learns early to withhold his fondness from fair appearances, will have reason to pay some honours to Bias of Priene, who enabled him to become wise without the cost of experience.

No. 176.] SATURDAY, Nov. 23, 1751.

——Naso suspendere adunco. HOR.

On me you turn the nose.——

THERE are many vexatious accidents and uneasy situations which raise little compassion for the sufferer, and which no man but those whom they immediately distress can regard with seriousness. Petty mischiefs, that have no influence on futurity, nor extend their effects to the rest of life, are always seen with a kind of malicious pleasure. A mistake or embarrassment, which for the present moment fills the face with blushes, and the mind with confusion, will have no other effect upon those who observe it, than that of convulsing them with irresistible laughter. Some circumstances of misery are so powerfully ridiculous, that neither kindness nor duty can withstand them; they bear down love, interest, and reverence, and force the friend, the dependent, or the child, to give way to instantaneous motions of merriment.

Among the principal of comic calamities may be reckoned the pain which an author, not yet hardened into insensibility, feels at the onset of a furious critic, whose age, rank, or fortune, gives him confidence to speak without reserve; who heaps one objection upon another, and obtrudes his remarks, and enforces his corrections, without tenderness or awe.

The author, full of the importance of his work, and anxious for the justification of every syllable, starts and kindles at the slightest attack; the critic, eager to establish his superiority, triumphing in every discovery of failure, and zealous to impress the cogency of his arguments, pursues him from line to line without cessation or remorse. The critic, who hazards little, proceeds with vehemence, impetuosity, and fearlessness; the author, whose quiet and fame, and life and immortality, are involved in the controversy, tries every art of subterfuge and defence; maintains modestly what he resolves never to yield, and yields unwillingly what cannot be maintained. The critic's purpose is to conquer, the author only hopes to escape; the critic therefore knits his brow, and raises his voice, and rejoices whenever he perceives any tokens of pain excited by the pressure of his assertions, or the point of his sarcasms. The author, whose endeavour is at once to mollify and elude his persecutor, composes his features and softens his accent, breaks the force of assault by retreat, and rather steps aside than flies or advances.

As it very seldom happens that the rage of extemporary criticism inflicts fatal or lasting wounds, I know not that the laws of benevolence entitle this distress to much sympathy. The diversion of baiting an author has the sanction of all ages and nations, and it is more lawful than the sport of teasing other animals, because, for the most part, he comes voluntarily to the stake, furnished, as he imagines, by the patron powers of literature, with resistless weapons and impenetrable armour, with the mail of the boar of Eyrmanth, and the paws of the lion of Nemea.

But the works of genius are sometimes produced by other motives than vanity; and he whom necessity or duty enforces to write, is not always so well satisfied with himself, as not to be discouraged by censorious impudence. It may therefore be necessary to consider, how they whom publication lays open to the insults of such as their obscurity secures against reprisals, may extricate themselves from unexpected encounters.

Vida, a man of considerable skill in the politics of literature, directs his pupil wholly to abandon his defence, and, even when he can irrefragably refute all objections, to suffer tamely the exultations of his antagonist.

This rule may perhaps be just, when advice is asked, and severity solicited, because no man tells his opinion so freely as when he imagines it received with implicit veneration; and critics ought never to be consulted, but while errors may yet be rectified or insipidity suppressed. But when the book has once been dismissed into the world, and can be no more retouched, I know not whether a very different conduct should not be prescribed, and whether firmness and spirit may not sometimes be of use to overpower arrogance and repel brutality. Softness, diffidence, and moderation will often be mistaken for imbecility and dejection; they lure cowardice to the attack by the hopes of easy victory, and it will soon be found that he whom every man thinks he can conquer, shall never be at peace.

The animadversions of critics are commonly such as may easily provoke the sedatest writer to some quickness of resentment and asperity of reply. A man who by long consideration has familiarized a subject to his own mind, carefully surveyed the series of his thoughts, and planned

all the parts of his composition into a regular dependance on each other, will often start at the sinistrous interpretations or absurd remarks of haste and ignorance, and wonder by what infatuation they have been led away from the obvious sense, and upon what peculiar principles of judgment they decide against him.

The eye of the intellect, like that of the body, is not equally perfect in all, nor equally adapted in any to all objects; the end of criticism is to supply its defects; rules are the instruments of mental vision, which may indeed assist our faculties when properly used, but produce confusion and obscurity by unskilful application.

Some seem always to read with the microscope of criticism, and employ their whole attention upon minute elegance, or faults scarcely visible to common observation. The dissonance of a syllable, the recurrence of the same sound, the repetition of a particle, the smallest diviation from propriety, the slightest defect in construction or arrangement, swell before their eyes into enormities. As they discern with great exactness, they comprehend but a narrow compass, and know nothing of the justness of the design, the general spirit of the performance, the artifice of connection, or the harmony of the parts: they never conceive how small a proportion that which they are busy in contemplating bears to the whole, or how the petty inaccuracies with which they are offended, are absorbed and lost in general excellence.

Others are furnished by criticism with a telescope. They see with great clearness whatever is too remote to be discovered by the rest of mankind, but are totally blind to all that lies immediately before them. They discover in every passage some secret meaning, some remote allusion, some artful allegory, or some occult imitation, which no other reader ever suspected; but they have no perception of the cogency of arguments, the force of pathetic sentiments, the various colours of diction, or the flowery embellishments of fancy; of all that engages the attention of others they are totally insensible, while they pry into worlds of conjecture, and amuse themselves with phantoms in the clouds.

In criticism, as in every other art, we fail sometimes by our weakness, but more frequently by our fault. We are sometimes bewildered by ignorance, and sometimes by prejudice; but we seldom deviate far from the right, but when we deliver ourselves up to the direction of vanity.

No. 177.] TUESDAY, Nov. 26, 1751.

Turpe est difficiles habere nugas. MART.

Those things which now seem frivolous and slight,
Will be of serious consequence to you,
When they have made you once ridiculous.

ROSCOMMON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

WHEN I was, at the usual time, about to enter upon the profession to which my friends had destined me, being summoned, by the death of my father, into the country, I found myself master of an unexpected sum of money, and of an estate, which, though not large, was, in my opinion, sufficient to support me in a condition far preferable to the fatigue, dependance, and uncertainty of any gainful occupation. I therefore resolved to devote the rest of my life wholly to curiosity, and without any confinement of my excursions, or termination of my views, to wander over the boundless regions of general knowledge.

This scheme of life seemed pregnant with inexhaustible variety, and therefore I could not forbear to congratulate myself upon the wisdom of my choice. I furnished a large room with all conveniences for study; collected books of every kind; quitted every science at the first perception of disgust; returned to it again as soon as my former ardour happened to revive; and having no rival to depress me by comparison, nor any critic to alarm me with objections, I spent day after day in profound tranquillity, with only so much complaisance in my own improvements, as served to excite and animate my application.

Thus I lived for some years with complete acquiescence in my own plan of conduct, rising early to read, and dividing the latter part of the day between economy, exercise and reflection. But in time I began to find my mind contracted and stiffened by solitude. My ease and elegance were sensibly impaired; I was no longer able to accommodate myself with readiness to the accidental current of conversation; my notions grew particular and paradoxical, and my phraseology formal and unfashionable; I spoke, on common occasions, the language of books. My quickness of apprehension, and celerity of reply, had entirely deserted me; when I delivered my opinion, or detailed my knowledge, I was bewildered by an unseasonable interrogatory, disconcerted by any slight opposition, and overwhelmed and lost in dejection, when the smallest advantage was gained against me in dispute. I became decisive and dogmatical, impatient of contradiction, perpetually jealous of my character, insolent to such as acknowledged my superiority, and sullen and malignant to all who refused to receive my dictates.

This I soon discovered to be one of those intellectual diseases which a wise man should make haste to cure. I therefore resolved for a time to shut my books, and learn again the art of conversation; to defecate and clear my mind by brisker motions and stronger impulses; and to unite myself once more to the living generation.

For this purpose I hasted to London, and entreated one of my academical acquaintances to introduce me into some of the little societies of literature which are formed in taverns and coffee-houses. He was pleased with an opportunity of showing me to his friends, and soon obtained me admission among a select company of curious men, who met once a week to exhilarate their studies and compare their acquisitions.

The eldest and most venerable of this society was Hirsutus, who, after the first civilities of my reception, found means to introduce the mention of his favourite studies, by a severe censure of those who want the due regard for their native country. He informed me that he had early withdrawn his attention from foreign trifles, and that, since he began to addict his mind to serious and manly studies, he had very carefully amassed all the English books that were printed in the black character. This search he had pursued so diligently, that he was able to show the deficiences of the best catalogues. He had long since completed his Caxton, had three sheets of Treveris unknown to the antiquaries, and wanted to a perfect Pynson but two volumes, of which one was promised him as a legacy by its present possessor, and the other he was resolved to buy at whatever price, when Quisquilius's library should be sold. Hirsutus had no other reason for the valuing or slighting a book, than that it was printed in the Roman or the Gothic letter, nor any ideas but such as his favourite volumes had supplied; when he was serious, he expatiated on the narratives of Johan de Trevisa, and, when he was merry, regaled us with a quotation from the Shippe of Foles.

While I was listening to this hoary student, Ferratus entered in a hurry, and informed us with the abruptness of ecstacy, that his set of halfpence was now complete; he had just received in a handful of change the piece that he had so long been seeking, and could now defy mankind to outgo his collection of English copper.

Chartophylax then observed how fatally human sagacity was sometimes baffled, and how often the most valuable discoveries are made by chance. He had employed himself and his emissaries seven years at great expense to perfect his series of Gazettes, but had long wanted a single paper, which, when he despaired of obtaining it, was sent him wrapped round a parcel of tobacco.

Cantilenus turned all his thoughts upon old ballads, for he considered them as the genuine records of the national taste. He offered to show me a copy of The Children in the Wood, which he firmly believed to be of the first edition, and by the help of which the text might be freed from several corruptions, if this age of barbarity had any claim to such favours from him.

Many were admitted into this society as inferior members, because they had collected old prints and neglected pamphlets, or possessed some fragment of antiquity, as the seal of an ancient corporation, the charter of a religious house, the genealogy of a family extinct, or a letter written in the reign of Elizabeth.

Every one of these virtuosos looked on all his associates as wretches of depraved taste and narrow notions. Their conversation was, therefore, fretful and waspish, their behaviour brutal, their merriment bluntly sarcastic, and their seriousness gloomy and suspicious. They were totally ignorant of all that passes, or has lately passed, in the world; unable to discuss any question of religious, political, or military knowledge; equally strangers to science and politer learning; and without any wish to improve their minds, or any other pleasure than that of displaying rarities of which they would not suffer others to make the proper use.

Hirsutus graciously informed me, that the number of their society was limited, but that I might sometimes attend as an auditor. I was pleased to find myself in no danger of an honour which I could not have willingly accepted, nor gracefully refused, and left them without any intention of returning; for I soon found that the suppression of those habits with which I was vitiated, required association with men very different from this solemn race.

I am, Sir, &c.

VIVACULUS.

It is natural to feel grief or indignation, when any thing necessary or useful is wantonly wasted, or negligently destroyed; and therefore my correspondent cannot be blamed for looking with uneasiness on the waste of life. Leisure and curiosity might soon make great advances in useful knowledge, were they not diverted by minute emulation and laborious trifles. It may, however, somewhat mollify his anger to reflect, that perhaps none of the assembly which he describes was capable of any nobler employment, and that he who does his best, however little, is always to be distinguished from him who does nothing. Whatever busies the mind without corrupting it, has at least this use, that it rescues the day from idleness, and he that is never idle will not often be vicious.

No. 178.] SATURDAY, Nov. 30, 1751.

Pars sanitatis velle sanari fuit. SENECA.

To yield to remedies is half the cure.

PYTHAGORAS is reported to have required from those whom he instructed in philosophy a probationary silence of five years. Whether this prohibition of speech extended to all the parts of

this time, as seems generally to be supposed, or was to be observed only in the school or in the presence of their master, as is more probable, it was sufficient to discover the pupil's disposition; to try whether he was willing to pay the price of learning; or whether he was one of those whose ardour was rather violent than lasting, and who expected to grow wise on other terms than those of patience and obedience.

Many of the blessings universally desired, are very frequently wanted, because most men, when they should labour, content themselves to complain, and rather linger in a state in which they cannot be at rest, than improve their condition by vigour and resolution.

Providence has fixed the limits of human enjoyment by immoveable boundaries, and has set different gratifications at such a distance from each other, that no art or power can bring them together. This great law it is the business of every rational being to understand, that life may not pass away in an attempt to make contradictions consistent, to combine opposite qualities, and to unite things which the nature of their being must always keep asunder.

Of two objects tempting at a distance on contrary sides, it is impossible to approach one but by receding from the other; by long deliberation and dilatory projects, they may be both lost, but can never be both gained. It is, therefore, necessary to compare them, and, when we have determined the preference, to withdraw our eyes and our thoughts at once from that which reason directs us to reject. This is more necessary, if that which we are forsaking has the power of delighting the senses, or firing the fancy. He that once turns aside to the allurements of unlawful pleasure can have no security that he shall ever regain the paths of virtue.

The philosophic goddess of Boethius, having related the story of Orpheus, who, when he had recovered his wife from the dominions of death, lost her again by looking back upon her in the confines of light, concludes with a very elegant and forcible application. *Whoever you are that endeavour to elevate your minds to the illuminations of Heaven, consider yourselves as represented in this fable: for he that is once so far overcome as to turn back his eyes towards the infernal caverns, loses at the first sight all that influence which attracted him on high.*

> Vos hæc fabula respicit,
> Quicunque in superum diem
> Mentem ducere quæritis.
> Nam qui Tartareum in specus
> Victus lumina flexerit,
> Quidquid præcipuum trahit,
> Perdit, dum videt inferos.

It may be observed, in general, that the future is purchased by the present. It is not possible to secure distant or permanent happiness but by the forbearance of some immediate gratification. This is so evidently true with regard to the whole of our existence, that all the precepts of theology have no other tendency than to enforce a life of faith; a life not regulated by our senses but our belief; a life in which pleasures are to be refused for fear of invisible punishments, and calamities sometimes to be sought, and always endured, in hope of rewards that shall be obtained in another state.

Even if we take into our view only that particle of our duration which is terminated by the grave, it will be found that we cannot enjoy one part of life beyond the common limitations of pleasure, but by anticipating some of the satisfaction which should exhilarate the following years. The heat of youth may spread happiness into wild luxuriance; but the radical vigour requisite to make it perennial is exhausted, and all that can be hoped afterwards is languor and sterility.

The reigning error of mankind is, that we are not content with the conditions on which the goods of life are granted. No man is insensible of the value of knowledge, the advantages of health, or the convenience of plenty, but every day shows us those on whom the conviction is without effect.

Knowledge is praised and desired by multitudes whom her charms could never rouse from the couch of sloth; whom the faintest invitation of pleasure draws away from their studies; to whom any other method of wearing out the day is more eligible than the use of books, and who are more easily engaged by any conversation, than such as may rectify their notions or enlarge their comprehension.

Every man that has felt pain, knows how little all other comforts can gladden him to whom health is denied. Yet who is there does not sometimes hazard it for the enjoyment of an hour? All assemblies of jollity, all places of public entertainment, exhibit examples of strength wasting in riot, and beauty withering in irregularity; nor is it easy to enter a house in which part of the family is not groaning in repentance of past intemperance, and part admitting disease by negligence, or soliciting it by luxury.

There is no pleasure which men of every age and sect have more generally agreed to mention with contempt than the gratifications of the palate; an entertainment so far removed from intellectual happiness, that scarcely the most shameless of the sensual herd have dared to defend it: yet even to this, the lowest of our delights, to this, though neither quick nor lasting, is health with all its activity and sprightliness daily sacrificed; and for this are half the miseries endured which urge impatience to call on death.

The whole world is put in motion by the wish for riches and the dread of poverty. Whe

hen would not imagine that such conduct as vill inevitably destroy what all are thus labour- ng to acquire, must generally be avoided? That ie who spends more than he receives, must in ime become indigent, cannot be doubted; but iow evident soever this consequence may ap- ear, the spendthrift moves in the whirl of leasure with too much rapidity to keep it be- ore his eyes, and, in the intoxication of gayety, rows every day poorer without any such sense f approaching ruin as is sufficient to wake him nto caution.

Many complaints are made of the misery of ife; and indeed it must be confessed that we re subject to calamities by which the good and ad, the diligent and slothful, the vigilant and reedless are equally afflicted. But surely, hough some indulgence may be allowed to roans extorted by inevitable misery, no man as a right to repine at evils which, against varning, against experience, he deliberately and eisurely brings upon his own head; or to con- ider himself as debarred from happiness by uch obstacles as resolution may break or dex- erity may put aside.

Great numbers who quarrel with their con- ition, have wanted not the power but the will o obtain a better state. They have never con- emplated the difference between good and evil ufficiently to quicken aversion, or invigorate esire; they have indulged a drowsy thought- essness, or giddy levity; have committed the alance of choice to the management of caprice; nd when they have long accustomed them- elves to receive all that chance offered them, vithout examination, lament at last that they nd themselves deceived.

No. 179.] TUESDAY, DEC. 3, 1751.

Perpetuo risu pulmonem agitare solebat JUV.

Democritus would feed his spleen, and shake His sides and shoulders till he felt them ache. DRYDEN.

"EVERY man," says Tully, "has two charac- ers; one which he partakes with all mankind, nd by which he is distinguished from brute nimals; another which discriminates him from he rest of his own species, and impresses on him manner and temper peculiar to himself: this articular character, if it be not repugnant to he laws of general humanity, it is always his usiness to cultivate and preserve."

Every hour furnishes some confirmation of ully's precept. It seldom happens, that an ssembly of pleasure is so happily selected, but at some one finds admission with whom the st are deservedly offended; and it will appear, n a close inspection, that scarce any man be- omes eminently disagreeable, but by a depart- ure from his real character, and an attempt at something for which nature or education have left him unqualified.

Ignorance or dulness have indeed no power of affording delight, but they never give disgust except when they assume the dignity of know- ledge, or ape the sprightliness of wit. Awk- wardness and inelegance have none of those at- tractions by which ease and politeness take pos- session of the heart; but ridicule and censure seldom rise against them, unless they appear as- sociated with that confidence which belongs only to long acquaintance with the modes of life, and to consciousness of unfailing propriety of behaviour. Deformity itself is regarded with tenderness rather than aversion, when it does not attempt to deceive the sight by dress and decoration, and to seize upon fictitious claims the prerogatives of beauty.

He that stands to contemplate the crowds that fill the streets of a populous city, will see many passengers whose air and motion it will be difficult to behold without contempt and laughter; but if he examines what are the ap- pearances that thus powerfully excite his risi- bility, he will find among them neither poverty nor disease, nor any involuntary or painful de- fect. The disposition to derision and insult is awakened by the softness of foppery, the swell of insolence, the liveliness of levity, or the so- lemnity of grandeur; by the sprightly trip, the stately stalk, the formal strut, and the lofty mien; by gestures intended to catch the eye, and by looks elaborately formed as evidences of importance.

It has, I think, been sometimes urged in favour of affectation, that it is only a mistake of the means to a good end, and that the inten- tion with which it is practised is always to please. If all attempts to innovate the consti- tutional or habitual character have really pro- ceeded from public spirit and love of others, the world has hitherto been sufficiently ungrateful, since no return but scorn has yet been made to the most difficult of all enterprises, a contest with nature; nor has any pity been shown to the fatigues of labour which never succeeded, and the uneasiness of disguise by which nothing was concealed.

It seems therefore to be determined by the general suffrage of mankind, that he who decks himself in adscititious qualities rather purposes to command applause than impart pleasure; and he is therefore treated as a man, who, by an unreasonable ambition, usurps the place in society to which he has no right. Praise is sel- dom paid with willingness even to incontestible merit, and it can be no wonder that he who calls for it without desert is repulsed with uni- versal indignation.

Affectation naturally counterfeits those excel- lences which are placed at the greatest distance

from possibility of attainment. We are conscious of our own defects, and eagerly endeavour to supply them by artificial excellence; nor would such efforts be wholly without excuse, were they not often excited by ornamental trifles, which he, that thus anxiously struggles for the reputation of possessing them, would not have been known to want, had not his industry quickened observation.

Gelasimus passed the first part of his life in academical privacy and rural retirement, without any other conversation than that of scholars, grave, studious, and abstracted as himself. He cultivated the mathematical sciences with indefatigable diligence, discovered many useful theorems, discussed with great accuracy the resistance of fluids, and, though his priority was not generally acknowledged, was the first who fully explained all the properties of the catenarian curve.

Learning, when it rises to eminence, will be observed in time, whatever mists may happen to surround it. Gelasimus, in his forty-ninth year, was distinguished by those who have the rewards of knowledge in their hands, and called out to display his acquisitions for the honour of his country, and add dignity by his presence to philosophical assemblies. As he did not suspect his unfitness for common affairs, he felt no reluctance to obey the invitation, and what he did not feel he had yet too much honesty to feign. He entered into the world at a larger and more populous college, where his performances would be more public, and his renown further extended; and imagined that he should find his reputation universally prevalent, and the influence of learning every where the same.

His merit introduced him to splendid tables and elegant acquaintance; but he did not find himself always qualified to join in the conversation. He was distressed by civilities which he knew not how to repay, and entangled in many ceremonial perplexities from which his books and diagrams could not extricate him. He was sometimes unluckily engaged in disputes with ladies with whom algebraic axioms had no great weight; and saw many whose favour and esteem he could not but desire, to whom he was very little recommended by his theories of the tides, or his approximations to the quadrature of the circle. Gelasimus did not want penetration to discover, that no charm was more generally irresistible than that of easy facetiousness and flowing hilarity. He saw that diversion was more frequently welcome than improvement; that authority and seriousness were rather feared than loved; and that the grave scholar was a kind of imperious ally, hastily dismissed when his assistance was no longer necessary. He came to a sudden resolution of throwing off those cumbrous ornaments of learning which hindered his reception, and commenced a man of wit and jocularity. Utterly unacquainted with every topic of merriment, ignorant of the modes and follies, the vices and virtues of mankind, and unfurnished with any ideas but such as Pappus and Archimedes had given him, he began to silence all inquiries with a jest instead of a solution; extended his face with a grin which he mistook for a smile; and, in the place of a scientific discourse, retailed in a new language, formed between the college and the tavern, the intelligence of the newspaper.

Laughter he knew, was a token of alacrity and therefore, whatever he said or heard, he was careful not to fail in that great duty of a wit. If he asked or told the hour of the day, if he complained of heat or cold, stirred the fire or filled a glass, removed his chair, or snuffed a candle, he always found some occasion to laugh. The jest was indeed a secret to all but himself, but habitual confidence in his own discernment hindered him from suspecting any weakness or mistake. He wondered that his wit was so little understood, but expected that his audience would comprehend it by degrees, and persisted all his life to show by gross buffoonery, how little the strongest faculties can perform beyond the limits of their own province.

No. 180.] Saturday, Dec. 7, 1751.

Ταῦτ εἰδὼς σοφὸς ἰσθὶ μάτην δ' Ἐπίκουρον ἔασον
Ποῦ τὸ κενὸν ζητεῖν, καὶ τίνες αἱ μονάδες.

AUTOMEDON.

On life, on morals, be thy thoughts employ'd;
Leave to the schools their atoms and their void.

It is somewhere related by Le Clerc, that a wealthy trader of good understanding, having the common ambition to breed his son a scholar, carried him to a university, resolving to use his own judgment in the choice of a tutor. He had been taught, by whatever intelligence, the nearest way to the heart of an academic, and at his arrival entertained all who came about him with such profusion, that the professors were lured by the smell of his table from their books, and flocked round him with all the cringes of awkward complaisance. This eagerness answered the merchant's purpose; he glutted them with delicacies, and softened them with caresses, till he prevailed upon one after another to open his bosom, and make a discovery of his competitions, jealousies, and resentments. Having thus learned each man's character, partly from himself, and partly from his acquaintances, he resolved to find some other education for his son, and went away convinced that a scholastic life has no other tendency than to vitiate the morals and contract the understanding, nor would he afterwards hear with patience the praises of the ancient authors, being

persuaded that scholars of all ages must have been the same, and that Xenophon and Cicero were professors of some former university, and therefore mean and selfish, ignorant and servile, like those whom he had lately visited and forsaken.

Envy, curiosity, and a sense of the imperfection of our present state, incline us to estimate the advantages which are in the possession of others above their real value. Every one must have remarked, what powers and prerogatives the vulgar imagine to be conferred by learning. A man of science is expected to excel the unlettered and unenlightened even on occasions where literature is of no use, and, among weak minds, loses part of his reverence, by discovering no superiority in those parts of life in which all are unavoidably equal; as, when a monarch makes a progress to the remoter provinces, the rustics are said sometimes to wonder that they find him of the same size with themselves.

These demands of prejudice and folly can never be satisfied; and therefore many of the imputations which learning suffers from disappointed ignorance are without reproach. But there are some failures to which men of study are peculiarly exposed. Every condition has its disadvantages. The circle of knowledge is too wide for the most active and diligent intellect, and while science is pursued, other accomplishments are neglected; as a small garrison must leave one part of an extensive fortress naked when an alarm calls them to another.

The learned, however, might generally support their dignity with more success, if they suffered not themselves to be misled by the desire of superfluous attainments. Raphael, in return to Adam's inquiries into the courses of the stars and the revolutions of heaven, counsels him to withdraw his mind from idle speculations, and employ his faculties upon nearer and more interesting objects, the survey of his own life, the subjection of his passions, the knowledge of duties which must daily be performed, and the detection of dangers which must daily be incurred.

This angelic counsel every man of letters should always have before him. He that devotes himself to retired study naturally sinks from mission to forgetfulness of social duties; he must be therefore sometimes awakened and recalled to the general condition of mankind.

I am far from any intention to limit curiosity, or confine the labours of learning to arts of immediate and necessary use. It is only from the various essays of experimental industry, and the vague excursions of minds sent out upon discovery, that any advancement of knowledge can be expected; and though many must be disappointed in their labours, yet they are not to be charged with having spent their time in vain; their example contributed to inspire emulation, and their miscarriages taught others the way to success.

But the distant hope of being one day useful or eminent, ought not to mislead us too far from that study which is equally requisite to the great and mean, to the celebrated and obscure; the art of moderating the desires, of repressing the appetites, and of conciliating or retaining the favour of mankind.

No man can imagine the course of his own life, or the conduct of the world around him, unworthy his attention; yet, among the sons of learning, many seem to have thought of every thing rather than of themselves, and to have observed every thing but what passes before their eyes: many who toil through the intricacy of complicated systems are insuperably embarrassed with the least perplexity in common affairs; many who compare the actions and ascertain the characters of ancient heroes, let their own days glide away without examination, and suffer vicious habits to encroach upon their minds without resistance or detection.

The most frequent reproach of the scholastic race is the want of fortitude, not martial but philosophic. Men bred in shades and silence, taught to immure themselves at sunset, and accustomed to no other weapon than syllogism, may be allowed to feel terror at personal danger, and to be disconcerted by tumult and alarm. But why should he whose life is spent in contemplation, and whose business is only to discover truth, be unable to rectify the fallacies of imagination, or contend successfully against prejudice and passion? To what end has he read and meditated, if he gives up his understanding to false appearances, and suffers himself to be enslaved by fear of evils to which only folly or vanity can expose him, or elated by advantages to which, as they are equally conferred upon the good and bad, no real dignity is annexed?

Such, however, is the state of the world, that the most obsequious of the slaves of pride, the most rapturous of the gazers upon wealth, the most officious of the whisperers of greatness, are collected from seminaries appropriated to the study of wisdom and of virtue, where it was intended that appetite should learn to be content with little, and that hope should aspire only to honours which no human power can give or take away.

The student, when he comes forth into the world, instead of congratulating himself upon his exemption from the errors of those whose opinions have been formed by accident or custom, and who live without any certain principles of conduct, is commonly in haste to mingle with the multitude, and show his sprightliness and ductility, by an expeditious compliance with fashions or vices. The first smile of a man, whose fortune gives him power to reward his dependents, commonly enchants him beyond resistance; the glare of equipage, the sweets of

luxury, the liberality of general promises, the softness of habitual affability, fill his imagination; and he soon ceases to have any other wish than to be well received, or any measure of right and wrong but the opinion of his patron.

A man flattered and obeyed learns to exact grosser adulation and enjoin lower submission. Neither our virtues nor vices are all our own. If there were no cowardice, there would be little insolence; pride cannot rise to any great degree, but by the concurrence of blandishment or the sufferance of tameness. The wretch who would shrink and crouch before one that should dart his eyes upon him with the spirit of natural equality, becomes capricious and tyrannical when he sees himself approached with a downcast look, and hears the soft address of awe and servility. To those who are willing to purchase favour by cringes and compliance, is to be imputed the haughtiness that leaves nothing to be hoped by firmness and integrity.

If, instead of wandering after the meteors of philosophy, which fill the world with splendour for a while, and then sink and are forgotten, the candidates of learning fixed their eyes upon the permanent lustre of moral and religious truth, they would find a more certain direction to happiness. A little plausibility of discourse, and acquaintance with unnecessary speculations, is dearly purchased when it excludes those instructions which fortify the heart with resolution, and exalt the spirit to independance.

No. 181.] TUESDAY, DEC. 10, 1751.

—Neu fluitem dubiæ spe pendulus horæ.—HOR.

Nor let me float in fortune's power,
Dependant on the future hour. FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As I have passed much of my life in disquiet and suspense, and lost many opportunities of advantage by a passion which I have reason to believe prevalent in different degrees over a great part of mankind, I cannot but think myself well qualified to warn those who are yet uncaptivated, of the danger which they incur by placing themselves within its influence.

I served an apprenticeship to a linen-draper, with uncommon reputation for diligence and fidelity; and at the age of three-and-twenty opened a shop for myself with a large stock, and such credit among all the merchants who were acquainted with my master, that I could command whatever was imported curious and valuable. For five years I proceeded with success proportionate to close application and untainted integrity; was a daring bidder at every sale; always paid my notes before they were due; and advanced so fast in commercial reputation, that I was proverbially marked out as the model of young traders, and every one expected that a few years would make me an alderman.

In this course of even prosperity, I was one day persuaded to buy a ticket in the lottery. The sum was inconsiderable, part was to be repaid though fortune might fail to favour me, and therefore my established maxims of frugality did not restrain me from so trifling an experiment. The ticket lay almost forgotten till the time at which every man's fate was to be determined; nor did the affair even then seem of any importance, till I discovered by the public papers that the number next to mine had conferred the great prize.

My heart leaped at the thought of such an approach to sudden riches, which I considered myself, however contrarily to the laws of computation, as having missed by a single chance; and I could not forbear to revolve the consequences which such a bounteous allotment would have produced, if it had happened to me. This dream of felicity, by degrees, took possession of my imagination. The great delight of my solitary hours was to purchase an estate, and form plantations with money which once might have been mine, and I never met my friends but I spoiled all their merriment by perpetual complaints of my ill luck.

At length another lottery was opened, and I had now so heated my imagination with the prospect of a prize, that I should have pressed among the first purchasers, had not my ardour been withheld by deliberation upon the probability of success from one ticket rather than another. I hesitated long between even and odd; considered the square and cubic numbers through the lottery; examined all those to which good luck had been hitherto annexed; and at last fixed upon one, which, by some secret relation to the events of my life, I thought predestined to make me happy. Delay in great affairs is often mischievous; the ticket was sold, and its possessor could not be found.

I returned to my conjectures, and, after many arts of prognostication, fixed upon another chance, but with less confidence. Never did captive, heir, or lover, feel so much vexation from the slow pace of time, as I suffered between the purchase of my ticket and the distribution of the prizes. I solaced my uneasiness as well as I could, by frequent contemplations of approaching happiness; when the sun rose I knew it would set, and congratulated myself at night that I was so much nearer to my wishes. At last the day came, my ticket appeared, and rewarded all my care and sagacity with a despicable prize of fifty pounds.

My friends, who honestly rejoiced upon my success, were very coldly received; I hid myself a fortnight in the country, that my chagri-

might fume away without observation, and then returning to my shop began to listen after another lottery.

With the news of a lottery I was soon gratified; and having now found the vanity of conjecture and inefficacy of computation, I resolved to take the prize by violence, and therefore bought forty tickets—not omitting, however, to divide them between the even and odd numbers, that I might not miss the lucky class. Many conclusions did I form, and many experiments did I try, to determine from which of those tickets I might most reasonably expect riches. At last, being unable to satisfy myself by any modes of reasoning, I wrote the numbers upon dice, and allotted five hours every day to the amusement of throwing them in a garret; and, examining the event by an exact register, found, on the evening before the lottery was drawn, that one of my numbers had been turned up five times more than any of the rest in three hundred and thirty thousand throws.

This experiment was fallacious; the first day presented the hopeful ticket, a detestable blank. The rest came out with different fortune, and in conclusion I lost thirty pounds by this great adventure.

I had now wholly changed the cast of my behaviour and the conduct of my life. The shop was for the most part abandoned to my servants; and if I entered it, my thoughts were so engrossed by my tickets that I scarcely heard or answered a question, but considered every customer as an intruder upon my meditations, whom I was in haste to despatch. I mistook the price of my goods, committed blunders in my bills, forgot to file my receipts, and neglected to regulate my books. My acquaintances by degrees began to fall away; but I perceived the decline of my business with little emotion, because whatever deficiency there might be in my gains I expected the next lottery to supply.

Miscarriage naturally produces diffidence; I began now to seek assistance against ill luck, by an alliance with those that had been more successful. I inquired diligently at what office any prize had been sold, that I might purchase of a more propitious vender; solicited those who had been fortunate in former lotteries, to partake with me in my new tickets; and whenever I met with one that had in any event of his life been eminently prosperous, I invited him to take a larger share. I had, by this rule of conduct, so diffused my interest, that I had a fourth of fifteen tickets, an eighth of forty, and a sixteenth of ninety.

I waited for the decision of my fate with my former palpitations, and looked upon the business of my trade with the usual neglect. The wheel at last was turned, and its revolutions brought me a long succession of sorrows and disappointments. I indeed often partook of a small prize, and the loss of one day was generally balanced by the gain of the next; but my desires yet remained unsatisfied, and when one of my chances had failed, all my expectation was suspended on those which remained yet undetermined. At last a prize of five thousand pounds was proclaimed; I caught fire at the cry, and, inquiring the number, found it to be one of my own tickets, which I had divided among those on whose luck I depended, and of which I had retained only a sixteenth part.

You will easily judge with what detestation of himself, a man thus intent upon gain reflected that he had sold a prize which was once in his possession. It was to no purpose that I represented to my mind the impossibility of recalling the past, or the folly of condemning an act, which only its event, an event which no human intelligence could foresee, proved to be wrong. The prize which, though put in my hands had been suffered to slip from me, filled me with anguish; and, knowing that complaint would only expose me to ridicule, I gave myself up silently to grief, and lost by degrees my appetite and my rest.

My indisposition soon became visible; I was visited by my friends, and among them by Eumathes, a clergyman, whose piety and learning gave him such an ascendant over me, that I could not refuse to open my heart. "There are," said he, "few minds sufficiently firm to be trusted in the hands of chance. Whoever finds himself inclined to anticipate futurity, and exalt possibility to certainty, should avoid every kind of casual adventure, since his grief must be always proportionate to his hope. You have long wasted that time, which, by a proper application, would have certainly, though moderately, increased your fortune, in a laborious and anxious pursuit of a species of gain, which no labour or anxiety, no art or expedient, can secure or promote. You are now fretting away your life in repentance of an act, against which repentance can give no caution, but to avoid the occasion of committing it. Rouse from this lazy dream of fortuitous riches, which, if obtained, you could scarcely have enjoyed, because they could confer no consciousness of desert; return to rational and manly industry, and consider the mere gift of luck as below the care of a wise man.

No. 182.] SATURDAY, DEC. 14, 1751.

——Dives qui fieri vult,
Et cito vult fieri. JUVENAL.

The lust of wealth can never bear delay.

It has been observed in a late paper, that we are unreasonably desirous to separate the goods of life from those evils which Providence has

connected with them, and to catch advantages without paying the price at which they are offered us. Every man wishes to be rich, but very few have the powers necessary to raise a sudden fortune, either by new discoveries, or by superiority of skill, in any necessary employment; and, among lower understandings, many want the firmness and industry requisite to regular gain and gradual acquisitions.

From the hope of enjoying affluence by methods more compendious than those of labour, and more generally practicable than those of genius, proceeds the common inclination to experiment and hazard, and that willingness to snatch all opportunities of growing rich by chance, which, when it has once taken possession of the mind, is seldom driven out either by time or argument, but continues to waste life in perpetual delusion, and generally ends in wretchedness and want.

The folly of untimely exultation and visionary prosperity is by no means peculiar to the purchasers of tickets; there are multitudes whose life is nothing but a continual lottery; who are always within a few months of plenty and happiness, and, how often soever they are mocked with blanks, expect a prize from the next adventure.

Among the most resolute and ardent of the votaries of chance, may be numbered the mortals whose hope is to raise themselves by a wealthy match; who lay out all their industry on the assiduities of courtship, and sleep and wake with no other ideas than of treats, compliments, guardians and rivals.

One of the most indefatigable of this class is my old friend Leviculus, whom I have never known for thirty years without some matrimonial project of advantage. Leviculus was bred under a merchant, and by the graces of his person, the sprightliness of his prattle, and the neatness of his dress, so much enamoured his master's second daughter, a girl of sixteen, that she declared her resolution to have no other husband. Her father, after having chidden her for undutifulness, consented to the match, not much to the satisfaction of Leviculus, who was sufficiently elated with his conquest to think himself entitled to a larger fortune. He was, however, soon rid of his perplexity, for his mistress died before their marriage.

He was now so well satisfied with his own accomplishments, that he determined to commence fortune-hunter; and when his apprenticeship expired, instead of beginning, as was expected, to walk the exchange with a face of importance, or associating himself with those who were most eminent for their knowledge of the stocks, he at once threw off the solemnity of the counting house, equipped himself with a modish wig, listened to wits in coffee-houses, passed his evenings behind the scenes in the theatres, learned the names of the beauties of quality, hummed the last stanzas of fashionable songs, talked with familiarity of high play, boasted of his achievements upon drawers and coachmen, was often brought to his lodgings at midnight in a chair, told with negligence and jocularity of bilking a tailor, and now and then let fly a shrewd jest at a sober citizen.

Thus furnished with irresistible artillery, he turned his batteries upon the female world, and in the first warmth of self-approbation, proposed no less than the possession of riches and beauty united. He therefore paid his civilities to Flavilla, the only daughter of a wealthy shopkeeper, who not being accustomed to amorous blandishments, or respectful addresses, was delighted with the novelty of love, and easily suffered him to conduct her to the play, and to meet her where she visited. Leviculus did not doubt but her father, however offended by a clandestine marriage, would soon be reconciled by the tears of his daughter, and the merit of his son-in-law, and was in haste to conclude the affair. But the lady liked better to be courted than married, and kept him three years in uncertainty and attendance. At last she fell in love with a young ensign at a ball, and, having danced with him all night, married him in the morning.

Leviculus, to avoid the ridicule of his companions, took a journey to a small estate in the country, where, after his usual inquiries concerning the nymphs in the neighbourhood, he found it proper to fall in love with Altilia, a maiden lady, twenty years older than himself, for whose favour fifteen nephews and nieces were in perpetual contention. They hovered round her with such jealous officiousness, as scarcely left a moment vacant for a lover. Leviculus, nevertheless, discovered his passion in a letter, and Altilia could not withstand the pleasure of hearing vows and sighs, and flatteries and protestations. She admitted his visits, enjoyed, for five years, the happiness of keeping all her expectants in perpetual alarms, and amused herself with the various stratagems which were practised to disengage her affections. Sometimes she was advised with great earnestness to travel for her health, and sometimes entreated to keep her brother's house. Many stories were spread to the disadvantage of Leviculus, by which she commonly seemed affected for a time, but took care soon afterwards to express her conviction of their falsehood. But being at last satiated with this ludicrous tyranny, she told her lover, when he pressed for the reward of his services, that she was very sensible of his merit, but was resolved not to impoverish an ancient family.

He then returned to the town, and soon after his arrival became acquainted with Latronia, a lady distinguished by the elegance of her equipage and the regularity of her conduct. Her

wealth was evident in her magnificence, and her prudence in her economy; and therefore Leviculus, who had scarcely confidence to solicit her favour, readily acquitted fortune of her former debts, when he found himself distinguished by her with such marks of preference as a woman of modesty is allowed to give. He now grew bolder, and ventured to breathe out his impatience before her. She heard him without resentment, in time permitted him to hope for happiness, and at last fixed the nuptial day, without any distrustful reserve of pin-money, or sordid stipulations for jointure and settlements.

Leviculus was triumphing on the eve of marriage, when he heard on the stairs the voice of Latronia's maid, whom frequent bribes had secured in his service. She soon burst into his room, and told him that she could not suffer him to be longer deceived; that her mistress was now spending the last payment of her fortune, and was only supported in her expense by the credit of his estate. Leviculus shuddered to see himself so near a precipice, and found that he was indebted for his escape to the resentment of the maid, who, having assisted Latronia to gain the conquest, quarrelled with her at last about the plunder.

Leviculus was now hopeless and disconsolate, till one Sunday he saw a lady in the Mall, whom her dress declared a widow, and whom, by the jolting prance of her gait, and the broad resplendance of her countenance, he guessed to have lately buried some prosperous citizen. He followed her home and found her to be no less than the relict of Prune the grocer, who, having no children, had bequeathed to her all his debts and dues, and his estates real and personal. No formality was necessary in addressing madame Prune, and therefore Leviculus went next morning without an introductor. His declaration was received with a loud laugh; she then collected her countenance, wondered at his impudence, asked if he knew to whom he was talking, then showed him the door, and again laughed to find him confused. Leviculus discovered that this coarseness was nothing more than the coquetry of Cornhill, and next day returned to the attack. He soon grew familiar to her dialect, and in a few weeks heard, without any emotion, hints of gay clothes with empty pockets; concurred in many sage remarks on the regard due to people of property; and agreed with her in detestation of the ladies at the other end of the town, who pinched their bellies to buy fine laces, and then pretended to laugh at the city.

He sometimes presumed to mention marriage; but was always answered with a slap, a hoot, and a flounce. At last he began to press her closer, and thought himself more favourably received; but going one morning, with a resolution to trifle no longer, he found her gone to church with a young journeyman from the neighbouring shop, of whom she had become enamoured at her window.

In these, and a thousand intermediate adventures, has Leviculus spent his time, till he is now grown gray with age, fatigue, and disappointment. He begins at last to find that success is not to be expected; and, being unfit for any employment that might improve his fortune, and unfurnished with any arts that might amuse his leisure, is condemned to wear out a tasteless life in narratives which few will hear, and complaints which none will pity.

No. 183.] TUESDAY DEC. 17, 1751.

Nulla fides regni sociis, omnisque potestas
Impatiens consortis erat. LUCAN.

No faith of partnership dominion owns;
Still discord hovers o'er divided thrones.

THE hostility perpetually exercised between one man and another, is caused by the desire of many for that which only few can possess. Every man would be rich, powerful, and famous; yet fame, power, and riches, are only the names of relative conditions, which imply the obscurity, dependance, and poverty of greater numbers.

This universal and incessant competition produces injury and malice by two motives, interest and envy; the prospect of adding to our possessions what we can take from others, and the hope of alleviating the sense of our disparity by lessening others, though we gain nothing to ourselves.

Of these two malignant and destructive powers, it seems probable, at the first view, that interest has the strongest and most extensive influence. It is easy to conceive that opportunities to seize what has been long wanted, may excite desires almost irresistible; but surely the same eagerness cannot be kindled by an accidental power of destroying that which gives happiness to another. It must be more natural to rob for gain, than to ravage only for mischief.

Yet I am inclined to believe, that the great law of mutual benevolence is oftener violated by envy than by interest; and that most of the misery which the defamation of blameless actions, or the obstruction of honest endeavours, brings upon the world, is inflicted by men that propose no advantage to themselves but the satisfaction of poisoning the banquet which they cannot taste, and blasting the harvest which they have no right to reap.

Interest can diffuse itself but to a narrow compass. The number is never large of those who can hope to fill the posts of degraded power, catch the fragments of shattered fortune, or succeed to

the honours of depreciated beauty. But the empire of envy has no limits, as it requires to its influence very little help from external circumstances. Envy may always be produced by idleness and pride, and in what place will they not be found.

Interest requires some qualities not universally bestowed. The ruin of another will produce no profit to him who has not discernment to mark his advantage, courage to seize, and activity to pursue it; but the cold malignity of envy may be exerted in a torpid and quiescent state, amidst the gloom of stupidity, in the coverts of cowardice. He that falls by the attacks of interest, is torn by hungry tigers; he may discover and resist his enemies. He that perishes in the ambushes of envy, is destroyed by unknown and invisible assailants, and dies like a man suffocated by a poisonous vapour, without knowledge of his danger, or possibility of contest.

Interest is seldom pursued but at some hazard. He that hopes to gain much, has commonly something to lose, and, when he ventures to attack superiority, if he fails to conquer, is irrevocably crushed. But envy may act without expense or danger. To spread suspicion, to invent calumnies, to propagate scandal, requires neither labour nor courage. It is easy for the author of a lie, however malignant, to escape detection, and infamy needs very little industry to assist its circulation.

Envy is almost the only vice which is practicable at all times and in every place: the only passion which can never lie quiet for want of irritation; its effects therefore are every where discoverable, and its attempts always to be dreaded.

It is impossible to mention a name which any advantageous distinction has made eminent, but some latent animosity will burst out. The wealthy trader, however he may abstract himself from public affairs, will never want those who hint, with Shylock, that ships are but boards. The beauty adorned only with the unambitious graces of innocence and modesty, provokes, whenever she appears, a thousand murmurs of detraction. The genius, even when he endeavours only to entertain or instruct, yet suffers persecution from innumerable critics, whose acrimony is excited merely by the pain of seeing others pleased, and of hearing applauses which another enjoys.

The frequency of envy makes it so familiar, that it escapes our notice; nor do we often reflect upon its turpitude or malignity till we happen to feel its influence. When he that has given no provocation to malice, but by attempting to excel, finds himself pursued by multitudes whom he never saw, with all the implacability of personal resentment; when he perceives clamour and malice let loose upon him as a public enemy, and incited by every stratagem of defamation; when he hears the misfortunes of his family, or the follies of his youth, exposed to the world; and every failure of conduct, or defect of nature, aggravated and ridiculed; he then learns to abhor those artifices at which he only laughed before, and discovers how much the happiness of life would be advanced by the eradication of envy from the human heart.

Envy is, indeed, a stubborn weed of the mind, and seldom yields to the culture of philosophy. There are, however, considerations, which, if carefully implanted and diligently propagated, might in time overpower and repress it, since no one can nurse it for the sake of pleasure, as its effects are only shame, anguish, and perturbation.

It is above all other vices inconsistent with the character of a social being, because it sacrifices truth and kindness to very weak temptations. He that plunders a wealthy neighbour gains as much as he takes away, and may improve his own condition in the same proportion as he impairs another's; but he that blasts a flourishing reputation must be content with a small dividend of additional fame, so small as can afford very little consolation to balance the guilt by which it is obtained.

I have hitherto avoided that dangerous and empirical morality, which cures one vice by means of another. But envy is so base and detestable, so vile in its original, and so pernicious in its effects, that the predominance of almost any other quality is to be preferred. It is one of those lawless enemies of society, against which poisoned arrows may honestly be used. Let it therefore be constantly remembered, that whoever envies another confesses his superiority, and let those be reformed by their pride who have lost their virtue.

It is no slight aggravation of the injuries which envy incites, that they are committed against those who have given no intentional provocation; and that the sufferer is often marked out for ruin, not because he has failed in any duty, but because he has dared to do more than was required.

Almost every other crime is practised by the help of some quality which might have produced esteem or love, if it had been well employed: but envy is mere unmixed and genuine evil; it pursues a hateful end by despicable means, and desires not so much its own happiness as another's misery. To avoid depravity like this, it is not necessary that any one should aspire to heroism or sanctity, but only that he should resolve not to quit the rank which nature assigns him, and wish to maintain the dignity of a human being.

No. 184.] Saturday, Dec. 21, 1751.

Permittes ipsis expendere numinibus, quid
Conveniat nobis, rebusque sit utile nostris. JUV.

Intrust thy fortune to the powers above;
Leave them to manage for thee, and to grant
What their unerring wisdom sees thee want.
DRYDEN.

As every scheme of life, so every form of writing, has its advantages and inconveniences, though not mingled in the same proportions. The writer of essays escapes many embarrassments to which a large work would have exposed him; he seldom harasses his reason with long trains of consequences, dims his eyes with the perusal of antiquated volumes, or burdens his memory with great accumulations of preparatory knowledge. A careless glance upon a favourite author, or transient survey of the varities of life, is sufficient to supply the first hint or seminal idea, which, enlarged by the gradual accretion of matter stored in the mind, is, by the warmth of fancy, easily expanded into flowers, and sometimes ripened into fruit.

The most frequent difficulty by which the authors of these petty compositions are distressed, arises from the perpetual demand of novelty and change. The compiler of a system of science lays his invention at rest, and employs only his judgment, the faculty exerted with less fatigue. Even the relator of feigned adventures, when once the principal characters are established, and the great events regularly connected, finds incidents and episodes crowding upon his mind; every change opens new views, and the latter part of the story grows without labour out of the former. But he that attempts to entertain his reader with unconnected pieces, finds the irksomeness of his task rather increased than lessened by every production. The day calls afresh upon him for a new topic, and he is again obliged to choose, without any principle to regulate his choice.

It is indeed true, that there is seldom any necessity of looking far, or inquiring long, for a proper subject. Every diversity of art or nature, every public blessing or calamity, every domestic pain or gratification, every sally of caprice, blunder of absurdity, or stratagem of affection, may supply matter to him whose only rule is to avoid uniformity. But it often happens, that the judgment is distracted with boundless multiplicity, the imagination ranges from one design to another, and the hours pass imperceptibly away, till the composition can be no longer delayed, and necessity enforces the use of those thoughts which then happen to be at hand. The mind, rejoicing at deliverance on any terms from perplexity and suspense, applies herself vigorously to the work before her, collects embellishments and illustrations, and sometimes finishes, with great elegance and happiness, what in a state of ease and leisure she never had begun.

It is not commonly observed, how much, even of actions considered as particularly subject to choice, is to be attributed to accident, or some cause out of our own power, by whatever name it be distinguished. To close tedious deliberations with hasty resolves, and after long consultations with reason to refer the question to caprice, is by no means peculiar to the essayist. Let him that peruses this paper review the series of his life, and inquire how he was placed in his present condition. He will find that, of the good or ill which he has experienced, a great part came unexpected, without any visible gradations of approach; that every event has been influenced by causes acting without his intervention; and that, whenever he pretended to the prerogative of foresight, he was mortified with new conviction of the shortness of his views.

The busy, the ambitious, the inconstant, and the adventurous, may be said to throw themselves by design into the arms of fortune, and voluntarily to quit the power of governing themselves; they engage in a course of life in which little can be ascertained by previous measures; nor is it any wonder that their time is passed between elation and despondency, hope and disappointment.

Some there are who appear to walk the road of life with more circumspection, and make no step till they think themselves secure from the hazard of a precipice; when neither pleasure nor profit can tempt them from the beaten path; who refuse to climb lest they should fall, or to run lest they should stumble; and move slowly forward, without any compliance with those passions by which the heady and vehement are seduced and betrayed.

Yet even the timorous prudence of this judicious class is far from exempting them from the dominion of chance, a subtle and insidious power, who will intrude upon privacy and embarrass caution. No course of life is so prescribed and limited, but that many actions must result from arbitrary election. Every one must form the general plan of his conduct by his own reflections; he must resolve whether he will endeavour at riches or at content; whether he will exercise private or public virtues; whether he will labour for the general benefit of mankind, or contract his beneficence to his family and dependants.

This question has long exercised the schools of philosophy, but remains yet undecided; and what hope is there that a young man, unacquainted with the arguments on either side, should determine his own destiny otherwise than by chance?

When chance has given him a partner of his bed, whom he prefers to all other women, with-

out any proof of superior desert, chance must again direct him in the education of his children; for, who was ever able to convince himself by arguments, that he had chosen for his son that mode of instruction to which his understanding was best adapted, or by which he would most easily be made wise or virtuous?

Whoever shall inquire by what motives he was determined on these important occasions, will find them such as his pride will scarcely suffer him to confess; some sudden ardour of desire, some uncertain glimpse of advantage, some petty competition, some inaccurate conclusion, or some example implicitly reverenced. Such are often the first causes of our resolves; for it is necessary to act, but impossible to know the consequences of action, or to discuss all the reasons which offer themselves on every part to inquisitiveness and solicitude.

Since life itself is uncertain, nothing which has life for its basis can boast much stability. Yet this is but a small part of our perplexity. We set out on a tempestuous sea in quest of some port, where we expect to find rest, but where we are not sure of admission; we are not only in danger of sinking in the way, but of being misled by meteors mistaken for stars, of being driven from our course by the changes of the wind, and of losing it by unskilful steerage; yet it sometimes happens, that cross winds blow us to a safer coast, that meteors draw us aside from whirlpools, and that negligence or error contributes to our escape from mischiefs to which a direct course would have exposed us. Of those that, by precipitate conclusions, involve themselves in calamities without guilt, very few, however they may reproach themselves, can be certain that other measures would have been more successful.

In this state of universal uncertainty, where a thousand dangers hover about us, and none can tell whether the good that he pursues is not evil in disguise, or whether the next step will lead him to safety or destruction, nothing can afford any rational tranquillity, but the conviction that however we amuse ourselves with unideal sounds, nothing in reality is governed by chance, but that the universe is under the perpetual superintendance of him who created it; that our being is in the hands of omnipotent goodness, by whom what appears casual to us, is directed for ends ultimately kind and merciful; and that nothing can finally hurt him who debars not himself from the Divine favour.

No. 185.] TUESDAY, DEC. 24, 1751.

At vindicta bonum vita jucundius ipsa,
Nempe hoc indocti. —
Chrysippus non dicit idem, nec mite Thaletis
Ingenium, dulcique senex vicinus Hymetto,
Qui partem accepta sava inter vincla cicutæ
Accusatori nollet dare.——*Quippe minuti*
Semper et infirmi est animi, exiguique voluptas
Ultio. JUV.

But O! revenge is sweet.
Thus think the crowd; who, eager to engage,
Take quickly fire, and kindle into rage.
Not so mild Thales, nor Chrysippus thought,
Nor that good man, who drank the pois'nous draught
With mind serene, and could not wish to see
His vile accuser drink as deep as he:
Exalted Socrates! divinely brave!
Injured he fell, and dying he forgave;
Too noble for revenge; which still we find
The weakest frailty of a feeble mind. DRYDEN.

No vicious dispositions of the mind more obstinately resist both the counsels of philosophy and the injunctions of religion, than those which are complicated with an opinion of dignity; and which we cannot dismiss without leaving in the hands of opposition some advantage iniquitously obtained, or suffering from our own prejudices some imputation of pusillanimity.

For this reason, scarcely any law of our Redeemer is more openly transgressed, or more industriously evaded, than that by which he commands his followers to forgive injuries, and prohibits, under the sanction of eternal misery, the gratification of the desire which every man feels to return pain upon him that inflicts it. Many who could have conquered their anger, are unable to combat pride, and pursue offences to extremity of vengeance, lest they should be insulted by the triumph of an enemy.

But certainly no precept could better become him, at whose birth *peace* was proclaimed *to the earth*. For, what would so soon destroy all the order of society, and deform life with violence and ravage, as a permission to every one to judge his own cause, and to apportion his own recompence for imagined injuries.

It is difficult for a man of the strictest justice not to favour himself too much, in the calmest moments of solitary meditation. Every one wishes for the distinctions for which thousands are wishing at the same time, in their own opinion, with better claims. He that, when his reason operates in its full force, can thus, by the mere prevalence of self-love, prefer himself to his fellow-beings, is very unlikely to judge equitably when his passions are agitated by a sense of wrong, and his attention wholly engrossed by pain, interest, or danger. Whoever arrogates to himself the right of vengeance, shows how little he is qualified to decide his own claims, since he certainly demands what he would think unfit to be granted to another.

Nothing is more apparent, than that, however injured or however provoked, some must at last be contented to forgive. For, it can never be hoped that he who first commits an injury will contentedly acquiesce in the penalty re-

quired: the same haughtiness of contempt and vehemence of desire, that prompt the act of injustice, will more strongly incite its justification; and resentment can never so exactly balance the punishment with the fault, but there will remain an overplus of vengeance, which even he who condemns his first action will think himself entitled to retaliate. What then can ensue but a continual exacerbation of hatred, an unextinguishable feud, an incessant reciprocation of mischief, a mutual vigilance to entrap, and eagerness to destroy?

Since then the imaginary right of vengeance must be at last remitted, because it is impossible to live in perpetual hostility, and equally impossible that of two enemies, either should first think himself obliged by justice to submission, it is surely eligible to forgive early. Every passion is more easily subdued before it has been long accustomed to possession of the heart; every idea is obliterated with less difficulty, as it has been more slightly impressed, and less frequently renewed. He who has often brooded over his wrongs, pleased himself with schemes of malignity, and glutted his pride with the fancied supplications of humbled enmity, will not easily open his bosom to amity and reconciliation, or indulge the gentle sentiments of benevolence and peace.

It is easiest to forgive while there is yet little to be forgiven. A single injury may be soon dismissed from the memory; but a long succession of ill offices by degrees associates itself with every idea; a long contest involves so many circumstances, that every place and action will recal it to the mind; and fresh remembrance of vexation must still enkindle rage, and irritate revenge.

A wise man will make haste to forgive, because he knows the true value of time, and will not suffer it to pass away in unnecessary pain. He that willingly suffers the corrosions of inveterate hatred, and gives up his days and nights to the gloom of malice and perturbations of stratagem, cannot surely be said to consult his ease. Resentment is a union of sorrow with malignity, a combination of a passion which all endeavour to avoid, with a passion which all concur to detest. The man who retires to meditate mischief, and to exasperate his own rage; whose thoughts are employed only on means of distress and contrivances of ruin; whose mind never pauses from the remembrance of his own sufferings, but to indulge some hope of enjoying the calamities of another, may justly be numbered among the most miserable of human beings, among those who are guilty without reward, who have neither the gladness of prosperity, nor the calm of innocence.

Whoever considers the weakness both of himself and others, will not long want persuasives to forgiveness. We know not to what degree of malignity any injury is to be imputed; or how much its guilt, if we were to inspect the mind of him that committed it, would be extenuated by mistake, precipitance, or negligence: we cannot be certain how much more we feel than was intended to be inflicted, or how much we increase the mischief to ourselves by voluntary aggravations. We may charge design the effects of accident; we may think the blow violent, only because we have made ourselves delicate and tender; we are on every side in danger of error and of guilt; which we are certain to avoid only by speedy forgiveness.

From this pacific and harmless temper, thus propitious to others and ourselves, to domestic tranquillity and to social happiness, no man is withheld but by pride, by the fear of being insulted by his adversary, or despised by the world.

It may be laid down as an unfailing and universal axiom, that "all pride is abject and mean." It is always an ignorant, lazy, or cowardly acquiescence in a false appearance of excellence, and proceeds not from consciousness of our attainments, but insensibility of our wants.

Nothing can be great which is not right. Nothing which reason condemns can be suitable to the dignity of the human mind. To be driven by external motives from the path which our own heart approves; to give way to any thing but conviction; to suffer the opinion of others to rule our choice, or overpower our resolves; is to submit tamely to the lowest and most ignominious slavery, and to resign the right of directing our own lives.

The utmost excellence at which humanity can arrive, is a constant and determinate pursuit of virtue, without regard to present dangers or advantage; a continual reference of every action to the Divine will; an habitual appeal to everlasting justice; and an unvaried elevation of the intellectual eye to the reward which perseverance only can obtain. But that pride which many, who presume to boast of generous sentiments, allow to regulate their measures, has nothing nobler in view than the approbation of men; of beings whose superiority we are under no obligation to acknowledge, and who, when we have courted them with the utmost assiduity, can confer no valuable or permanent reward; of beings who ignorantly judge of what they do not understand, or partially determine what they never have examined; and whose sentence is therefore of no weight till it has received the ratification of our own conscience.

He that can descend to bribe suffrages like these, at the price of his innocence; he that can suffer the delight of such acclamations to withhold his attention from the commands of the universal Sovereign, has little reason to congratulate himself upon the greatness of his

mind: whenever he awakes to seriousness and reflection, he must become despicable in his own eyes, and shrink with shame from the remembrance of his cowardice and folly.

Of him that hopes to be forgiven, it is indispensably required that he forgive. It is therefore superfluous to urge any other motive. On this great duty eternity is suspended: and to him that refuses to practise it, the throne of mercy is inaccessible, and the Saviour of the world has been born in vain.

No. 186.] SATURDAY, DEC. 28, 1751.

Pone me, pigris ubi nulla campis
Arbor æstiva recreatur aura——
Dulce ridentem Lalagen amabo,
Dulce loquentem. HOR.

Place me where never summer breeze
Unbinds the glebe, or warms the trees;
Where ever-lowering clouds appear,
And angry Jove deforms th' inclement year;
Love and the nymph shall charm my toils,
The nymph, who sweetly speaks and sweetly smiles.
FRANCIS.

Of the happiness and misery of our present state, part arises from our sensations, and part from our opinions; part is distributed by nature, and part is in a great measure apportioned by ourselves. Positive pleasure we cannot always obtain, and positive pain we often cannot remove. No man can give to his own plantations the fragrance of the Indian groves; nor will any precepts of philosophy enable him to withdraw his attention from wounds or diseases. But the negative infelicity which proceeds, not from the pressure of sufferings, but the absence of enjoyments, will always yield to the remedies of reason.

One of the great arts of escaping superfluous uneasiness, is to free our minds from the habit of comparing our condition with that of others on whom the blessings of life are more bountifully bestowed, or with imaginary states of delight and security, perhaps unattainable by mortals. Few are placed in a situation so gloomy and distressful, as not to see every day beings yet more forlorn and miserable, from whom they may learn to rejoice in their own lot.

No inconvenience is less superable by art or diligence than the inclemency of climates, and therefore none affords more proper exercise for this philosophical abstraction. A native of England, pinched with the frosts of December, may lessen his affection for his own country by suffering his imagination to wander in the vales of Asia, and sport among woods that are always green, and streams that always murmur; but if he turns his thoughts towards the polar regions, and considers the nations to whom a great portion of the year is darkness, and who are condemned to pass weeks and months amidst mountains of snow, he will soon recover his tranquillity, and, while he stirs his fire, or throws his cloak about him, reflect how much he owes to Providence, that he is not placed in Greenland or Siberia.

The barrenness of the earth and the severity of the skies, in these dreary countries, are such as might be expected to confine the mind wholly to the contemplation of necessity and distress, so that the care of escaping death from cold and hunger should leave no room for those passions which, in lands of plenty, influence conduct or diversify characters; the summer should be spent only in providing for the winter, and the winter in longing for the summer.

Yet learned curiosity is known to have found its way into these abodes of poverty and gloom: Lapland and Iceland have their historians, their critics, and their poets; and love, that extends his dominion wherever humanity can be found, perhaps exerts the same power in the Greenlander's hut as in the palaces of eastern monarchs.

In one of the large caves to which the families of Greenland retire together, to pass the cold months, and which may be termed their villages or cities, a youth and maid, who came from different parts of the country, were so much distinguished for their beauty, that they were called by the rest of the inhabitants Anningait and Ajut, from a supposed resemblance to their ancestors of the same names, who had been transformed of old into the sun and moon.

Anningait for some time heard the praises of Ajut with little emotion, but at last, by frequent interviews, became sensible of her charms, and first made a discovery of his affection, by inviting her with her parents to a feast, where he placed before Ajut the tail of a whale. Ajut seemed not much delighted by this gallantry; yet, however, from that time, was observed rarely to appear but in a vest made of the skin of a white deer; she used frequently to renew the black dye upon her hands and forehead, to adorn her sleeves with coral and shells, and to braid her hair with great exactness.

The elegance of her dress, and the judicious disposition of her ornaments, had such an effect upon Anningait, that he could no longer be restrained from a declaration of his love. He therefore composed a poem in her praise, in which, among other heroic and tender sentiments, he protested that "she was beautiful as the vernal willow, and fragrant as thyme upon the mountains; that her fingers were white as the teeth of the morse, and her smile grateful as the dissolution of the ice; that he would pursue her, though she should pass the snows of the midland cliffs, or seek shelter in the caves of the eastern cannibals; that he would tear her from the embraces of the genius of the rocks, snatch

ıer from the paws of Amarock, and rescue her rom the ravine of Hafgufa." He concluded vith a wish, that "whoever shall attempt to ıinder his union with Ajut might be buried vithout his bow, and that, in the land of souls, ıis scull might serve for no other use than to atch the droppings of the starry lamps."

This ode being universally applauded, it was xpected that Ajut would soon yield to such fer- our and accomplishments: but Ajut, with the ıatural haughtiness of beauty, expected all the orms of courtship: and before she would con- ess herself conquered, the sun returned, the ice roke, and the season of labour called all to their ımployments.

Anningait and Ajut for a time always went ut in the same boat, and divided whatever was aught. Anningait, in the sight of his mistress, ost no opportunity of signalizing his courage; e attacked the sea-horses on the ice, pursued he seals into the water, and leaped upon the ack of the whale while he was yet struggling vith the remains of life. Nor was his diligence ess to accumulate all that could be necessary to ıake winter comfortable; he dried the roe of ishes and the flesh of seals; he entrapped deer nd foxes, and dressed their skins to adorn his ride; he feasted her with eggs from the rocks, nd strewed her tent with flowers.

It happened that a tempest drove the fish to a istant part of the coast before Anningait had ompleted his store; he therefore entreated Ajut, that she would at last grant him her hand, nd accompany him to that part of the country vhither he was now summoned by necessity. Ajut thought him not yet entitled to such con- escension, but proposed, as a trial of his con- tancy, that he should return at the end of sum- ner to the cavern where their acquaintance ommenced, and there expect the reward of his ssiduities. "O virgin, beautiful as the sun hining on the water, consider," said Anningait, what thou hast required. How easily may ıy return be precluded by a sudden frost or un- xpected fogs! Then must the night be passed vithout my Ajut. We live not, my fair, in ıose fabled countries which lying strangers so vantonly describe; where the whole year is di- ided into short days and nights; where the ıme habitation serves for summer and winter; vhere they raise houses in rows above the round, dwell together from year to year, with ocks of tame animals grazing in the fields about ıem; can travel at any time from one place to ıother, through ways enclosed with trees, or ver walls raised upon the inland waters; and irect their course through wide countries by the ght of green hills or scattered buildings. Even ı summer, we have no means of crossing the ıountains, whose snows are never dissolved; or can remove to any distant residence, but in ur boats coasting the bays. Consider, Ajut, a few summer-days, and a few winter-nights, and the life of man is at an end. Night is the time of ease and festivity, of revels and gayety; but what will be the flaming lamp, the delicious seal, or the soft oil, without the smile of Ajut?"

The eloquence of Anningait was vain; the maid continued inexorable, and they parted with ardent promises to meet again before the night of winter.

No. 187.] TUESDAY, DEC. 31, 1751.

Non illum nostri possunt mutare labores,
Nec si frigoribus mediis Hebrumque bibamus,
Sithoniasque nives hiemis subeamus aquosæ——
Omnia vincit amor. VIRGIL.

Love alters not for us his hard decrees,
Not though beneath the Thracian clime we freeze,
Or the mild bliss of temperate skies forego,
And in mid winter tread Sithonian snow:——
Love conquers all.—— DRYDEN.

ANNINGAIT, however discomposed by the dila- tory coyness of Ajut, was yet resolved to omit no tokens of amorous respect; and therefore pre- sented her at his departure with the skins of seven white fawns, of five swans, and eleven seals, with three marble lamps, ten vessels of seal oil, and a large kettle of brass, which he had purchased from a ship, at the price of half a whale and two horns of sea-unicorns.

Ajut was so much affected by the fondness of her lover, or so much overpowered by his mag- nificence, that she followed him to the sea-side; and, when she saw him enter the boat, wished aloud that he might return with plenty of skins and oil; that neither the mermaids might snatch him into the deeps, nor the spirits of the rocks confine him in their caverns.

She stood a while to gaze upon the departing vessel, and then returning to her hut, silent and dejected, laid aside, from that hour, her white deer-skin, suffered her hair to spread unbraided on her shoulders, and forbore to mix in the dances of the maidens. She endeavoured to di- vert her thoughts by continual application to feminine employments, gathered moss for the winter lamps, and dried grass to line the boots of Anningait. Of the skins which he had bestowed upon her, she made a fishing-coat, a small boat, and tent, all of exquisite manufacture; and, while she was thus busied, solaced her labours with a song, in which she prayed, "that her lover might have hands stronger than the paws of the bear, and feet swifter than the feet of the rein-deer; that his dart might never err, and that his boat might never leak; that he might never stumble on the ice, nor faint in the wa- ter; that the seal might rush on his harpoon, and the wounded whale might dash the waves in vain."

The large boats in which the Greenlanders transport their families, are always rowed by women; for a man will not debase himself by work which requires neither skill nor courage. Anningait was therefore exposed by idleness to the ravages of passion. He went thrice to the stern of the boat, with an intent to leap into the water, and swim back to his mistress; but recollecting the misery which they must endure in the winter, without oil for the lamp or skins for the bed, he resolved to employ the weeks of absence in provision for a night of plenty and felicity. He then composed his emotions as he could, and expressed in wild numbers and uncouth images his hopes, his sorrows, and his fears. "O life!" says he, "frail and uncertain! where shall wretched man find thy resemblance but in ice floating on the ocean? It towers on high, it sparkles from afar, while the storms drive and the waters beat it, the sun melts it above, and the rocks shatter it below. What art thou, deceitful pleasure, but a sudden blaze streaming from the north, which plays a moment on the eye, mocks the traveller with the hopes of light, and then vanishes for ever! What, love, art thou, but a whirlpool, which we approach without knowledge of our danger, drawn on by imperceptible degrees, till we have lost all power of resistance and escape! Till I fixed my eyes on the graces of Ajut, while I had not yet called her to the banquet, I was careless as the sleeping morse, I was merry as the singers in the stars. Why, Ajut, did I gaze upon thy graces? Why, my fair, did I call thee to the banquet? Yet, be faithful, my love, remember Anningait, and meet my return with the smile of virginity. I will chase the deer, I will subdue the whale, resistless as the frost of darkness, and unwearied as the summer sun. In a few weeks I shall return prosperous and wealthy; then shall the roefish and the porpoise feast thy kindred; the fox and the hare shall cover thy couch; the tough hide of the seal shall shelter thee from cold; and the fat of the whale illuminate thy dwelling."

Anningait having with these sentiments consoled his grief, and animated his industry, found that they had now coasted the headland, and saw the whales spouting at a distance. He therefore placed himself in his fishing-boat, called his associates to their several employments, plied his oar and harpoon with incredible courage and dexterity; and, by dividing his time between the chase and fishery, suspended the miseries of absence and suspicion.

Ajut, in the mean time, notwithstanding her neglected dress, happened, as she was drying some skins in the sun, to catch the eye of Norngsuk, on his return from hunting. Norngsuk was of birth truly illustrious. His mother had died in childbirth, and his father, the most expert fisher of Greenland, had perished by too close pursuit of the whale. His dignity was equalled by his riches; he was master of four men's and two women's boats, had ninety tubs of oil in his winter habitation, and five-and-twenty seals buried in the snow against the season of darkness. When he saw the beauty of Ajut, he immediately threw over her the skin of a deer that he had taken, and soon after presented her with a branch of coral. Ajut refused his gifts, and determined to admit no lover in the place of Anningait.

Norngsuk, thus rejected, had recourse to stratagem. He knew that Ajut would consult an angekkok, or diviner, concerning the fate of her lover, and the felicity of her future life. He therefore applied himself to the most celebrated angekkok of that part of the country, and by a present of two seals and a marble kettle, obtained a promise that, when Ajut should consult him, he would declare that her lover was in the land of souls. Ajut, in a short time, brought him a coat made by herself, and inquired what events were to befall her; with assurances of a much larger reward at the return of Anningait, if the prediction should flatter her desires. The angekkok knew the way to riches, and foretold that Anningait, having already caught two whales, would soon return home with a large boat laden with provisions.

This prognostication she was ordered to keep secret; and Norngsuk, depending upon his artifice, renewed his addresses with greater confidence; but, finding his suit still unsuccessful, applied himself to her parents with gifts and promises. The wealth of Greenland is too powerful for the virtue of a Greenlander; they forgot the merit and the presents of Anningait, and decreed Ajut to the embraces of Norngsuk. She entreated; she remonstrated; she wept, and raved; but, finding riches irresistible, fled away into the uplands, and lived in a cave upon such berries as she could gather, and the birds or hares which she had the fortune to ensnare, taking care, at an hour when she was no likely to be found, to view the sea every day, that her lover might not miss her at his return.

At last she saw the great boat in which Anningait had departed, steering slow and heavy-laden along the coast. She ran with all the impatience of affection to catch her lover in her arms, and relate her constancy and sufferings. When the company reached the land, they informed her, that Anningait, after the fishery was ended, being unable to support the slow passage of the vessel of carriage, had set out before them in his fishing-boat, and they expected at their arrival to have found him on shore.

Ajut, distracted at this intelligence, was about to fly into the hills, without knowing why, though she was now in the hands of her parents, who forced her back to their own hut, and endeavoured to comfort her: but when at last they

retired to rest, Ajut went down to the beach; where, finding a fishing-boat, she entered it without hesitation, and telling those who wondered at her rashness, that she was going in search of Anningait, rowed away with great swiftness, and was seen no more.

The fate of these lovers gave occasion to various fictions and conjectures. Some are of opinion that they were changed into stars; others imagine that Anningait was seized in his passage by the genius of the rocks; and that Ajut was transformed into a mermaid, and still continues to seek her lover in the deserts of the sea. But the general persuasion is, that they are both in that part of the land of souls where the sun never sets, where oil is always fresh, and provisions always warm. The virgins sometimes throw a thimble and a needle into the bay from which the hapless maid departed; and when a Greenlander would praise any couple for virtuous affection, he declares that they love like Anningait and Ajut.

No. 188.] SATURDAY, JAN. 4, 1752.

——*Si te colo, Sexte, non amabo.* MART.

The more I honour thee, the less I love.

NONE of the desires dictated by vanity is more general, or less blameable, than that of being distinguished for the arts of conversation. Other accomplishments may be possessed without opportunity of exerting them, or wanted without danger that the defect can often be remarked; but as no man can live, otherwise than in a hermitage, without hourly pleasure or vexation, from the fondness or neglect of those about him, the faculty of giving pleasure is of continual use. Few are more frequently envied than those who have the power of forcing attention wherever they come, whose entrance is considered as a promise of felicity, and whose departure is lamented like the recess of the sun from northern climates, as a privation of all that enlivens fancy, or inspirits gayety.

It is apparent, that to excellence in this valuable art, some peculiar qualifications are necessary; for every one's experience will inform him, that the pleasure which men are able to give in conversation, holds no stated proportion to their knowledge or their virtue. Many find their way to the tables and the parties of those who never consider them as of the least importance in any other place; we have all, at one time or other, been content to love those whom we could not esteem, and been persuaded to try the dangerous experiment of admitting him for a companion, whom we knew to be too ignorant for a counsellor and too treacherous for a friend.

I question whether some abatement of character is not necessary to general acceptance. Few spend their time with much satisfaction under the eye of incontestable superiority; and, therefore, among those whose presence is courted at assemblies of jollity, there are seldom found men eminently distinguished for powers or acquisitions. The wit, whose vivacity condemns slower tongues to silence; the scholar, whose knowledge allows no man to fancy that he instructs him; the critic, who suffers no fallacy to pass undetected; and the reasoner, who condemns the idle to thought and the negligent to attention, are generally praised and feared, reverenced and avoided.

He that would please must rarely aim at such excellence as depresses his hearers in their own opinion, or debars them from the hope of contributing reciprocally to the entertainment of the company. Merriment, extorted by sallies of imagination, sprightliness of remark, or quickness of reply, is too often what the Latins call the Sardinian laughter, a distortion of the face without gladness of heart.

For this reason, no style of conversation is more extensively acceptable than the narrative. He who has stored his memory with slight anecdotes, private incidents, and personal peculiarities, seldom fails to find his audience favourable. Almost every man listens with eagerness to contemporary history; for almost every man has some real or imaginary connection with a celebrated character; some desire to advance or oppose a rising name. Vanity often co-operates with curiosity. He that is a hearer in one place, qualifies himself to become a speaker in another; for though he cannot comprehend a series of argument, or transport the volatile spirit of wit without evaporation, he yet thinks himself able to treasure up the various incidents of a story, and pleases his hopes with the information which he shall give to some inferior society.

Narratives are for the most part heard without envy, because they are not supposed to imply any intellectual qualities above the common rate. To be acquainted with facts not yet echoed by plebeian mouths, may happen to one man as well as to another; and to relate them when they are known, has in appearance so little difficulty, that every one concludes himself equal to the task.

But it is not easy, and in some situations of life not possible, to accumulate such a stock of materials as may support the expense of continual narration; and it frequently happens, that they who attempt this method of ingratiating themselves, please only at the first interview: and, for want of new supplies of intelligence, wear out their stories by continual repetition.

There would be, therefore, little hope of obtaining the praise of a good companion, were it

not to be gained by more compendious methods; but such is the kindness of mankind to all, except those who aspire to real merit and rational dignity, that every understanding may find some way to excite benevolence; and whoever is not envied may learn the art of procuring love. We are willing to be pleased, but are not willing to admire: we favour the mirth or officiousness that solicits our regard, but oppose the worth or spirit that enforces it.

The first place among those that please, because they desire only to please, is due to the *merry fellow*, whose laugh is loud, and whose voice is strong; who is ready to echo every jest with obstreperous approbation, and countenance every frolic with vociferations of applause. It is not necessary to a merry fellow to have in himself any fund of jocularity, or force of conception: it is sufficient that he always appears in the highest exaltation of gladness; for the greater part of mankind are gay or serious by infection, and follow without resistance the attraction of example.

Next to the merry fellow is the *good-natured man*, a being generally without benevolence, or any other virtue than such as indolence and insensibility confer. The characteristic of a good-natured man is to bear a joke; to sit unmoved and unaffected amidst noise and turbulence, profaneness and obscenity; to hear every tale without contradiction; to endure insult without reply; and to follow the stream of folly, whatever course it shall happen to take. The good-natured man is commonly the darling of the petty wits, with whom they exercise themselves in the rudiments of raillery; for he never takes advantage of failings, nor disconcerts a puny satirist with unexpected sarcasms; but, while the glass continues to circulate, contentedly bears the expense of uninterrupted laughter, and retires rejoicing at his own importance.

The *modest man* is a companion of a yet lower rank, whose only power of giving pleasure is not to interrupt it. The modest man satisfies himself with peaceful silence, which all his companions are candid enough to consider as proceeding not from inability to speak, but willingness to hear.

Many, without being able to attain any general character of excellence, have some single art of entertainment which serves them as a passport through the world. One I have known for fifteen years the darling of a weekly club, because every night, precisely at eleven, he begins his favourite song, and during the vocal performance, by corresponding motions of his hand, chalks out a giant upon the wall. Another has endeared himself to a long succession of acquaintances by sitting among them with his wig reversed; another, by contriving to smut the nose of any stranger, who was to be initiated in the club; another, by purring like a cat, and then pretending to be frighted; and another, by yelping like a hound, and calling to the drawers to drive out the dog.

Such are the arts by which cheerfulness is promoted, and sometimes friendship established; arts, which those who despise them should not rigorously blame, except when they are practised at the expense of innocence; for it is always necessary to be loved, but not always necessary to be reverenced.

No. 189.] TUESDAY, JAN. 7, 1752.

Quod tam grande sophos clamat tibi turba togata,
Non tu, Pomponi, cœna diserta tua est. MART.

Resounding plaudits through the crowd have rung;
Thy treat is eloquent, and not thy tongue.
F. LEWIS.

THE world scarcely affords opportunities of making any observation more frequently than on false claims to commendation. Almost every man wastes part of his life in attempts to display qualities which he does not possess, and to gain applause which he cannot keep; so that scarcely can two persons casually meet, but one is offended or diverted by the ostentation of the other.

Of these pretenders it is fit to distinguish those who endeavour to deceive from them who are deceived; those who by designed impostures promote their interest, or gratify their pride, from them who mean only to force into regard their latent excellences and neglected virtues; who believe themselves qualified to instruct or please, and therefore invite the notice of mankind.

The artful and fraudulent usurpers of distinction deserve greater severities than ridicule and contempt, since they are seldom content with empty praise, but are instigated by passions more pernicious than vanity. They consider the reputation which they endeavour to establish, as necessary to the accomplishment of some subsequent design, and value praise only as it may conduce to the success of avarice or ambition.

The commercial world is very frequently put into confusion by the bankruptcy of merchants, that assumed the splendour of wealth only to obtain the privilege of trading with the stock of other men, and of contracting debts which nothing but lucky casualties could enable them to pay; till, after having supported their appearance awhile by a tumultuary magnificence of boundless traffic, they sink at once, and drag down into poverty those whom their equipages had induced to trust them.

Among wretches that place their happiness in the favour of the great, of beings whom only high titles or large estates set above themselves, nothing is more common than to boast of confi-

ence which they do not enjoy; to sell promises which they know their interest unable to perform; and to reimburse the tribute which they pay to an imperious master, from the contributions of meaner dependants, whom they can amuse with tales of their influence, and hopes of their solicitation.

Even among some, too thoughtless and volatile for avarice or ambition, may be found a species of falsehood more detestable than the levee or exchange can show. There are men that boast of debaucheries, of which they never had address to be guilty; ruin, by lewd tales, the characters of women to whom they are scarcely known, or by whom they have been rejected; destroy, in a drunken frolic, the happiness of families, blast the bloom of beauty, and intercept the reward of virtue.

Other artifices of falsehood, though utterly unworthy of an ingenious mind, are not yet to be ranked with flagitious enormities, nor is it necessary to incite sanguinary justice against them, since they may be adequately punished by detection and laughter. The traveller who describes cities which he has never seen; the squire who, at his return from London, tells of his intimacy with nobles to whom he has only bowed in the park or coffee-house; the author who entertains his admirers with stories of the assistance which he gives to wits of a higher rank; the city dame who talks of her visits at great houses, where she happens to know the cook-maid, are surely such harmless animals as truth herself may be content to despise without desiring to hurt them.

But of the multitudes who struggle in vain for distinction, and display their own merits only to feel more acutely the sting of neglect, a great part are wholly innocent of deceit, and are betrayed by infatuation and credulity, to that scorn with which the universal love of praise incites us all to drive feeble competitors out of our way.

Few men survey themselves with so much severity as not to admit prejudices in their own favour, which an artful flatterer may gradually strengthen, till wishes for a particular qualification are improved to hopes of attainment, and hopes of attainment to belief of possession. Such flatterers every one will find, who has power to reward their assiduities. Wherever there is wealth there will be dependance and expectation, and wherever there is dependance there will be an emulation of servility.

Many of the follies which provoke general censure, are the effects of such vanity, as however it might have wantoned in the imagination, would scarcely have dared the public eye, had it not been animated and emboldened by flattery. Whatever difficulty there may be in the knowledge of ourselves, scarcely any one fails to suspect his own imperfections, till he is elevated by others to confidence. We are almost all naturally modest and timorous; but fear and shame are uneasy sensations, and whosoever helps to remove them is received with kindness.

Turpicula was the heiress of a large estate, and, having lost her mother in her infancy, was committed to a governess, whom misfortunes had reduced to suppleness and humility. The fondness of Turpicula's father would not suffer him to trust her at a public school; but he hired domestic teachers, and bestowed on her all the accomplishments that wealth could purchase. But how many things are necessary to happiness which money cannot obtain! Thus secluded from all with whom she might converse on terms of equality, she heard none of those intimations of her defects, which envy, petulance, or anger, produce among children, where they are not afraid of telling what they think.

Turpicula saw nothing but obsequiousness, and heard nothing but commendations. None are so little acquainted with the heart, as not to know that woman's first wish is to be handsome, and that consequently the readiest method of obtaining her kindness is to praise her beauty. Turpicula had a distorted shape and a dark complexion; yet when the impudence of adulation had ventured to tell her of the commanding dignity of her motion, and the soft enchantment of her smile, she was easily convinced that she was the delight or torment of every eye, and that all who gazed upon her felt the fire of envy or love. She therefore neglected the culture of an understanding which might have supplied the defects of her form, and applied all her care to the decoration of her person; for she considered that more could judge of beauty than of wit, and was, like the rest of human beings, in haste to be admired. The desire of conquest naturally led her to the lists in which beauty signalizes her power. She glittered at court, fluttered in the park, and talked loud in the front box; but, after a thousand experiments of her charms, was at last convinced that she had been flattered, and that her glass was honester than her maid.

No. 190.] SATURDAY, JAN. 11, 1752.

Ploravere suis, non respondere favorem
Quæsitum meritis. [illegible]

Henry and Alfred ——
Closed their long glories with a sigh, to find
Th' unwilling gratitude of base mankind. POPE.

AMONG the emirs and visiers, the sons of valour and of wisdom, that stand at the corners of the Indian throne to assist the counsels or conduct the wars of the posterity of Timur, the

first place was long held by Morad the son of Hanuth. Morad, having signalized himself in many battles and sieges, was rewarded with the government of a province, from which the fame of his wisdom and moderation was wafted to the pinnacles of Agra, by the prayers of those whom his administration made happy. The emperor called him into his presence, and gave into his hand the keys of riches, and the sabre of command. The voice of Morad was heard from the cliffs of Taurus to the Indian ocean, every tongue faltered in his presence, and every eye was cast down before him.

Morad lived many years in prosperity; every day increased his wealth, and extended his influence. The sages repeated his maxims, the captains of thousands waited his commands. Competition withdrew into the cavern of envy, and discontent trembled at her own murmurs. But human greatness is short and transitory, as the odour of incense in the fire. The sun grew weary of gilding the palaces of Morad, the clouds of sorrow gathered round his head, and the tempest of hatred roared about his dwelling.

Morad saw ruin hastily approaching. The first that forsook him were his poets; their example was followed by all those whom he had rewarded for contributing to his pleasures; and only a few, whose virtue had entitled them to favour, were now to be seen in his hall or chambers. He felt his danger, and prostrated himself at the foot of the throne. His accusers were confident and loud, his friends stood contented with frigid neutrality, and the voice of truth was overborne by clamour. He was divested of his power, deprived of his acquisitions, and condemned to pass the rest of his life on his hereditary estate.

Morad had been so long accustomed to crowds and business, supplicants and flattery, that he knew not how to fill up his hours in solitude; he saw with regret the sun rise to force on his eye a new day for which he had no use; and envied the savage that wanders in the desert, because he has no time vacant from the calls of nature, but is always chasing his prey, or sleeping in his den.

His dicontent in time vitiated his constitution, and a slow disease seized upon him. He refused physic, neglected exercise, and lay down on his couch peevish and restless, rather afraid to die than desirous to live. His domestics, for time, redoubled their assiduities; but finding that no officiousness could sooth, nor exactness satisfy, they soon gave way to negligence and sloth, and he that once commanded nations often languished in his chamber without an attendant.

In this melancholy state, he commanded messengers to recall his eldest son Abouzaid from the army. Abouzaid was alarmed at the account of his father's sickness, and hasted by long journeys to his place of residence. Morad was yet living, and felt his strength return at the embraces of his son; then commanding him to sit down at his bed side, "Abouzaid," says he, "thy father has no more to hope or fear from the inhabitants of the earth; the cold hand of the angel of death is now upon him, and the voracious grave is howling for his prey. Hear, therefore, the precepts of ancient experience, let not my last instructions issue forth in vain. Thou hast seen me happy and calamitous, thou hast beheld my exaltation and my fall. My power is in the hands of my enemies, my treasures have rewarded my accusers; but my inheritance the clemency of the emperor has spared, and my wisdom his anger could not take away. Cast thine eyes round thee; whatever thou beholdest will, in a few hours, be thine; apply thine ear to my dictates, and these possessions will promote thy happiness. Aspire not to public honours, enter not the palaces of kings; thy wealth will set thee above insult, let thy moderation keep thee below envy. Content thyself with private dignity, diffuse thy riches among thy friends, let every day extend thy beneficence, and suffer not thy heart to be at rest till thou art loved by all to whom thou art known. In the height of my power, I said to Defamation, Who will hear thee? and to Artifice, What canst thou perform? But, my son, despise not thou the malice of the weakest; remember that venom supplies the want of strength, and that the lion may perish by the puncture of an asp."

Morad expired in a few hours. Abouzaid, after the months of mourning, determined to regulate his conduct by his father's precepts, and cultivate the love of mankind by every art of kindness and endearment. He wisely considered, that domestic happiness was first to be secured, and that none have so much power of doing good or hurt, as those who are present in the hour of negligence, hear the bursts of thoughtless merriment, and observe the starts of unguarded passion. He therefore augmented the pay of all his attendants, and requited every exertion of uncommon diligence by supernumerary gratuities. While he congratulated himself upon the fidelity and affection of his family, he was in the night alarmed with robbers, who, being pursued and taken, declared that they had been admitted by one of his servants; the servant immediately confessed that he unbarred the door, because another not more worthy of confidence was intrusted with the keys.

Abouzaid was thus convinced that a dependant could not easily be made a friend; and that, while many were soliciting for the first rank of favour, all those would be alienated whom he disappointed. He therefore resolved to associate with a few equal companions selected from among the chief men of the province. With these he lived happily for a time, till familiarity set them free from restraint, and every man thought him-

self at liberty to indulge his own caprice, and advance his own opinions. They then disturbed each other with contrariety of inclinations, and difference of sentiments, and Abouzaid was necessitated to offend one party by concurrence, or both by indifference.

He afterwards determined to avoid a close union with beings so discordant in their nature, and to diffuse himself in a larger circle. He practised the smile of universal courtesy, and invited all to his table, but admitted none to his retirements. Many who had been rejected in his choice of friendship, now refused to accept his acquaintance; and of those whom plenty and magnificence drew to his table, every one pressed forward toward intimacy, thought himself overlooked in the crowd, and murmured because he was not distinguished above the rest. By degrees all made advances, and all resented repulse. The table was then covered with delicacies in vain; the music sounded in empty rooms; and Abouzaid was left to form in solitude some new scheme of pleasure or security.

Resolving now to try the force of gratitude, he inquired for men of science whose merit was obscured by poverty. His house was soon crowded with poets, sculptors, painters, and designers, who wantoned in unexperienced plenty, and employed their powers in celebration of their patron. But in a short time they forgot the distress from which they had been rescued, and began to consider their deliverer as a wretch of narrow capacity, who was growing great by works which he could not perform, and whom they overpaid by condescending to accept his bounties. Abouzaid heard their murmurs and dismissed them, and from that hour continued blind to colours, and deaf to panegyric.

As the sons of art departed, muttering threats of perpetual infamy, Abouzaid, who stood at the gate, called to him Hamet the poet. "Hamet," said he, "thy ingratitude has put an end to my hopes and experiments: I have now learned the vanity of those labours that wish to be rewarded by human benevolence; I shall henceforth do good, and avoid evil, without respect to the opinion of men; and resolve to solicit only the approbation of that Being, whom alone we are sure to please by endeavouring to please him."

No. 191.] TUESDAY, JAN. 14, 1752.

Cereus in vitium flecti, monitoribus asper. HOR.

The youth——
Yielding like wax, th' impressive folly bears;
Rough to reproof, and slow to future cares.
FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

DEAR MR. RAMBLER,

I HAVE been four days confined to my chamber by a cold, which has already kept me from three plays, nine sales, five shows, and six card-tables, and put me seventeen visits behindhand; and the doctor tells my mamma, that if I fret and cry, it will settle in my head, and I shall not be fit to be seen these six weeks. But, dear Mr. Rambler, how can I help it? At this very time Melissa is dancing with the prettiest gentleman;—she will breakfast with him to-morrow, and then run to two auctions, and hear compliments, and have presents; then she will be drest, and visit, and get a ticket to the play; then go to cards and win, and come home with two flambeaux before her chair. Dear Mr Rambler, who can bear it?

My aunt has just brought me a bundle of your papers for my amusement. She says, you are a philosopher, and will teach me to moderate my desires, and look upon the world with indifference. But, dear Sir, I do not wish nor intend to moderate my desires, nor can I think it proper to look upon the world with indifference, till the world looks with indifference on me. I have been forced, however, to sit this morning a whole quarter of an hour with your paper before my face; but just as my aunt came in, Phyllida had brought me a letter from Mr. Trip, which I put within the leaves; and read about *absence* and *inconsolableness*, and *ardour*, and *irresistible passion*, and *eternal constancy*, while my aunt imagined that I was puzzling myself with your philosophy, and often cried out, when she saw me look confused, "If there is any word which you do not understand, child, I will explain."

Dear soul! how old people that think themselves wise may be imposed upon! But it is fit that they should take their turn; for I am sure, while they can keep poor girls close in the nursery, they tyrannize over us in a very shameful manner, and fill our imaginations with tales of terror, only to make us live in quiet subjection, and fancy that we can never be safe but by their protection.

I have a mamma and two aunts, who have all been formerly celebrated for wit and beauty, and are still generally admired by those who value themselves upon their understanding, and love to talk of vice and virtue, nature and simplicity, and beauty and propriety; but if there was not some hope of meeting me, scarcely a creature would come near them that wears a fashionable coat. These ladies, Mr. Rambler, have had me under their government fifteen years and a half, and have all that time been endeavouring to deceive me by such representations of life as I now find not to be true; but I know not whether I ought to impute them to ignorance or malice, as it is possible the world may be much changed since they mingled in general conversation.

Being desirous that I should love books, they told me, that nothing but knowledge could make me an agreeable companion to men of sense, or

qualify me to distinguish the superficial glitter of vanity from the solid merit of understanding; and that a habit of reading would enable me to fill up the vacuities of life without the help of silly or dangerous amusements, and preserve me from the snares of idleness and the inroads of temptation.

But their principal intention was to make me afraid of men; in which they succeeded so well for a time, that I durst not look in their faces, or be left alone with them in a parlour; for they made me fancy that no man ever spoke but to deceive, or looked but to allure; that the girl who suffered him that had once squeezed her hand, to approach her a second time, was on the brink of ruin; and that she who answered a billet, without consulting her relations, gave love such power over her, that she would certainly either become poor or infamous.

From the time that my leading-strings were taken off, I scarce heard any mention of my beauty but from the milliner, the mantua-maker, and my own maid; for mamma never said more, when she heard me commended, but "The girl is very well," and then endeavoured to divert my attention by some inquiry after my needle or my book.

It is now three months since I have been suffered to pay and receive visits, to dance at public assemblies, to have a place kept for me in the boxes, and to play at Lady Racket's rout; and you may easily imagine what I think of those who have so long cheated me with false expectations, disturbed me with fictitious terrors, and concealed from me all that I have found to make the happiness of woman.

I am so far from perceiving the usefulness or necessity of books, that, if I had not dropped all pretensions to learning, I should have lost Mr. Trip, whom I once frighted into another box by retailing some of Dryden's remarks upon a tragedy; for Mr. Trip declares that he hates nothing like hard words, and I am sure there is not a better partner to be found; his very walk is a dance. I have talked once or twice among ladies about principles and ideas; but they put their fans before their faces, and told me I was too wise for them, who for their part never pretended to read any thing but the play-bill; and then asked me the price of my best head.

Those vacancies of time which are to be filled up with books, I have never yet obtained; for consider, Mr. Rambler, I go to bed late, and therefore cannot rise early; as soon as I am up, I dress for the gardens; then walk in the park; then always go to some sale or show, or entertainment at the Little Theatre; then must be dressed for dinner; then must pay my visits; then walk in the park; then hurry to the play; and from thence to the card-table. This is the general course of the day, when there happens nothing extraordinary: but sometimes I ramble into the country, and come back again to a ball; sometimes I am engaged for a whole day and part of the night. If, at any time, I can give an hour by not being at home, I have so many things to do, so many orders to give to the milliner, so many alterations to make in my clothes, so many visitants' names to read over, so many invitations to accept or refuse, so many cards to write, and so many fashions to consider, that I am lost in confusion, forced at last to let in company, or step into my chair, and leave half my affairs to the direction of my maid.

This is the round of my day; and when shall I either stop my course, or so change it as to want a book? I suppose it cannot be imagined that any of these diversions will soon be at an end. There will always be gardens, and a park, and auctions, and shows, and playhouses, and cards; visits will always be paid, and clothes always be worn; and how can I have time unemployed upon my hands?

But I am most at a loss to guess for what purpose they related such tragic stories of the cruelty, perfidy, and artifices of men, who, if they ever were so malicious and destructive, have certainly now reformed their manners. I have not, since my entrance into the world, found one who does not profess himself devoted to my service, and ready to live or die as I shall command him. They are so far from intending to hurt me, that their only contention is who shall be allowed most closely to attend, and most frequently to treat me. When different places of entertainment or schemes of pleasure are mentioned, I can see the eye sparkle and the cheeks glow of him whose proposals obtain my approbation; he then leads me off in triumph, adores my condescension, and congratulates himself that he has lived to the hour of felicity. Are these, Mr. Rambler, creatures to be feared? Is it likely that any injury will be done me by those who can enjoy life only while I favour them with my presence?

As little reason can I yet find to suspect them of stratagems and fraud. When I play at cards, they never take advantage of my mistakes, or exact from me a rigorous observation of the game. Even Mr. Shuffle, a grave gentleman, who has daughters older than myself, plays with me so negligently, that I am sometimes inclined to believe he loses his money by design; and yet he is so fond of play, that he says he will one day take me to his house in the country, that we may try by ourselves who can conquer. I have not yet promised him; but when the town grows a little empty, I shall think upon it, for I want some trinkets, like Letitia's, to my watch. I do not doubt my luck, but must study some means of amusing my relations.

For all these distinctions I find myself indebted to that beauty which I was never suffer-

ed to hear praised, and of which, therefore, I did not before know the full value. This concealment was certainly an intentional fraud; for my aunts have eyes like other people, and I am every day told, that nothing but blindness can escape the influence of my charms. Their whole account of that world which they pretend to know so well, has been only one fiction entangled with another; and though the modes of life oblige me to continue some appearances of respect, I cannot think that they, who have been so clearly detected in ignorance or imposture, have any right to the esteem, veneration, or obedience of,

Sir, yours,

BELLARIA.

No. 192.] SATURDAY, JAN. 18, 1752.

Γένος οὐδὲν εἰς ἔρωτα,
Σοφίη, τέχνος πατεῦται·
Μόνον ἄργυρον βλίτουσιν.
Ἀπόλοιτο πρῶτος αὐτὸς
Ὁ τὸν ἄργυρον φιλήσας·
Διὰ τοῦτον οὐκ ἀδελφός,
Διὰ τοῦτον οὐ τοκῆς,
Πέλεμοι, φόνοι δι' αὐτόν.
Τὸ δὲ χεῖρον, ἀλλόμεσθα
Διὰ τοῦτον οἱ φιλοῦντες. ANACREON.

In vain the noblest birth would prove,
Nor worth nor wit avail in love;
'Tis gold alone succeeds—by gold
The venal sex is bought and sold.
Accursed be he who first of yore
Discovered the pernicious ore!
This sets a brother's heart on fire,
And arms the son against the sire;
And what, alas! is worse than all,
To this the lover owes his fall. F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

AM the son of a gentleman, whose ancestors or many ages held the first rank in the country; till at last one of them, too desirous of opularity, set his house open, kept a table overed with continual profusion, and distriuted his beef and ale to such as chose rather to ive upon the folly of others, than their own abour with such thoughtless liberality, that he eft a third part of his estate mortgaged. His uccessor a man of spirit, scorned to impair his ignity by parsimonious retrenchments, or to dmit, by a sale of his lands, any participation f the rights of his manor; he therefore made nother mortgage to pay the interest of the forer, and pleased himself with the reflection, hat his son would have the hereditary estate ithout the diminution of an acre.

Nearly resembling this was the practice of y wise progenitors for many ages. Every man boasted the antiquity of his family, resolved to support the dignity of his birth, and lived in splendour and plenty at the expense of his heir, who, sometimes by a wealthy marriage, and sometimes by lucky legacies, discharged part of the incumbrances, and thought himself entitled to contract new debts, and to leave to his children the same inheritance of embarrassment and distress. Thus the estate perpetually decayed; the woods were felled by one, the park ploughed by another, the fishery let to farmers by a third; at last the old hall was pulled down to spare the cost of reparation, and part of the materials sold to build a small house with the rest. We were now openly degraded from our original rank, and my father's brother was allowed with less reluctance to serve an apprenticeship, though we never reconciled ourselves heartily to the sound of haberdasher, but always talked of warehouses and a merchant, and when the wind happened to blow loud, affected to pity the hazards of commerce, and to sympathize with the solicitude of my poor uncle, who had the true retailer's terror of adventure, and never exposed himself or his property to any wider water than the Thames.

In time, however, by continual profit and small expenses, he grew rich, and began to turn his thoughts towards rank. He hung the arms of the family over his parlour-chimney; pointed at a chariot decorated only with a cipher; became of opinion that money could not make a gentleman; resented the petulance of upstarts; told stories of Alderman Puff's grandfather, the porter; wondered that there was no better method for regulating precedence; wished for some dress peculiar to men of fashion; and when his servant presented a letter, always inquired whether it came from his brother the esquire.

My father was careful to send him game by every carrier, which, though the conveyance often cost more than the value, was well received, because it gave an opportunity of calling his friends together, describing the beauty of his brother's seat, and lamenting his own folly, whom no remonstrances could withhold from polluting his fingers with a shop-book.

The little presents which we sent were always returned with great munificence. He was desirous of being the second founder of his family, and could not bear that we should be any longer outshone by those whom we considered as climbers upon our ruins, and usurpers of our fortune. He furnished our house with all the elegance of fashionable expense, and was careful to conceal his bounties, lest the poverty of his family should be suspected.

At length it happened that, by misconduct like our own, a large estate, which had been purchased from us, was again exposed to the best bidder. My uncle, delighted with an opportunity of reinstating the family in their posses-

sions, came down with treasures scarcely to be imagined in a place where commerce has not made large sums familiar, and at once drove all the competitors away, expedited the writings, and took possession. He now considered himself as superior to trade, disposed of his stock, and as soon as he had settled his economy, began to show his rural sovereignty, by breaking the hedges of his tenants in hunting, and seizing the guns or nets of those whose fortunes did not qualify them for sportsmen. He soon afterwards solicited the office of sheriff, from which all his neighbours were glad to be reprieved, but which he regarded as a resumption of ancestral claims, and a kind of restoration to blood after the attainder of a trade.

My uncle, whose mind was so filled with this change of his condition, that he found no want of domestic entertainment, declared himself too old to marry, and resolved to let the newly-purchased estate fall into the regular channel of inheritance, I was therefore considered as heir-apparent, and courted with officiousness and caresses, by the gentlemen who had hitherto coldly allowed me that rank which they could not refuse, depressed me with studied neglect, and irritated me with ambiguous insults.

I felt not much pleasure from the civilities for which I knew myself indebted to my uncle's industry, till, by one of the invitations which every day now brought me, I was induced to spend a week with Lucius, whose daughter Flavilla I had often seen and admired like others, without any thought of nearer approaches. The inequality which had hitherto kept me at a distance being now levelled, I was received with every evidence of respect; Lucius told me the fortune which he intended for his favourite daughter, many odd accidents obliged us to be often together without company, and I soon began to find that they were spreading for me the nets of matrimony.

Flavilla was all softness and complaisance. I, who have been excluded by a narrow fortune from much acquaintance with the world, and never been honoured before with the notice of so fine a lady, was easily enamoured. Lucius either perceived my passion, or Flavilla betrayed it; care was taken that our private meetings should be less frequent, and my charmer confessed by her eyes how much pain she suffered from our restraint. I renewed my visit upon every pretence, but was not allowed one interview without witness: at last I declared my passion to Lucius, who received me as a lover worthy of his daughter, and told me that nothing was wanting to his consent, but that my uncle should settle his estate upon me. I objected the indecency of encroaching on his life, and the danger of provoking him by such an unseasonable demand. Lucius seemed not to think decency of much importance, but admitted the danger of displeasing, and concluded that, as he was now old and sickly, we might, without any inconvenience, wait for his death.

With this resolution I was better contented, as it procured me the company of Flavilla, in which the days passed away amidst continual rapture; but in time I began to be ashamed of sitting idle, in expectation of growing rich by the death of my benefactor, and proposed to Lucius many schemes of raising my own fortune by such assistance as I knew my uncle willing to give me. Lucius, afraid lest I should change my affection in absence, diverted me from my design by dissuasives to which my passion easily listened. At last my uncle died, and considering himself as neglected by me, from the time that Flavilla took possession of my heart, left his estate to my younger brother, who was always hovering about his bed, and relating stories of my pranks and extravagance, my contempt of the commercial dialect, and my impatience to be selling stock.

My condition was soon known, and I was no longer admitted by the father of Flavilla. I repeated the protestations of regard, which had been formerly returned with so much ardour, in a letter which she received privately, but returned by her father's footman. Contempt has driven out my love, and I am content to have purchased, by the loss of fortune, an escape from a harpy, who has joined the artifices of age to the allurements of youth. I am now going to pursue my former projects with a legacy which my uncle bequeathed me, and if I succeed, shall expect to hear of the repentance of Flavilla.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

CONSTANTIUS.

No. 193.] TUESDAY, JAN. 21, 1752.

Laudis amore tumes? Sunt certa piacula quæ te
Ter pure lecto poterunt recreare libello. HOR

Or art thou vain? books yield a certain spell
To stop thy tumour; you shall cease to swell
When you have read them thrice, and studied well.

CREECH.

WHATEVER is universally desired will be sought by industry and artifice, by merit and crimes, by means good and bad, rational and absurd, according to the prevalence of virtue or vice, of wisdom or folly. Some will always mistake the degree of their own desert, and some will desire that others may mistake it. The cunning will have recourse to stratagem, and the powerful to violence, for the attainment of their wishes; some will stoop to theft, and others venture upon plunder.

Praise is so pleasing to the mind of man, that it is the original motive of almost all our actions

The desire of commendation, as of every thing else, is varied indeed by innumerable differences of temper, capacity, and knowledge; some have no higher wish than for the applause of a club; some expect the acclamations of a county; and some have hoped to fill the mouths of all ages and nations with their names. Every man pants for the highest eminence within his view; none, however mean, ever sinks below the hope of being distinguished by his fellow-beings, and very few have by magnanimity or piety, been so raised above it, as to act wholly without regard to censure or opinion.

To be praised, therefore, every man resolves; but resolutions will not execute themselves. That which all think too parsimoniously distributed to their own claims, they will not gratuitously squander upon others, and some expedient must be tried, by which praise may be gained before it can be enjoyed.

Among the innumerable bidders for praise, some are willing to purchase at the highest rate, and offer ease and health, fortune and life. Yet even of these only a small part have gained what they so earnestly desired; the student wastes away in meditation, and the soldier perishes on the ramparts, but unless some accidental advantage co-operates with merit, neither perseverance nor advantage attract attention, and learning and bravery sink into the grave, without honour or remembrance.

But ambition and vanity generally expect to be gratified on easier terms. It has been long observed, that what is procured by skill or labour to the first possessor, may be afterwards transferred for money; and that the man of wealth may partake all the acquisitions of courage without hazard, and all the products of industry without fatigue. It was easily discovered, that riches would obtain praise among other conveniences, and that he whose pride was unluckily associated with laziness, ignorance, or cowardice, needed only to pay the hire of a panegyrist, and he might be regaled with periodical eulogies; might determine, at leisure, what virtue or science he would be pleased to appropriate, and be lulled in the evening with soothing serenades, or waked in the morning by sprightly gratulations.

The happiness which mortals receive from the celebration of beneficence which never relieved, eloquence which never persuaded, or elegance which never pleased, ought not to be envied or disturbed, when they are known honestly to pay for their entertainment. But there are unmerciful exactors of adulation, who withhold the wages of venality; retain their encomiast from year to year by general promises and ambiguous blandishments; and when he has run through the whole compass of flattery, dismiss him with contempt, because his vein of fiction is exhausted.

A continual feast of commendation is only to be obtained by merit or by wealth; many are therefore obliged to content themselves with single morsels, and recompense the infrequency of their enjoyment by excess and riot, whenever fortune sets the banquet before them. Hunger is never delicate; they, who are seldom gorged to the full with praise, may be safely fed with gross compliments; for the appetite must be satisfied before it is disgusted.

It is easy to find the moment at which vanity is eager for sustenance, and all that impudence or servility can offer will be well received. When any one complains of the want of what he is known to possess in an uncommon degree, he certainly waits with impatience to be contradicted. When the trader pretends anxiety about the payment of his bills, or the beauty remarks how frightfully she looks, then is the lucky moment to talk of riches or of charms, of the death of lovers, or the honour of a merchant.

Others there are yet more open and artless, who, instead of suborning a flatterer, are content to supply his place, and, as some animals impregnate themselves, swell with the praises which they hear from their own tongues. *Recte is dicitur laudare sese, cui nemo alius contigit laudator.* "It is right," says Erasmus, "that he, whom no one else will commend, should bestow commendations on himself." Of all the sons of vanity, these are surely the happiest and greatest; for what is greatness or happiness but independance on external influences, exemption from hope, or fear, and the power of supplying every want from the common stores of nature, which can neither be exhausted nor prohibited? Such is the wise man of the stoics; such is the divinity of the Epicureans; and such is the flatterer of himself. Every other enjoyment malice may destroy; every other panegyric envy may withhold; but no human power can deprive the boaster of his own encomiums. Infamy may hiss, or contempt may growl; the hirelings of the great may follow fortune, and the votaries of truth may attend on virtue; but his pleasures still remain the same; he can always listen with rapture to himself, and leave those who dare not repose upon their own attestation, to be elated or depressed by chance, and toil on in the hopeless task of fixing caprice, and propitiating malice.

This art of happiness has been long practised by periodical writers, with little apparent violation of decency. When we think our excellences overlooked by the world, or desire to recal the attention of the public to some particula performance, we sit down with great composure, and write a letter to ourselves. The correspondent, whese character we assume, always addresses us with the deference due to a superior intelligence; proposes his doubts with a proper

sense of his own inability; offers an objection with trembling diffidence; and at last has no other pretensions to our notice than his profundity of respect, and sincerity of admiration, his submission to our dictates, and zeal for our success. To such a reader, it is impossible to refuse regard, nor can it easily be imagined with how much alacrity we snatch up the pen which indignation or despair had condemned to inactivity, when we find such candour and judgment yet remaining in the world.

A letter of this kind I had lately the honour of perusing, in which, though some of the periods were negligently closed, and some expressions of familiarity were used, which I thought might teach others to address me with too little reverence, I was so much delighted with the passages in which mention was made of universal learning—unbounded genius—soul of Homer, Pythagoras, and Plato—solidity of thought—accuracy of distinction—elegance of combination—vigour of fancy—strength of reason—and regularity of composition—that I had once determined to lay it before the public. Three times I sent it to the printer, and three times I fetched it back. My modesty was on the point of yielding, when reflecting that I was about to waste panegyrics on myself, which might be more profitably reserved for my patron, I locked it up for a better hour, in compliance with the farmer's principle, who never eats at home what he can carry to the market.

No. 194.] SATURDAY, JAN. 25, 1752.

Si damnosa senem juvat alea, ludit et hæres
Bullutus, parvoque eadem movet arma fritillo. JUV.

If gaming does an aged sire entice,
Then my young master swiftly learns the vice,
And shakes in hanging sleeves the little box and dice. J. DRYDEN, jun.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THAT vanity which keeps every man important in his own eyes, inclines me to believe that neither you nor your readers have yet forgotten the name of Eumathes, who sent you a few months ago an account of his arrival at London, with a young nobleman his pupil. I shall therefore continue my narrative without preface or recapitulation.

My pupil, in a very short time, by his mother's countenance and direction, accomplished himself with all those qualifications which constitute puerile politeness. He became in a few days a perfect master of his hat, which with a careless nicety he could put off or on, without any need to adjust it by a second motion. This was not attained but by frequent consultations with his dancing master, and constant practice before the glass, for he had some rustic habits to overcome; but what will not time and industry perform? A fortnight more furnished him with all the airs and forms of familiar and respectful salutation, from the clap on the shoulder to the humble bow; he practices the stare of strangeness, and the smile of condescension, the solemnity of promise, and the graciousness of encouragement, as if he had been nursed at a levee; and pronounces, with no less propriety than his father, the monosyllables of coldness, and sonorous periods of respectful profession.

He immediately lost the reserve and timidity which solitude and study are apt to impress upon the most courtly genius; was able to enter a crowded room with airy civility; to meet the glances of a hundred eyes without perturbation; and address those whom he never saw before with ease and confidence. In less than a month his mother declared her satisfaction at his proficiency by a triumphant observation that she believed *nothing would make him blush.*

The silence with which I was contented to hear my pupil's praises, gave the lady reason to suspect me not much delighted with his acquisitions; but she attributed my discontent to the diminution of my influence, and my fears of losing the patronage of the family; and though she thinks favourably of my learning and morals, she considers me as wholly unacquainted with the customs of the polite part of mankind; and therefore not qualified to form the manners of a young nobleman, or communicate the knowledge of the world. This knowledge she comprises in the rules of visiting, the history of the present hour, an early intelligence of the change of fashions, an extensive acquaintance with the names and faces of persons of rank, and a frequent appearance in places of resort.

All this my pupil pursues with great application. He is twice a day in the Mall, where he studies the dress of every man splendid enough to attract his notice, and never comes home without some observation upon sleeves, buttonholes, and embroidery. At his return from the theatre, he can give an account of the gallantries, glances, whispers, smiles, sighs, flirts, and blushes of every box, so much to his mother's satisfaction, that when I attempted to resume my character, by inquiring his opinion of the sentiments and diction of the tragedy, she at once repressed my criticism, by telling me, *that she hoped he did not go to lose his time in attending to the creatures on the stage.*

But his acuteness was most eminently signalized at the masquerade, where he discovered his acquaintance through their disguises, with such wonderful facility, as has afforded the family an inexhaustible topic of conversation. Every new visitor is informed how one was detected by his gait, and another by the swing of

s arms, a third by the toss of his head, and an-her by his favourite phrase; nor can you doubt t these performances receive their just ap-ause, and a genius thus hastening to maturity promoted by every art of cultivation.

Such have been his endeavours, and such his sistances, that every trace of literature was on obliterated. He has changed his language th his dress, and, instead of endeavouring at pu-y or propriety, has no other care than to catch e reigning phrase and current exclamation, t, by copying whatever is peculiar in the talk all those whose birth or fortune entitles them imitation, he has collected every fashionable rbarism of the present winter, and speaks a lect not to be understood among those who 'm their style by poring upon authors.

To this copiousness of ideas, and felicity of nguage, he has joined such eagerness to lead e conversation, that he is celebrated among the lies as the prettiest gentleman that the age can ast of, except that some who love to talk them-ves think him too forward, and others lament at, with so much wit and knowledge, he is t taller.

His mother listens to his observations with r eyes sparkling, and her heart beating, and a scarcely contain, in the most numerous as-nblies, the expectations which she has formed his future eminence. Women, by whatever e, always judge absurdly of the intellects of ys. The vivacity and confidence which at-ct female admiration, are seldom produced in e early part of life, but by ignorance at least, not by stupidity; for they proceed not from nfidence of right, but fearlessness of wrong. hoever has a clear apprehension, must have ick sensibility, and where he has no sufficient ason to trust his own judgment, will proceed th doubt and caution, because he perpetually eads the disgrace of error. The pain of mis-riage is naturally proportionate to the desire excellence; and, therefore, till men are hard-ed by long familiarity with reproach, or have ained, by frequent struggles, the art of sup-essing their emotions, diffidence is found the eparable associate of understanding.

But so little distrust has my pupil of his own ilites, that he has for some time professed nself a wit, and tortures his imagination on occasions for burlesque and jocularity. How supports a character which, perhaps, no man er assumed without repentance, may be easily ajectured. Wit, you know, is the unexpected oulation of ideas, the discovery of some occult ation between images in appearance remote m each other; an effusion of wit, therefore, supposes an accumulation of knowledge; a mory stored with notions, which the imagi-tion may cull out to compose new assemblages. hatever may be the native vigour of the mind, can never form many combinations from few ideas, as many changes can never be rung upon a few bells. Accident may indeed sometimes produce a lucky parallel or a striking contrast; but these gifts of chance are not frequent, and he that has nothing of his own, and yet condemns himself to needless expenses, must live upon loans or theft.

The indulgence which his youth has hitherto obtained, and the respect which his rank secures, have hitherto supplied the want of intellectual qualifications; and he imagines that all admire who applaud, and that all who laugh are pleased. He therefore returns every day to the charge with increase of courage, though not of strength, and practises all the tricks by which wit is counterfeited. He lays trains for a quibble; he contrives blunders for his footman: he adapts old stories to present characters; he mistakes the question, that he may return a smart answer; he anticipates the argument, that he may plausibly object; when he has nothing to reply, he repeats the last words of his antagonist, then says, "your humble servant," and concludes with a laugh of triumph.

These mistakes I have honestly attempted to correct; but what can be expected from reason unsupported by fashion, splendour, or authority? He hears me, indeed, or appears to hear me, but is soon rescued from the lecture by more pleasing avocations; and shows, diversions and caresses, drive my precepts from his remembrance.

He at last imagines himself qualified to enter the world, and has met with adventures in his first sally, which I shall, by your paper, communicate to the public.

I am, &c.

EUMATHES.

No. 195.] TUESDAY, JAN. 28, 1752.

——Nescit equo rudis
Hærere ingenuus puer
Venurique timet; ludere doctior
Seu Græco jubeas trochu,
Seu malis vetita legibus alea. HOR.

Nor knows our youth, of noblest race,
To mount the managed steed, or urge the chase;
More skill'd in the mean arts of vice,
The whirling troque, or law-forbidden dice.

FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

FAVOURS of every kind are doubled when they are speedily conferred. This is particularly true of the gratification of curiosity: he that long delays a story, and suffers his auditor to torment himself with expectation, will seldom be able to recompense the uneasiness, or equal the hope which he suffers to be raised.

For this reason, I have already sent you the continuation of my pupil's history, which, though it contains no events very uncommon, may be of use to young men who are in too much haste to trust their own prudence, and quit the wing of protection before they are able to shift for themselves.

When he first settled in London, he was so much bewildered in the enormous extent of the town, so confounded by incessant noise, and crowds, and hurry, and so terrified by rural narratives of the arts of sharpers, the rudeness of the populace, malignity of porters, and treachery of coachmen, that he was afraid to go beyond the door without an attendant, and imagined his life in danger if he was obliged to pass the streets at night in any vehicle but his mother's chair.

He was therefore contented, for a time, that I should accompany him in all his excursions. But his fear abated as he grew more familiar with its objects; and the contempt to which his rusticity exposed him from such of his companions as had accidentally known the town longer, obliged him to dissemble his remaining terrors.

His desire of liberty made him now willing to spare me the trouble of observing his motions; but knowing how much his ignorance exposed him to mischief, I thought it cruel to abandon him to the fortune of the town. We went together every day to a coffee-house, where he met wits, heirs, and fops, airy, ignorant, and thoughtless as himself, with whom he had become acquainted at card-tables, and whom he considered as the only beings to be envied or admired. What were their topics of conversation, I could never discover; for so much was their vivacity depressed by my intrusive seriousness, that they seldom proceeded beyond the exchange of nods and shrugs, an arch grin, or a broken hint, except when they could retire, while I was looking on the papers, to a corner of the room, where they seemed to disburthen their imaginations, and commonly vented the superfluity of their sprightliness in a peal of laughter. When they had tittered themselves into negligence, I could sometimes overhear a few syllables, such as—solemn rascal—academical airs—smoke the tutor—company for gentlemen—and other broken phrases, by which I did not suffer my quiet to be disturbed, for they never proceeded to avowed indignities, but contented themselves to murmur in secret, and whenever I turned my eye upon them, shrunk into stillness.

He was, however, desirous of withdrawing from the subjection which he could not venture to break, and made a secret appointment to assist his companions in the persecution of a play. His footman privately procured him a catcall, on which he practised, in a back garret, for two hours in the afternoon. At the proper time chair was called; he pretended an engageme at Lady Flutter's, and hastened to the pla where his critical associates had assemble They hurried away to the theatre, full of m lignity and denunciations against a man who name they had never heard, and a performan which they could not understand; for th were resolved to judge for themselves, a would not suffer the town to be imposed up by scribblers. In the pit, they exerted ther selves with great spirit and vivacity; called o for the tunes of obscene songs, talked loudly intervals of Shakspeare and Jonson, played their catcalls a short prelude of terror, clamou ed vehemently for the prologue, and clapp with great dexterity at the first entrance of t players.

Two scenes they heard without attempti interruption; but being no longer able to r strain their impatience, they then began to e ert themselves in groans and hisses, and pli their catcalls with incessant diligence; so th they were soon considered by the audience disturbers of the house, and some who sat ne them, either provoked at the obstruction of the entertainment, or desirous to preserve the auth from the mortification of seeing his hopes d stroyed by children, snatched away their instr ments of criticism, and, by the seasonable v bration of a stick, subdued them instantaneous to decency and silence.

To exhilarate themselves after this vexatio defeat, they posted to a tavern, where they r covered their alacrity, and, after two hours obstreperous jollity, burst out big with ente prise, and panting for some occasion to signa ise their prowess. They proceeded vigorous through two streets, and with very little o position dispersed a rabble of drunkards le daring than themselves, then rolled two watc men in the kennel, and broke the windows of tavern in which the fugitives took shelter. last it was determined to march up to a row chairs, and demolish them for standing on t pavement; the chairmen formed a line of ba tle, and blows were exchanged for a time wi equal courage on both sides. At last the assa ants were overpowered, and the chairmen, wh they knew their captives, brought them hor by force.

The young gentleman, next morning, hu his head, and was so much ashamed of his ou rages and defeat, that perhaps he might ha been checked in his first follies, had not h mother, partly in pity of his dejection, and pa ly in approbation of his spirit, relieved him fro his perplexity by paying the damages privatel and discouraging all animadversion and repro

This indulgence could not wholly preser him from the remembrance of his disgrace, n at once restore his confidence and elation. H

was for three days silent, modest, and compliant, and thought himself neither too wise for instruction, nor too manly for restraint. But his levity overcame this salutary sorrow; he began to talk with his former raptures of masquerades, taverns, and frolics; blustered when his wig was not combed with exactness; and threatened destruction to a tailor who had mistaken his directions about the pocket.

I knew that he was now rising again above control, and that this inflation of spirits would burst out into some mischievous absurdity. I therefore watched him with great attention; but one evening, having attended his mother at a visit, he withdrew himself unsuspected, while the company was engaged at cards. His vivacity and officiousness were soon missed, and his return impatiently expected; supper was delayed and conversation suspended; every coach that rattled through the street was expected to bring him, and every servant that entered the room was examined concerning his departure. At last the lady returned home, and was with great difficulty preserved from fits by spirits and cordials. The family was despatched a thousand ways without success, and the house was filled with distraction, till, as we were deliberating what further measures to take, he returned from a petty gaming-table, with his coat torn, and his head broken; without his sword, snuff-box, sleeve-buttons, and watch.

Of this loss, or robbery, he gave little account; but, instead of sinking into his former shame, endeavoured to support himself by surliness and asperity. "He was not the first that had played away a few trifles, and of what use were birth and fortune if they would not admit some sallies and expenses?" His mamma was so much provoked by the cost of this prank, that she would neither palliate nor conceal it; and his father, after some threats of rustication which his fondness would not suffer him to execute, reduced the allowance of his pocket, that he might not be tempted by plenty to profusion. This method would have succeeded in a place where there are no panders to folly and extravagance, but was now likely to have produced pernicious consequences; for we have discovered a treaty with a broker, whose daughter he seems disposed to marry, on condition that he shall be supplied with present money, for which he is to repay thrice the value at the death of his father.

There was now no time to be lost. A domestic consultation was immediately held, and he was doomed to pass two years in the country; but his mother, touched with his tears, declared that she thought him too much of a man to be any longer confined to his book, and he therefore begins his travels to-morrow under a French governor.

I am &c.

EUMATHES.

No. 196.] SATURDAY, FEB. 1, 1752.

Multa ferunt anni venientes commoda secum,
Multa recedentes adimunt.—— HOR.

The blessings flowing in with life's full tide
Down with our ebb of life decreasing glide.
FRANCIS.

BAXTER, in the narrative of his own life, has enumerated several opinions, which, though he thought them evident and incontestable at his first entrance into the world, time and experience disposed him to change.

Whoever reviews the state of his own mind from the dawn of manhood to its decline, and considers what he pursued or dreaded, slighted or esteemed, at different periods of his age, will have no reason to imagine such changes of sentiment peculiar to any station or character. Every man, however careless and inattentive, has conviction forced upon him; the lectures of time obtrude themselves upon the most unwilling or dissipated auditor; and, by comparing our past with our present thoughts, we perceive that we have changed our minds, though perhaps we cannot discover when the alteration happened, or by what causes it was produced.

This revolution of sentiments occasions a perpetual contest between the old and young. They who imagine themselves entitled to veneration by the prerogative of longer life, are inclined to treat the notions of those whose conduct they superintend with superciliousness and contempt, for want of considering that the future and the past have different appearances; that the disproportion will always be great between expectation and enjoyment, between new possession and satiety; that the truth of many maxims of age gives too little pleasure to be allowed till it is felt; and that the miseries of life would be increased beyond all human power of endurance, if we were to enter the world with the same opinions as we carry from it.

We naturally indulge those ideas that please us. Hope will predominate in every mind, till it has been suppressed by frequent disappointments. The youth has not yet discovered how many evils are continually hovering about us, and when he is set free from the shackles of discipline, looks abroad into the world with rapture; he sees an elysian region open before him, so variegated with beauty, and so stored with pleasure, that his care is rather to accumulate good, than to shun evil; he stands distracted by different forms of delight, and has no other doubt, than which path to follow of those which all lead equally to the bowers of happiness.

He who has seen only the superficies of life believes every thing to be what it appears, and rarely suspects that external splendour conceals any latent sorrow or vexation. He never imagines that there may be greatness without safety,

affluence without content, jollity without friendship, and solitude without peace. He fancies himself permitted to cull the blessings of every condition, and to leave its inconveniences to the idle and the ignorant. He is inclined to believe no man miserable but by his own fault, and seldom looks with much pity upon failings or miscarriages, because he thinks them willingly admitted, or negligently incurred.

It is impossible, without pity and contempt, to hear a youth of generous sentiments and warm imagination, declaring in the moment of openness and confidence, his designs and expectations; because long life is possible, he considers it as certain, and therefore promises himself all the changes of happiness, and provides gratifications for every desire. He is, for a time, to give himself wholly to frolic and diversion, to range the world in search of pleasure, to delight every eye, to gain every heart, and to be celebrated equally for his pleasing levities and solid attainments, his deep reflections and his sparkling repartees. He then elevates his views to nobler enjoyments, and finds all the scattered excellences of the female world united in a woman, who prefers his addresses to wealth and titles; he is afterwards to engage in business, to dissipate difficulty, and overpower opposition; to climb, by the mere force of merit, to fame and greatness; and reward all those who countenanced his rise, or paid due regard to his early excellence. At last he will retire in peace and honour; contract his views to domestic pleasures; form the manners of children like himself; observe how every year expands the beauty of his daughters, and how his sons catch ardour from their father's history; he will give laws to the neighbourhood; dictate axioms to posterity; and leave the world an example of wisdom and of happiness.

With hopes like these, he sallies jocund into life; to little purpose is he told, that the condition of humanity admits no pure and unmingled happiness; that the exuberant gayety of youth ends in poverty or disease; that uncommon qualifications and contrarieties of excellence, produce envy equally with applause; that, whatever admiration and fondness may promise him, he must marry a wife like the wives of others, with some virtues and some faults, and be as often disgusted by her vices, as delighted by her elegance; that if he adventures into the circle of action, he must expect to encounter men as artful, as daring, as resolute as himself; that of his children, some may be deformed, and others vicious; some may disgrace him by their follies, some offend him by their insolence, and some exhaust him by their profusion. He hears all this with obstinate incredulity, and wonders by what malignity old age is influenced, that it cannot forbear to fill his ears with predictions of misery.

Among other pleasing errors of young minds is the opinion of their own importance. He thi has not yet remarked how little attention h contemporaries can spare from their own affair conceives all eyes turned upon himself, and ima gines every one that approaches him to be a enemy or a follower, an admirer or a spy. H therefore considers his fame as involved in th event of every action. Many of the virtues an vices of youth proceed from this quick sense reputation. This it is that gives firmness an constancy, fidelity and disinterestedness, and it this that kindles resentment for slight injuries, an dictates all the principles of sanguinary honou

But as time brings him forward into th world, he soon discovers that he only shar fame or reproach with innumerable partners that he is left unmarked in the obscurity of th crowd; and that what he does, whether goo or bad, soon gives way to new objects of regard He then easily sets himself free from the anxi ties of reputation, and considers praise or cen sure as a transient breath, which, while he hea it, is passing away, without any lasting mischi or advantage.

In youth, it is common to measure right an wrong by the opinion of the world, and in ag to act without any measure but interest, and lose shame without substituting virtue.

Such is the condition of life, that something always wanting to happiness. In youth, w have warm hopes, which are soon blasted b rashness and negligence, and great design which are defeated by inexperience. In ag we have knowledge and prudence without spir to exert, or motives to prompt them; we a able to plan schemes, and regulate measures; bu have not time remaining to bring them to com pletion.

No. 197.] TUESDAY, FEB. 4, 1752.

Cujus vulturis hoc erit cadaver? MART.

Say, to what vulture's share this carcass falls?
F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I BELONG to an order of mankind, considerab at least for their number, to which your noti has never been formally extended, though equa ly entitled to regard with those triflers, wh have hitherto supplied you with topics of amuse ment or instruction. I am, Mr. Rambler, legacy-hunter; and, as every man is willing t think well of the tribe in which his name is re gistered, you will forgive my vanity, if I remin you that the legacy-hunter, however degrade by an ill-compounded appellation in our ba barous language, was known, as I am told, ancient Rome, by the sonorous titles of *captat* and *hæredipeta*.

My father was an attorney in the country, who married his master's daughter in hopes of a fortune which he did not obtain, having been, as he afterwards discovered, chosen by her only because she had no better offer, and was afraid of service. I was the first offspring of a marriage, thus reciprocally fraudulent, and therefore could not be expected to inherit much dignity or generosity, and if I had them not from nature, was not likely ever to attain them; for, in the years which I spent at home, I never heard any reason for action or forbearance, but that we should gain money or lose it; nor was taught any other style of commendation, than that Mr. Sneaker is a warm man, Mr. Gripe has done his business, and needs care for nobody.

My parents, though otherwise not great philosophers, knew the force of early education, and took care that the blank of my understanding should be filled with impressions of the value of money. My mother used, upon all occasions, to inculcate some salutary axioms, such as might incite me *to keep what I had, and get what I could;* she informed me that we were in a world, where *all must catch that catch can;* and as I grew up, stored my memory with deeper observations; restrained me from the usual puerile expenses, by remarking that *many a little make a mickle;* and when I envied the finery of my neighbours, told me that *brag was a good dog, but holdfast was a better.*

I was soon sagacious enough to discover that I was not born to great wealth; and having heard no other name for happiness, was sometimes inclined to repine at my condition. But my mother always relieved me by saying that there was money enough in the family, that *it was good to be of kin to means,* that I had nothing to do but to please my friends, and I might come to hold up my head with the best squire in the country.

These splendid expectations arose from our alliance to three persons of considerable fortune. My mother's aunt had attended on a lady, who, when she died, rewarded her officiousness and fidelity with a large legacy. My father had two relations, of whom one had broken his indentures and run to sea, from whence, after an absence of thirty years, he returned with ten thousand pounds; and the other had lured an heiress out of a window, who dying of her first child, had left him her estate, on which he lived, without any other care than to collect his rents, and preserve from poachers that game which he could not kill himself.

These hoarders of money were visited and courted by all who had any pretence to approach them, and received presents and compliments from cousins who could scarcely tell the degree of their relation. But we had peculiar advantages, which encouraged us to hope, that we should by degrees supplant our competitors. My father, by his profession, made himself necessary in their affairs; for the sailor and the chambermaid, he inquired out mortgages and securities, and wrote bonds and contracts; and had endeared himself to the old woman, who once rashly lent a hundred pounds without consulting him, by informing her that her debtor was on the point of bankruptcy, and posting so expeditiously with an execution that all the other creditors were defrauded.

To the squire he was a kind of steward, and had distinguished himself in his office by his address in raising the rents, his inflexibility in distressing the tardy tenants, and his acuteness in setting the parish free from burdensome inhabitants, by shifting them off to some other settlement.

Business made frequent attendance necessary; trust soon produced intimacy; and success gave a claim to kindness; so that we had opportunity to practise all the arts of flattery and endearment. My mother, who could not support the thought of losing any thing, determined that all their fortunes should centre in me; and, in the prosecution of her schemes, took care to inform me that *nothing cost less than good words,* and that it is comfortable to leap into an estate which another has got.

She trained me by these precepts to the utmost ductility of obedience, and the closest attention to profit. At an age when other boys sre sporting the fields, or murmuring in the school, I was contriving some new method of paying my court; inquiring the age of my future benefactors; or considering how I should employ their legacies.

If our eagerness of money could have been satisfied with the possessions of any one of my relations, they might perhaps have been obtained; but as it was impossible to be always present with all three, our competitors were busy to efface any trace of affection which we might have left behind; and since there was not, on any part, such superiority of merit as could enforce a constant and unshaken preference, whoever was the last that flattered or obliged had for a time the ascendant.

My relations maintained a regular exchange of courtesy, took care to miss no occasion of condolence or congratulation, and sent presents at stated times, but had in their hearts not much esteem for one another. The seaman looked with contempt upon the squire as a milksop and a landman, who had lived without knowing the points of the compass, or seeing any part of the world beyond the county-town: and, whenever they met, would talk of longitude and latitude, and circles and tropics, would scarcely tell him the hour without some mention of the horizon and meridian, nor show him the news without detecting his ignorance of the situation of other countries.

The squire considered the sailor as a rude unsultivated savage, with little more of human than his form, and diverted himself with his ignorance of all common objects and affairs; when he could persuade him to go into the field, he always exposed him to the sportsmen, by sending him to look for game in improper places; and once prevailed upon him to be present at the races, only that he might show the gentlemen how a sailor sat upon a horse.

The old gentlewoman thought herself wiser than both, for she lived with no servant but a maid, and saved her money. The others were indeed sufficiently frugal; but the squire could not live without dogs and horses, and the sailor never suffered the day to pass but over a bowl of punch, to which, as he was not critical in the choice of his company, every man was welcome that could roar out a catch, or tell a story.

All these, however, I was to please; an arduous task; but what will not youth and avarice undertake? I had an unresisting suppleness of temper, and an unsatiable wish for riches; I was perpetually instigated by the ambition of my parents, and assisted occasionally by their instructions. What these advantages enabled me to perform, shall be told in the next letter of,

Yours, &c.

CAPTATOR.

No. 198.] SATURDAY, FEB. 8, 1752.

Nil mihi das vivus, dicis post fata daturum,
Si non insanis, scis, Maro, quid cupiam.

MART.

You've told me, Maro, whilst you live,
You'd not a single penny give,
But that whene'er you chanced to die,
You'd leave a handsome legacy;
You must be mad beyond redress,
If my next wish you cannot guess.

F. LEWIS.

MR. RAMBLER.

SIR,

YOU, who must have observed the inclination which almost every man, however unactive or insignificant, discovers of representing his life as distinguished by extraordinary events, will not wonder that Captator thinks his narrative important enough to be continued. Nothing is more common than for those to tease their companions with their history, who have neither done nor suffered any thing that can excite curiosity, or afford instruction.

As I was taught to flatter with the first essays of speech, and had very early lost every other passion in the desire of money, I began my pursuit with omens of success; for I divided my officiousness so judiciously among my relations, that I was equally the favourite of all. When any of them entered the door, I went to welcome him with raptures; when he went away, I hung down my head, and sometimes entreated to go with him with so much importunity, that I very narrowly escaped a consent which I dreaded in my heart. When at an annual entertainment they were all together, I had a harder task; but plied them so impatiently with caresses, that none could charge me with neglect; and when they were wearied with my fondness and civilities, I was always dismissed with money to buy playthings.

Life cannot be kept at a stand; the years of innocence and prattle were soon at an end, and other qualifications were necessary to recommend me to continuance of kindness. It luckily happened that none of my friends had high notions of book-learning. The sailor hated to see tall boys shut up in a school, when they might more properly be seeing the world, and making their fortunes; and was of opinion that, when the first rules of arithmetic were known, all that was necessary to make a man complete might be learned on ship-board. The squire only insisted that so much scholarship was indispensably necessary as might confer ability to draw a lease and read the court-hands; and the old chambermaid declared loudly her contempt of books, and her opinion that they only took the head of the main chance.

To unite, as well as we could, all their systems, I was bred at home. Each was taught to believe that I followed his directions, and I gained likewise, as my mother observed, this advantage, that I was always in the way; for she had known many favourite children sent to schools or academies, and forgotten.

As I grew fitter to be trusted to my own discretion, I was often despatched upon various pretences to visit my relations, with directions from my parents how to ingratiate myself, and drive away competitors.

I was, from my infancy, considered by the sailor as a promising genius, because I liked punch better than wine; and I took care to improve this prepossession by continual inquiries about the art of navigation, the degree of heat and cold in different climates, the profits of trade, and the dangers of shipwreck. I admired the courage of the seaman, and gained his heart by importuning him for a recital of his adventures, and a sight of his foreign curiosities. I listened with an appearance of close attention to stories which I could already repeat, and at the close never failed to express my resolution to visit distant countries, and my contempt of the cowards and drones that spend all their lives in their native parish; though I had in reality no desire of any thing but money, nor ever felt the stimulations of curiosity or ardour of adventure, but would contentedly have passed the years of Nestor in receiving rents, and lending upon mortgages.

The squire I was able to please with less hypocrisy, for I really thought it pleasant enough to kill the game and eat it. Some arts of falsehood, however, the *hunger of gold* persuaded me to practise, by which, though no other mischief was produced, the purity of my thoughts was vitiated, and the reverence for truth gradually destroyed. I sometimes purchased fish, and pretended to have caught them; I hired the countrymen to show me partridges, and then gave my uncle intelligence of their haunt; I learned the seats of hares at night, and discovered them in the morning with a sagacity that raised the wonder and envy of old sportsmen. One only obstruction to the advancement of my reputation I could never fully surmount; I was naturally a coward, and was therefore always left shamefully behind, when there was a necessity to leap a hedge, to swim a river, or force the horses to their utmost speed; but as these exigencies did not frequently happen, I maintained my honour with sufficient success, and was never left out of a hunting party.

The old chambermaid was not so certainly, nor so easily pleased, for she had no predominant passion but avarice, and was therefore cold and inaccessible. She had no conception of any virtue in a young man but that of saving his money. When she heard of my exploits in the field, she would shake her head, inquire how much I should be the richer for all my performances, and lament that such sums should be spent upon dogs and horses. If the sailor told her of my inclination to travel, she was sure there was no place like England, and could not imagine why any man that can live in his own country should leave it. This sullen and frigid being I found means, however, to propitiate by frequent commendations of frugality, and perpetual care to avoid expense.

From the sailor was our first and most considerable expectation; for he was richer than the chambermaid, and older than the squire. He was so awkward and bashful among women, that we concluded him secure from matrimony; and the noisy fondness with which he used to welcome me to his house, made us imagine that he would look out for no other heir, and that we had nothing to do but wait patiently for his death. But in the midst of our triumph, my uncle saluted us one morning with a cry of transport, and, clapping his hand hard on my shoulder, told me, I was a happy fellow to have a friend like him in the world, for he came to fit me out for a voyage with one of his old acquaintances. I turned pale, and trembled; my father told him that he believed my constitution not fitted to the sea; and my mother, bursting into tears, cried out that her heart would break if she lost me. All this had no effect; the sailor was wholly insusceptive of the softer passions, and, without regard to tears or arguments, persisted in his resolution to make me a man.

We were obliged to comply in appearance, and preparations were accordingly made. I took leave of my friends with great alacrity, proclaimed the beneficence of my uncle with the highest strains of gratitude, and rejoiced at the opportunity now put into my hands of gratifying my thirst of knowledge. But a week before the day appointed for my departure I fell sick by my mother's direction, and refused all food but what she privately brought me; whenever my uncle visited me I was lethargic or delirious, but took care in my raving fits to talk incessantly of travel and merchandise. The room was kept dark; the table was filled with vials and gallipots; my mother was with difficulty persuaded not to endanger her life with nocturnal attendance; my father lamented the loss of the profits of the voyages; and such superfluity of artifices was employed, as perhaps might have discovered the cheat to a man of penetration. But the sailor, unacquainted with subtilties and stratagems, was easily deluded; and as the ship could not stay for my recovery, sold the cargo, and left me to re-establish my health at leisure.

I was sent to regain my flesh in a purer air, lest it should appear never to have been wasted, and in two months returned to deplore my disappointment. My uncle pitied my dejection, and bid me prepare myself against next year, for no land-lubber should touch his money.

A reprieve however was obtained, and perhaps some new stratagem might have succeeded another spring; but my uncle unhappily made amorous advances to my mother's maid; who, to promote so advantageous a match, discovered the secret with which only she had been entrusted. He stormed, and raved, and declaring that he would have heirs of his own, and not give his substance to cheats and cowards, married the girl in two days, and has now four children.

Cowardice is always scorned, and deceit universally detested. I found my friends, if not wholly alienated, at least cooled in their affection; the squire, though he did not wholly discard me, was less fond, and often inquired when I would go to sea. I was obliged to bear his insults, and endeavoured to rekindle his kindness by assiduity and respect; but all my care was vain; he died without a will, and the estate devolved to the legal heir.

Thus has the folly of my parents condemned me to spend in flattery and attendance those years in which I might have been qualified to place myself above hope or fear. I am arrived at manhood without any useful art or generous sentiment; and, if the old woman should likewise at last deceive me, am in danger at once of beggary and ignorance.

I am, &c.

CAPTATOR.

No. 199.] TUESDAY, FEB. 11, 1752.

Decolor, obscurus, vilis, non ille repexam
Cæsariem regum, candida virginis ornat
Colla, nec insigni splendet per cingula morsu;
Sed nova si nigri videas miracula saxi,
Tunc superat pulchros cultus, et quicquid Eois
Indus littoribus rubru scrutatur in alga.

CLAUDIANUS.

Obscure, unprized, and dark, the magnet lies,
Nor lures the search of avaricious eyes,
Nor binds the neck, nor sparkles in the hair,
Nor dignifies the great, nor decks the fair.
But search the wonders of the dusky stone,
And own all glories of the mine outdone,
Each grace of form, each ornament of state,
That decks the fair, or dignifies the great.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH you have seldom digressed from moral subjects, I suppose you are not so rigorous or cynical as to deny the value or usefulness of natural philosophy; or to have lived in this age of inquiry and experiment, without any attention to the wonders every day produced by the pokers of magnetism and the wheels of electricity. At least, I may be allowed to hope that, since nothing is more contrary to moral excellence than envy, you will not refuse to promote the happiness of others, merely because you cannot partake of their enjoyments.

In confidence, therefore, that your ignorance has not made you an enemy to knowledge, I offer you the honour of introducing to the notice of the public an adept, who, having long laboured for the benefit of mankind, is not willing, like too many of his predecessors, to conceal his secrets in the grave.

Many have signalized themselves by melting their estates in crucibles. I was born to no fortune, and therefore had only my mind and my body to devote to knowledge, and the gratitude of posterity will attest that neither mind nor body has been spared. I have sat whole weeks without sleep by the side of an athanor, to watch the movement of projection; I have made the first experiment in nineteen diving-engines of new construction; I have fallen eleven times speechless under the shock of electricity; I have twice dislocated my limbs, and once fractured my skull in essaying to fly,* and four times endangered my life by submitting to the transfusion of blood.

In the first period of my studies, I exerted the powers of my body more than those of my mind, and was not without hopes that fame might be purchased by a few broken bones without the toil of thinking; but having been shattered by some violent experiments, and constrained to confine myself to my books, I passed six and thirty years in searching the treasures of ancient wisdom, but am at last amply recompensed for all my perseverance.

The curiosity of the present race of philosophers, having been long exercised upon electricity, has been lately transformed to magnetism; the qualities of the loadstone have been investigated, if not with much advantage, yet with great applause; and as the highest praise of art is to imitate nature, I hope no man will think the makers of artificial magnets celebrated or reverenced above their deserts.

I have for some time employed myself in the same practice, but with deeper knowledge and more extensive views. While my contemporaries were touching needles and raising weights, or busying themselves with inclination and variation, I have been examining those qualities of magnetism which may be applied to the accommodation and happiness of common life. I have left to inferior understandings the care of conducting the sailor through the hazards of the ocean, and reserved to myself the more difficult and illustrious province of preserving the connubial compact from violation, and setting mankind free for ever from the danger of supposititious children, and the torments of fruitless vigilance and anxious suspicion.

To defraud any man of his due praise is unworthy of a philosopher; I shall therefore openly confess, that I owe the first hint of this inestimable secret to the rabbi Abraham Ben Hannase, who, in his treatise of precious stones, has left this account of the magnet: "The calamita, or loadstone that attracts iron, produces many bad fantasies in man. Women fly from this stone. If therefore any husband be disturbed with jealousy, and fear lest his wife converses with other men, let him lay this stone upon her while she is asleep. If she be pure, she will, when she wakes, clasp her husband fondly in her arms; but if she be guilty, she will fall out of bed, and run away."

When I first read this wonderful passage, I could not easily conceive why it had remained hitherto unregarded in such a zealous competition for magnetical fame. It would surely be unjust to suspect that any of the candidates are strangers to the name or works of rabbi Abraham, or to conclude, from a late edict of the Royal Society in favour of the English language, that philosophy and literature are no longer to act in concert. Yet, how should a quality so useful escape promulgation, but by the obscurity of the language in which it was delivered? Why are footmen and chambermaids paid on every side for keeping secrets, which no caution nor expense could secure from the all-penetrating magnet? or, Why are so many wit-

* It is said that Dr. Johnson once lodged in the same house with a man who broke his legs in attempting to fly.—C.

nesses summoned, and so many artifices practised, to discover what so easy an experiment would infallibly reveal?

Full of this perplexity, I read the lines of Abraham to a friend, who advised me not to expose my life by a mad indulgence of the love of fame; he warned me, by the fate of Orpheus, that knowledge or genius could give no protection to the invader of female prerogatives; assured me that neither the armour of Achilles, nor the antidotes of Mithridates, would be able to preserve me; and counselled me, if I could not live without renown, to attempt the acquisition of universal empire, in which the honour would perhaps be equal, and the danger certainly be less.

I, a solitary student, pretend not to much knowledge of the world, but am unwilling to think it so generally corrupt, as that a scheme for the detection of incontinence should bring any danger upon its inventor. My friend has indeed told me that all the women will be my enemies, and that, however I flatter myself with hopes of defence from the men, I shall certainly find myself deserted in the hour of danger. Of the young men, said he, some will be afraid of sharing the disgrace of their mothers, and some the danger of their mistresses; of those who are married, part are already convinced of the falsehood of their wives, and part shut their eyes to avoid conviction; few ever sought for virtue in marriage, and therefore few will try whether they have found it. Almost every man is careless or timorous; and to trust is easier and safer than to examine.

These observations discouraged me, till I began to consider what reception I was likely to find among the ladies, whom I have reviewed under the three classes of maids, wives and widows, and cannot but hope that I may obtain some countenance among them. The single ladies I suppose universally ready to patronize my method, by which connubial wickedness may be detected, since no woman marries with a previous design to be unfaithful to her husband. And, to keep them steady in my cause, I promise never to sell one of my magnets to a man who steals a girl from school, marries a woman forty years younger than himself, or employs the authority of parents to obtain a wife without her own consent.

Among the married ladies, notwithstanding the insinuations of slander, I yet resolve to believe that the greater part are my friends, and am at least convinced, that they who demand the test, and appear on my side will supply by their spirit the deficiency of their numbers, and that their enemies will shrink and quake at the sight of a magnet, as the slaves of Scythia fled from the scourge.

The widows will be confederated in my favour by their curiosity, if not by their virtue; for it may be observed, that women who have outlived their husbands always think themselves entitled to superintend the conduct of young wives; and as they are themselves in no danger from this magnetic trial, I shall expect them to be eminently and unanimously zealous in recommending it.

With these hopes I shall, in a short time, offer to sale magnets armed with a particular metallic composition which concentrates their virtue, and determines their agency. It is known that the efficacy of the magnet in common operations depends much upon its armature; and it cannot be imagined that a stone, naked, or cased only in the common manner, will discover the virtues ascribed to it by rabbi Abraham. The secret of this metal I shall carefully conceal, and therefore am not afraid of imitators, nor shall trouble the offices with solicitation for a patent.

I shall sell them of different sizes, and the various degrees of strength. I have some of a bulk proper to be hung at the bed's head, as scarecrows, and some so small that they may be easily concealed. Some I have ground into oval forms to be hung at watches; and some, for the curious, I have set in wedding-rings, that ladies may never want an attestation of their innocence. Some I can produce so sluggish and inert, that they will not act before the third failure; and others so vigorous and animated, that they exert their influence against unlawful wishes, if they have been willingly and deliberately indulged. As it is my practice honestly to tell my customers the properties of my magnets, I can judge, by their choice, of the delicacy of their sentiments. Many have been contented to spare cost by purchasing only the lowest degree of efficacy, and all have started with terror from those which operate upon the thoughts. One young lady only fitted on a ring of the strongest energy, and declared that she scorned to separate her wishes from her acts, or allow herself to think what she was forbidden to practise.

I am, &c.

HERMETICUS.

No. 200.] SATURDAY, FEB. 15, 1752.

Nemo petit, modicis quæ mittebantur amicis
A Seneca; quæ Piso bonus, quæ Cotta solebat
Largiri: namque et titulis et fascibus olim
Major habebatur donandi gloria: solum
Poscimus, ut canes civiliter. Hoc face, et esto,
Esto, ut nunc multi, dives tibi, pauper amicis.

JUV

No man expects (for who so much a sot?
Who has the times he lives in so forgot?)
What Seneca, what Piso used to send
To raise or to support a sinking friend.
Those godlike men, to wanting virtue kind,
Bounty well placed preferr'd, and well design'd,

X x

To all their titles, all that height of power
Which turns the brains of fools, and fools alone adore.
When your poor client is condemn'd t' attend,
'Tis all we ask, receive him as a friend:
Descend to this, and then we ask no more
Rich to yourself, to all beside be poor. BOWLES.

TO THE RAMBLER.

MR. RAMBLER,

SUCH is the tenderness or infirmity of many minds, that, when any affliction oppresses them, they have immediate recourse to lamentation and complaint, which, though it can only be allowed reasonable when evils admit of remedy, and then only when addressed to those from whom the remedy is expected, yet seems even in hopeless and incurable distresses to be natural, since those by whom it is not indulged, imagine that they give a proof of extraordinary fortitude by suppressing it.

I am one of those who, with the Sancho of Cervantes, leave to higher characters the merit of suffering in silence, and give vent without scruple to any sorrow that swells in my heart. It is therefore to me a severe aggravation of a calamity, when it is such as in the common opinion will not justify the acerbity of exclamation, or support the solemnity of vocal grief. Yet many pains are incident to a man of delicacy, which the unfeeling world cannot be persuaded to pity, and which, when they are separated from their peculiar and personal circumstances, will never be considered as important enough to claim attention, or deserve redress.

Of this kind will appear, to gross and vulgar apprehensions, the miseries which I endured in a morning visit to Prospero, a man lately raised to wealth by a lucky project, and too much intoxicated by sudden elevation, or too little polished by thought and conversation, to enjoy his present fortune with elegance and decency.

We set out in the world together; and for a long time mutually assisted each other in our exigences, as either happened to have money or influence beyond his immediate necessities. You know that nothing generally endears men so much as participation of dangers and misfortunes; I therefore always considered Prospero as united with me in the strongest league of kindness, and imagined that our friendship was only to be broken by the hand of death. I felt at his sudden shoot of success an honest and disinterested joy; but, as I want no part of his superfluities, am not willing to descend from that equality in which we hitherto have lived.

Our intimacy was regarded by me as a dispensation from ceremonial visits; and it was so long before I saw him at his new house, that he gently complained of my neglect, and obliged me to come on a day appointed. I kept my promise, but found that the impatience of my friend arose not from any desire to communicate his happiness, but to enjoy his superiority.

When I told my name at the door, the footman went to see if his master was at home, and, by the tardiness of his return, gave me reason to suspect that time was taken to deliberate. He then informed me that Prospero desired my company, and showed the staircase carefully secured by mats from the pollution of my feet. The best apartments were ostentatiously set open, that I might have a distant view of the magnificence which I was not permitted to approach; and my old friend, receiving me with all the insolence of condescension at the top of the stairs, conducted me to a back room, where he told me he always breakfasted when he had not great company.

On the floor where we sat, lay a carpet covered with a cloth, of which Prospero ordered his servant to lift up a corner, that I might contemplate the brightness of the colours, and the elegance of the texture, and asked me whether I had ever seen any thing so fine before. I did not gratify his folly with any outcries of admiration, but coldly bade the footman let down the cloth.

We then sat down, and I began to hope that pride was glutted with persecution, when Prospero desired that I would give the servant leave to adjust the cover of my chair, which was slipped a little aside, to show the damask; he informed me that he had bespoke ordinary chairs for common use, but had been disappointed by his tradesman. I put the chair aside with my foot, and drew another so hastily, that I was entreated not to rumple the carpet.

Breakfast was at last set; and as I was not willing to indulge the peevishness that began to seize me, I commended the tea. Prospero then told me, that another time I should taste his finest sort, but that he had only a very small quantity remaining, and reserved it for those whom he thought himself obliged to treat with particular respect.

While we were conversing upon such subjects, as imagination happened to suggest, he frequently digressed in directions to the servant that waited, or made a slight inquiry after the jeweller or silversmith; and once, as I was pursuing an argument with some degree of earnestness, he started from his posture of attention, and ordered that if Lord Lofty called on him that morning, he should be shown into the best parlour.

My patience was yet not wholly subdued. I was willing to promote his satisfaction, and therefore observed that the figures on the china were eminently pretty. Prospero had now an opportunity of calling for his Dresden china, which, says he, I always associate with my chased tea-kettle. The cups were brought; I once resolved not to have looked upon them, but my curiosity prevailed. When I had examined

them a little, Prospero desired me to set them down, for they who were accustomed only to common dishes seldom handled china with much care. You will, I hope, commend my philosophy, when I tell you that I did not dash his baubles to the ground.

He was now so much elevated with his own greatness, that he thought some humility necessary to avert the glance of envy; and therefore told me, with an air of soft composure, that I was not to estimate life by external appearance, that all these shining acquisitions had added little to his happiness, that he still remembered with pleasure the days in which he and I were upon the level, and had often, in the moment of reflection, been doubtful, whether he should lose much by changing his condition for mine.

I began now to be afraid lest his pride should, by silence and submission, be emboldened to insults that could not easily be borne, and therefore coolly considered how I should repress it without such bitterness of reproof as I was yet unwilling to use. But he interrupted my meditation, by asking leave to be dressed, and told me, that he had promised to attend some ladies in the park, and, if I was going the same way, would take me in his chariot. I had no inclination to any other favours, and therefore left him without any intention of seeing him again, unless some misfortune should restore his understanding.

I am, &c.

ASPER.

Though I am not wholly insensible of the provocations which my correspondent has received, I cannot altogether commend the keenness of his resentment, nor encourage him to persist in his resolution of breaking off all commerce with his old acquaintance. One of the golden precepts of Pythagoras directs, that *a friend should not be hated for little faults;* and surely he, upon whom nothing worse can be charged, than that he mats his stairs, and covers his carpet, and sets out his finery to show before those whom he does not admit to use it, has yet committed nothing that should exclude him from common degrees of kindness. Such improprieties often proceed rather from stupidity than malice. Those who thus shine only to dazzle, are influenced merely by custom and example, and neither examine, nor are qualified to examine, the motives of their own practice, or to state the nice limits between elegance and ostentation. They are often innocent of the pain which their vanity produces, and insult others when they have no worse purpose than to please themselves.

He that too much refines his delicacy will always endanger his quiet. Of those with whom nature and virtue oblige us to converse, some are ignorant of the arts of pleasing, and offend when they design to caress; some are negligent, and gratify themselves without regard to the quiet of another; some perhaps are malicious, and feel no greater satisfaction in prosperity than that of raising envy and trampling inferiority. But whatever be the motive of insult, it is always best to overlook it; for folly scarcely can deserve resentment, and malice is punished by neglect.*

No. 201.] TUESDAY, FEB. 18, 1752.

——*Sanctus haberi,*
Promissique tenax factis dictisque mereris?
Agnosco procerem. JUV.

Convince the world that you're devout and true;
Be just in all you say, and all you do;
Whatever be your birth, you're sure to be
A peer of the first magnitude to me. STEPNEY.

BOYLE has observed, that the excellency of manufactures and the facility of labour would be much promoted, if the various expedients and contrivances which lie concealed in private hands, were by reciprocal communications made generally known; for there are few operations that are not performed by one or other with some peculiar advantages, which, though singly of little importance, would by conjunction and concurrence, open new inlets to knowledge, and give new powers to diligence.

There are, in like manner, several moral excellences distributed among the different classes of a community. It was said by Cujacius, that he never read more than one book by which he was not instructed; and he that shall inquire after virtue with ardour and attention will seldom find a man by whose example or sentiments he may not be improved.

Every profession has some essential and appropriate virtue, without which there can be no hope of honour or success, and which, as it is more or less cultivated, confers within its sphere of activity different degrees of merit and reputation. As the astrologers range the subdivisions of mankind under the planets which they suppose to influence their lives, the moralist may distribute them according to the virtues which they necessarily practise, and consider them as distinguished by prudence or fortitude, diligence or patience.

So much are the modes of excellence settled by time and place, that men may be heard boasting in one street of that which they would anxiously conceal in another. The grounds of scorn and esteem, the topics of praise and satire, are varied according to the several virtues or vices which the course of life has disposed men to admire or abhor; but he who is solicitous for

* The character of Prospero, it is universally acknowledged, was intended for Garrick, who, says Mr. Boswell, "never entirely forgave its pointed satire."—C.

his own improvement must not be limited by local reputation, but select from every tribe of mortals their characteristical virtues, and constellate in himself the scattered graces which shine singly in other men.

The chief praise to which a trader aspires is that of punctuality, or an exact and rigorous observance of commercial engagements; nor is there any vice of which he so much dreads the imputation, as of negligence and instability. This is a quality which the interest of mankind requires to be diffused through all the ranks of life, but which many seem to consider as a vulgar and ignoble virtue, below the ambition of greatness or attention of wit, scarcely requisite among men of gayety and spirit, and sold at its highest rate when it is sacrificed to a frolic or a jest.

Every man has daily occasion to remark what vexations arise from this privilege of deceiving one another. The active and vivacious have so long disdained the restraints of truth, that promises and appointments have lost their cogency, and both parties neglect their stipulations, because each concludes that they will be broken by the other.

Negligence is first admitted in small affairs, and strengthened by petty indulgences. He that is not yet hardened by custom, ventures not on the violation of important engagements, but thinks himself bound by his word in cases of property or danger, though he allows himself to forget at what time he is to meet ladies in the park, or at what tavern his friends are expecting him.

This laxity of honour would be more tolerable, if it could be restrained to the play-house, the ball-room, or the card-table; yet even there it is sufficiently troublesome, and darkens those moments, with expectation, suspense, and resentment, which are set aside for pleasure, and from which we naturally hope for unmingled enjoyment and total relaxation. But he that suffers the slightest breach in his morality can seldom tell what shall enter it, or how wide it shall be made; when a passage is open, the influx of corruption is every moment wearing down opposition, and by slow degrees deluges the heart.

Aliger entered the world a youth of lively imagination, extensive views, and untainted principles. His curiosity incited him to range from place to place, and try all the varieties of conversation; his elegance of address and fertility of ideas gained him friends wherever he appeared; or at least he found the general kindness of reception always shown to a young man whose birth and fortune give him a claim to notice, and who has neither by vice or folly destroyed his privileges. Aliger was pleased with this general smile of mankind, and was industrious to preserve it by compliance and officiousness, but did not suffer his desire of pleasing to vitiate his integrity. It was his established maxim, that a promise is never to be broken; nor was it without long reluctance that he once suffered himself to be drawn away from a festal engagement by the importunity of another company.

He spent the evening, as is usual, in the rudiments of vice, in perturbation and imperfect enjoyment, and met his disappointed friends in the morning with confusion and excuses. His companions, not accustomed to such scrupulous anxiety, laughed at his uneasiness, compounded the offence for a bottle, gave him courage to break his word again, and again levied the penalty. He ventured the same experiment upon another society, and found them equally ready to consider it as a venial fault, always incident to a man of quickness and gayety; till, by degrees, he began to think himself at liberty to follow the last invitation, and was no longer shocked at the turpitude of falsehood. He made no difficulty to promise his presence at distant places; and, if listlessness happened to creep upon him, would sit at home with great tranquillity, and has often sunk to sleep in a chair, while he held ten tables in continual expectations of his entrance.

It was so pleasant to live in perpetual vacancy, that he soon dismissed his attention as a useless incumbrance, and resigned himself to carelessness and dissipation, without any regard to the future or the past, or any other motive of action than the impulse of a sudden desire, or the attraction of immediate pleasure. The absent were immediately forgotten, and the hopes or fears felt by others had no influence upon his conduct. He was in speculation completely just, but never kept his promise to a creditor; he was benevolent, but always deceived those friends whom he undertook to patronize or assist; he was prudent, but suffered his affairs to be embarrassed for want of regulating his accounts at stated times. He courted a young lady, and, when the settlements were drawn, took a ramble into the country on the day appointed to sign them. He resolved to travel, and sent his chests on ship-board, but delayed to follow them till he lost his passage. He was summoned as an evidence in a cause of great importance, and loitered on the way till the trial was past. It is said that when he had, with great expense, formed an interest in a borough, his opponent contrived, by some agents who knew his temper, to lure him away on the day of election.

His benevolence draws him into the commission of a thousand crimes, which others less kind or civil would escape. His courtesy invites application; his promise produces dependance; he has his pockets filled with petitions, which he intends some time to deliver and enforce, and his table covered with letters of request, with which

purposes to comply; but time slips imperptibly away, while he is either idle or busy; s friends lose their opportunities, and charge on him their miscarriages and calamities. This character, however contemptible, is not culiar to Aliger. They whose activity of agination is often shifting the scenes of expection, are frequently subject to such sallies of price as make all their actions fortuitous, deroy the value of their friendship, obstruct the icacy of their virtues, and set them below the eanest of those that persist in their resolutions, ecute what they design, and perform what ey have promised.

o. 202.] SATURDAY, FEB. 22, 1752.

Πρὸς ἅπαντα δειλὸς ἐστὶν ὁ πένης πράγματα,
Καὶ πάντας αὐτοῦ καταφρονεῖν ὑπολαμβάνει.
Ὁ δὲ μετρίως πράττων περισπλέστερον
Ἅπαντα τ' ἀνιαρᾷ, Δαμητρία, φέρει.

CALLIMACHUS.

From no affliction is the poor exempt;
He thinks each eye surveys him with contempt:
Unmanly poverty subdues the heart,
Cankers each wound, and sharpens every dart.

F. LEWIS.

MONG those who have endeavoured to promote arning, and rectify judgment, it has been long stomary to complain of the abuse of words, hich are often admitted to signify things so fferent, that, instead of assisting the underanding as vehicles of knowledge, they produce ror, dissension, and perplexity, because what affirmed in one sense is received in another.

If this ambiguity sometimes embarrasses the ost solemn controversies, and obscures the deonstrations of science, it may well be expected infest the pompous periods of declaimers, hose purpose is often only to amuse with falcies, and change the colours of truth and falsehood; or the musical compositions of poets, hose style is professedly figurative, and whose t is imagined to consist in distorting words om their original meaning.

There are few words of which the reader beeves himself better to know the import than of *verty*; yet, whoever studies either the poets or hilosophers, will find such an account of the ondition expressed by that term as his experiace or observation will not easily discover to be ue. Instead of the meanness, distress, comaint, anxiety, and dependence, which have itherto been combined in his ideas of poverty, e will read of content, innocence, and cheerfulss, of health and safety, tranquillity, and freeom; of pleasures not known but to men unenumbered with possessions; and of sleep that eeds his balsamic anodynes only on the cottage. uch are the blessings to be obtained by the resignation of riches, that kings might descend from their thrones, and generals retire from a triumph, only to slumber, undisturbed in the elysium of poverty.

If these authors do not deceive us, nothing can be more absurd than that perpetual contest for wealth which keeps the world in commotion; nor any complaints more justly censured than those which proceed from want of the gifts of fortune, which we are taught by the great masters of moral wisdom to consider as golden shackles, by which the wearer is at once disabled and adorned; as luscious poisons, which may for a time please the palate, but soon betray their malignity by languor and by pain.

It is the great privilege of poverty to be happy unenvied, to be healthful without physic, and secure without a guard; to obtain from the bounty of nature what the great and wealthy are compelled to procure by the help of artists and attendants, of flatterers and spies.

But it will be found, upon a nearer view, that they who extol the happiness of poverty, do not mean the same state with those who deplore its miseries. Poets have their imaginations filled with ideas of magnificence; and being accustomed to contemplate the downfall of empires, or to contrive forms of lamentations for monarchs in distress, rank all the classes of mankind in a state of poverty who make no approaches to the dignity of crowns. To be poor in the epic language is only not to command the wealth of nations, nor to have fleets and armies in pay.

Vanity has perhaps contributed to this impropriety of style. He that wishes to become a philosopher at a cheap rate, easily gratifies his ambition by submitting to poverty when he does not feel it, and by boasting his contempt of riches when he has already more than he enjoys. He who would show the extent of his views, and grandeur of his conceptions, or discover his acquaintance with splendour and magnificence, may talk, like Cowley, of an humble station and quiet obscurity, of the paucity of nature's wants, and the inconveniences of superfluity, and at last, like him, limit his desires to five hundred pounds a year; a fortune, indeed, not exuberant, when we compare it with the expenses of pride and luxury, but to which it little becomes a philosopher to affix the name of poverty, since no man can, with any propriety, be termed poor, who does not see the greater part of mankind richer than himself.

As little is the general condition of human life understood by the panegyrists and historians, who amuse us with accounts of the poverty of heroes and sages. Riches are of no value in themselves, their use is discovered only in that which they procure. They are not coveted, unless by narrow understandings, which confound the means with the end, but for the sake of

power, influence, and esteem; or, by some of less elevated and refined sentiments, as necessary to sensual enjoyment.

The pleasures of luxury many have, without uncommon virtue, been able to despise, even when affluence and idleness have concurred to tempt them; and therefore he who feels nothing from indigence but the want of gratifications which he could not in any other condition make consistent with innocence, has given no proof of eminent patience. Esteem and influence every man desires, but they are equally pleasing, and equally valuable, by whatever means they are obtained; and whoever has found the art of securing them without the help of money, ought, in reality, to be accounted rich, since he has all that riches can purchase to a wise man. Cincinnatus, though he lived upon a few acres cultivated by his own hand, was sufficiently removed from all the evils generally comprehended under the name of poverty, when his reputation was such, that the voice of his country called him from his farm to take absolute command into his hand; nor was Diogenes much mortified by his residence in a tub, where he was honoured with the visit of Alexander the Great.

The same fallacy has conciliated veneration to the religious orders. When we behold a man abdicating the hope of terrestrial possessions, and precluding himself, by an irrevocable vow, from the pursuit and acquisition of all that his fellow-beings consider as worthy of wishes and endeavours, we are immediately struck with the purity, abstraction, and firmness of his mind, and regard him as wholly employed in securing the interests of futurity, and devoid of any other care than to gain at whatever price the surest passage to eternal rest.

Yet, what can the votary be justly said to have lost of his present happiness? If he resides in a convent, he converses only with men whose condition is the same with his own; he has, from the munificence of the founder, all the necessaries of life, and is safe from that *destitution, which* Hooker declares to be *such an impediment to virtue, as, till it be removed, suffereth not the mind of man to admit any other care.* All temptations to envy and competition are shut out from his retreat; he is not pained with the sight of unattainable dignity, nor insulted with the bluster of insolence, or the smile of forced familiarity. If he wanders abroad, the sanctity of his character amply compensates all other distinctions; he is seldom seen but with reverence, nor heard but with submission.

It has been remarked, that death, though often defied in the field, seldom fails to terrify when it approaches the bed of sickness in its natural horror; so poverty may easily be endured while associated with dignity and reputation, but will always be shunned and dreaded when it is accompanied with ignominy and contempt.

No. 203.] TUESDAY, FEB. 25, 1752.

Cum volet illa dies, quæ nil nisi corporis hujus
Jus habet, incerti spatium mihi finiat ævi. OVI

Come, soon or late, death's undetermined day,
This mortal being only can decay. WELSTE

IT seems to be the fate of man to seek all his co solations in futurity. The time present is se dom able to fill desire or imagination with in mediate enjoyment, and we are forced to supp its deficiencies by recollection or anticipation.

Every one has so often detected the fallacio ness of hope, and the inconvenience of teachi himself to expect what a thousand accidents ma preclude, that, when time has abated the con dence with which youth rushes out to take po session of the world, we endeavour, or wish, find entertainment in the review of life, and repose upon real facts and certain experienc This is perhaps one reason, among many, wh age delights in narratives.

But so full is the world of calamity, that eve source of pleasure is polluted, and every retir ment of tranquillity disturbed. When time h supplied us with events sufficient to employ o thoughts, it has mingled them with so man disasters, that we shrink from their remem brance, dread their intrusion upon our mind and fly from them as from enemies that purs us with torture.

No man past the middle point of life can s down to feast upon the pleasures of youth wit out finding the banquet embittered by the cup sorrow; he may revive lucky accidents an pleasing extravagances; many days of harmle frolic, or nights of honest festivity, will perha recur; or, if he has been engaged in scenes action and acquainted with affairs of difficult and vicissitudes of fortune, he may enjoy th nobler pleasure of looking back upon distre firmly supported, dangers resolutely encounte ed, and opposition artfully defeated. Æne properly comforts his companions, when, afte the horrors of a storm, they have landed on a unknown and desolate country, with the hop that their miseries will be at some distant tim recounted with delight. There are few high gratifications than that of reflection on su mounted evils, when they were not incurred n protracted by our fault, and neither reproach with cowardice nor guilt.

But this felicity is almost always abated b the reflection, that they with whom we shoul be most pleased to share it are now in the grav A few years make such havoc in human gener ations, that we soon see ourselves deprived those with whom we entered the world, an whom the participation of pleasures or fatigu had endeared to our remembrance. The ma of enterprise recounts his adventures and ex pedients, but is forced at the close of the rel

tion to pay a sigh to the names of those that contributed to his success; he that passes his life among the gayer part of mankind, has his remembrance stored with remarks and repartees of wits, whose sprightliness and merriment are now lost in perpetual silence; the trader, whose industry has supplied the want of inheritance, repines in solitary plenty at the absence of companions with whom he had planned out amusements for his latter years; and the scholar, whose merit, after a long series of efforts, raises him from obscurity, looks round in vain from his exaltation for his old friends or enemies, whose applause or mortification would heighten his triumph.

Among Martial's requisites to happiness is, *Res non parta labore, sed relicta*, An estate not gained by industry, but left by inheritance. It is necessary to the completion of every good, that it be timely obtained; for whatever comes at the close of life will come too late to give much delight. Yet all human happiness has its defects; of what we do not gain for ourselves we have only a faint and imperfect fruition, because we cannot compare the difference between want and possession, or at least can derive from it no conviction of our own abilities, nor any increase of self-esteem. What we acquire by bravery or science, by mental or corporal diligence; comes at last when we cannot communicate, and therefore cannot enjoy it.

Thus every period of life is obliged to borrow its happiness from the time to come. In youth we have nothing past to entertain us, and in age we derive little from retrospect but hopeless sorrow. Yet the future likewise has its limits, which the imagination dreads to approach, but which we see to be not far distant. The loss of our friends and companions impresses hourly upon us the necessity of our own departure; we know that the schemes of man are quickly at an end, that we must soon lie down in the grave with the forgotten multitudes of former ages, and yield our place to others, who, like us, shall be driven a while, by hope or fear, about the surface of the earth, and then like us be lost in the shades of death.

Beyond this termination of our material existence we are therefore obliged to extend our hopes; and almost every man indulges his imagination with something, which is not to happen till he has changed his manner of being: some amuse themselves with entails and settlements, provide for the perpetuation of families and honours, or contrive to obviate the dissipation of the fortunes which it has been their business to accumulate; others, more refined or exalted, congratulate their own hearts upon the future extent of their reputation, the reverence of distant nations, and the gratitude of unprejudiced posterity.

They whose souls are so chained down to coffers and tenements, that they cannot conceive a state in which they shall look upon them with less solicitude, are seldom attentive or flexible to arguments; but the votaries of fame are capable of reflection, and therefore may be called to reconsider the probability of their expectations.

Whether to be remembered in remote times be worthy of a wise man's wish, has not yet been satisfactorily decided; and indeed, to be long remembered, can happen to so small a number, that the bulk of mankind has very little interest in the question. There is never room in the world for more than a certain quantity or measure of renown. The necessary business of life, the immediate pleasures or pains of every condition, leave us not leisure beyond a fixed portion for contemplations which do not forcibly influence our present welfare. When this vacuity is filled, no characters can be admitted into the circulation of fame, but by occupying the place of some that must be thrust into oblivion. The eye of the mind, like that of the body, can only extend its view to new objects, by losing sight of those which are now before it.

Reputation is therefore a meteor, which blazes a while and disappears for ever; and, if we except a few transcendent and invincible names, which no revolutions of opinion or length of time is able to suppress; all those that engage our thoughts, or diversify our conversation, are every moment hasting to obscurity, as new favourites are adopted by fashion.

It is not therefore from this world that any ray of comfort can proceed, to cheer the gloom of the last hour. But futurity has still its prospects; there is yet happiness in reserve, which, if we transfer our attention to it, will support us in the pains of disease, and the languor of decay. This happiness we may expect with confidence, because it is out of the power of chance, and may be attained by all that sincerely desire and earnestly pursue it. On this therefore every mind ought finally to rest. Hope is the chief blessing of man, and that hope only is rational, of which we are certain that it cannot deceive us.

No. 204.] SATURDAY, FEB. 29, 1752.

Nemo tam divos habuit faventes,
Crastinum ut possit sibi polliceri. SENECA

Of Heaven's protection who can be
So confident to utter this—?
To-morrow I will spend in bliss. F. LEWIS.

SEGED, lord of Ethiopia, to the inhabitants of the world: To the sons of *presumption*, humility and fear; and to the daughters of *sorrow*, content and acquiescence.

Thus, in the twenty-seventh year of his reign, spoke Seged, the monarch of forty nations, the distributor of the waters of the Nile: "At length, Seged, thy toils are at an end; thou hast reconciled disaffection, thou hast suppressed rebellion, thou hast pacified the jealousies of thy courtiers, thou hast chased war from thy confines, and erected fortresses in the lands of thy enemies. All who have offended thee tremble in thy presence, and wherever thy voice is heard it is obeyed. Thy throne is surrounded by armies, numerous as the locusts of the summer, and resistless as the blasts of pestilence. Thy magazines are stored with ammunition, thy treasuries overflow with the tribute of conquered kingdoms. Plenty waves upon thy fields, and opulence glitters in thy cities. Thy nod is as the earthquake that shakes the mountains, and thy smile as the dawn of the vernal day. In thy hand is the strength of thousands, and thy health is the health of millions. Thy palace is gladdened by the song of praise, and thy path perfumed by the breath of benediction. Thy subjects gaze upon thy greatness, and think of danger or misery no more. Why, Seged, wilt not thou partake the blessings thou bestowest? Why shouldst thou only forbear to rejoice in this general felicity? Why should thy face be clouded with anxiety, when the meanest of those who call thee sovereign gives the day to festivity, and the night to peace? At length, Seged, reflect and be wise. What is the gift of conquest but safety? Why are riches collected but to purchase happiness."

Seged then ordered the house of pleasure, built in an island of the lake of Dambea, to be prepared for his reception. "I will retire," says he, "for ten days from tumult and care, from counsels and decrees. Long quiet is not the lot of the governors of nations, but a cessation of ten days cannot be denied me. This short interval of happiness may surely be secured from the interruption of fear or perplexity, sorrow or disappointment. I will exclude all trouble from my abode, and remove from my thoughts whatever may confuse the harmony of the concert, or abate the sweetness of the banquet. I will fill the whole capacity of my soul with enjoyment, and try what it is to live without a wish unsatisfied."

In a few days the orders were performed, and Seged hasted to the palace of Dambea, which stood in an island cultivated only for pleasure, planted with every flower that spreads its colours to the sun, and every shrub that sheds fragrance in the air. In one part of this extensive garden were open walks for excursions in the morning; in another, thick groves, and silent arbours, and bubbling fountains, for repose at noon. All that could solace the sense, or flatter the fancy, all that industry could extort from nature, or wealth furnish to art, all that conquest could seize, or beneficence attract, was collected together, and every perception of delight was excited and gratified.

Into this delicious region Seged summoned all the persons of his court who seemed eminently qualified to receive or communicate pleasure. His call was readily obeyed: the young, the fair, the vivacious, and the witty, were all in haste to be sated with felicity. They sailed jocund over the lake, which seemed to smooth its surface before them; their passage was cheered with music, and their hearts dilated with expectation.

Seged, landing here with his band of pleasure, determined from that hour to break off all acquaintance with discontent, to give his heart for ten days to ease and jollity, and then fall back to the common state of man, and suffer his life to be diversified, as before, with joy and sorrow.

He immediately entered his chamber, to consider where he should begin his circle of happiness. He had all the artists of delight before him, but knew not whom to call, since he could not enjoy one but by delaying the performance of another. He chose and rejected, he resolved and changed his resolution, till his faculties were harassed, and his thoughts confused: then returned to the apartment where his presence was expected, with languid eyes and clouded countenance, and spread the infection of uneasiness over the whole assembly. He observed their depression, and was offended; for he found his vexation increased by those whom he expected to dissipate and relieve it. He retired again to his private chamber, and sought for consolation in his own mind; one thought flowed in upon another; a long succession of images seized his attention; the moments crept imperceptibly away through the gloom of pensiveness, till, having recovered his tranquillity, he lifted up his head, and saw the lake brightened by the setting sun. "Such," said Seged sighing, "is the longest day of human existence: before we have learned to use it, we find it at an end."

The regret which he felt for the loss of so great a part of his first day, took from him all disposition to enjoy the evening; and after having endeavoured, for the sake of his attendants, to force an air of gayety, and excite that mirth which he could not share, he resolved to refer his hopes to the next morning, and lay down to partake with the slaves of labour and poverty the blessing of sleep.

He rose early the second morning, and resolved now to be happy. He therefore fixed upon the gate of the palace an edict, importing, that whoever, during nine days, should appear in the presence of the king with dejected countenance, or utter any expression of discontent or sorrow, should be driven for ever from the palace of Dambea.

This edict was immediately made known in every chamber of the court and bower of the

lens. Mirth was frighted away; and they
were before dancing in the lawns, or sing-
in the shades, were at once engaged in the
of regulating their looks, that Seged might
his will punctually obeyed, and see none
ng them liable to banishment.

eged now met every face settled in a smile;
a smile that betrayed solicitude, timidity,
constraint. He accosted his favourites with
iliarity and softness; but they durst not
k without premeditation, lest they should be
icted of discontent or sorrow. He proposed
rsions, to which no objection was made, be-
e objection would have implied uneasiness;
they were regarded with indifference by the
tiers, who had no other desire than to sig-
ze themselves by clamorous exultation. He
ed various topics of conversation; but ob-
ed only forced jests and laborious laughter;
after many attempts to animate his train to
idence and alacrity, was obliged to confess to
self the impotence of command, and resign
her day to grief and disappointment.

le at last relieved his companions from their
ors, and shut himself up in his chamber to
rtain, by different measures, the felicity of
succeeding days. At length he threw him-
on the bed, and closed his eyes, but imagined,
is sleep, that his palace and gardens were
whelmed by an inundation, and waked with
he terrors of a man struggling in the water.
composed himself again to rest, but was af-
ited by an imaginary irruption into his
dom; and striving, as is usual in dreams,
out ability to move, fancied himself betrayed
is enemies, and again started up with horror
indignation.

was now day, and fear was so strongly im-
sed on his mind that he could sleep no more.
rose; but his thoughts were filled with the
ge and invasion, nor was he able to disen-
his attention, or mingle with vacancy and
in any amusement. At length his pertur-
on gave way to reason, and he resolved no
er to be harassed by visionary miseries; but
re this resolution could be completed, half
lay had elapsed. He felt a new conviction
e uncertainty of human schemes, and could
forbear to bewail the weakness of that being,
se quiet was to be interrupted by vapours of
fancy. Having been first disturbed by a
m, he afterwards grieved that a dream could
rb him. He at last discovered that his ter-
and grief were equally vain, and that to lose
present in lamenting the past was volun-
y to protract a melancholy vision. The
i day was now declining, and Seged again
ived to be happy on the morrow.

No. 205.] TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 1752.

——Volat ambiguis
Mobilis alis hora, nec ulli
Præstat velox fortuna fidem SENECA.

On fickle wings the minutes haste,
And fortune's favours never last. F. LEWIS.

ON the fourth morning Seged rose early, refreshed with sleep, vigorous with health, and eager with expectation. He entered the garden, attended by the princess and ladies of his court, and, seeing nothing about but airy cheerfulness, began to say to his heart, "This day shall be a day of pleasure." The sun played upon the water, the birds warbled in the groves, and the gales quivered among the branches. He roved from walk to walk as chance directed him, and sometimes listened to the songs, sometimes mingled with the dancers, sometimes let loose his imagination in flights of merriment, and sometimes uttered grave reflections and sententious maxims, and feasted on the admiration with which they were received.

Thus the day rolled on, without any accident of vexation, or intrusion of melancholy thoughts. All that beheld him caught gladness from his looks, and the sight of happiness conferred by himself filled his heart with satisfaction: but having passed three hours in this harmless luxury, he was alarmed on a sudden by a universal scream among the women, and, turning back, saw the whole assembly flying in confusion. A young crocodile had risen out of the lake, and was ranging the garden in wantonness or hunger. Seged beheld him with indignation, as a disturber of his felicity, and chased him back into the lake, but could not persuade his retinue to stay, or free their hearts from the terror which had seized upon them. The princesses inclosed themselves in the palace, and could yet scarcely believe themselves in safety. Every attention was fixed upon the late danger and escape, and no mind was any longer at leisure for gay sallies or careless prattle.

Seged had now no other employment than to contemplate the innumerable casualties which lie in ambush on every side to intercept the happiness of man, and break in upon the hour of delight and tranquillity. He had, however, the consolation of thinking, that he had not been now disappointed by his own fault, and that the accident which had blasted the hopes of the day might easily be prevented by future caution.

That he might provide for the pleasure of the next morning, he resolved to repeal his penal edict, since he had already found that discontent and melancholy were not to be frighted away by the threats of authority, and that pleasure would only reside where she was exempted from control. He therefore invited all the companions of his retreat to unbounded pleasantry, by pro-

posing prizes for those who should, on the following day, distinguish themselves by any festive performances; the tables of the antichamber were covered with gold and pearls, and robes and garlands decreed the rewards of those who could refine elegance or heighten pleasure.

At this display of riches every eye immediately sparkled, and every tongue was busied in celebrating the bounty and magnificence of the emperor. But when Seged entered, in hopes of uncommon entertainment from universal emulation, he found that any passion too strongly agitated puts an end to that tranquillity which is necessary to mirth, and that the mind that is to be moved by the gentle ventilations of gayety must be first smoothed by a total calm. Whatever we ardently wish to gain, we must, in the same degree, be afraid to lose, and fear and pleasure cannot dwell together.

All was now care and solicitude. Nothing was done or spoken, but with so visible an endeavour at perfection, as always failed to delight, though it sometimes forced admiration: and Seged could not but observe with sorrow, that his prizes had more influence than himself. As the evening approached, the contest grew more earnest, and those who were forced to allow themselves excelled began to discover the malignity of defeat, first by angry glances, and at last by contemptuous murmurs. Seged likewise shared the anxiety of the day; for, considering himself as obliged to distribute with exact justice the prizes which had been so zealously sought, he durst never remit his attention, but passed his time upon the rack of doubt, in balancing different kinds of merit, and adjusting the claims of all the competitors.

At last, knowing that no exactness could satisfy those whose hopes he should disappoint, and thinking that, on a day set apart for happiness, it would be cruel to oppress any heart with sorrow, he declared that all had pleased him alike, and dismissed all with presents of equal value.

Seged soon saw that his caution had not been able to avoid offence. They who had believed themselves secure of the highest prizes, were not pleased to be levelled with the crowd; and though, by the liberality of the king, they received more than his promise had entitled them to expect, they departed unsatisfied, because they were honoured with no distinction, and wanted an opportunity to triumph in the mortification of their opponents. "Behold here," said Seged, "the condition of him who places his happiness in the happiness of others." He then retired to meditate, and, while the courtiers were repining at his distributions, saw the fifth sun go down in discontent.

The next dawn renewed his resolution to be happy. But having learned how little he could effect by settled schemes or preparatory measures, he thought it best to give up one day entirely to chance, and left every one to please himself be pleased his own way.

This relaxation of regularity diffused a general complacence through the whole court, and the emporer imagined that he had at last found the secret of obtaining an interval of felicity. But as he was roving in this careless assembly with equal carelessness, he overheard one of his courtiers in a close arbour murmuring alone. "What merit has Seged above us, that we should thus fear and obey him? a man who whatever he may have formerly performed, now shows to have the same weakness with ourselves!" This charge affected him the more, as it was uttered by one whom he had always observed among the most abject of flatterers. At first his indignation prompted him to severity; but reflecting, that what was spoken without intention to be heard was to be considered as only thought, and was, perhaps, but the sudden burst of casual and temporary vexation, he invented some decent pretence to send him away, that his retreat might not be tainted with the breath of envy; and after a struggle of deliberation was past, and all desire of revenge utterly suppressed, passed the evening not only with tranquillity, but triumph, though none but himself was conscious of the victory.

The remembrance of this clemency cheered the beginning of the seventh day, and nothing happened to disturb the pleasure of Seged, who looking on the tree that shaded him, he recollected that under a tree of the same kind he had passed the night after his defeat in the kingdom of Goiama. The reflection on his loss, his dishonour, and the miseries which his subjects had suffered from the invader, filled him with sadness. At last he shook off the weight of sorrow, and began to solace himself with his usual pleasures, when his tranquillity was again disturbed by jealousies which the late contest for the prizes had produced, and which, having in vain tried to pacify them by persuasion, he was forced to silence by command.

On the eight morning Seged was awaked early by an unusual hurry in the apartments, and, inquiring the cause, was told that the princess Balkis was seized with sickness. He rose, and, calling the physicians, found that they had little hope of her recovery. Here was an end of jollity; all his thoughts were now upon his daughter, whose eyes he closed on the tenth day.

Such were the days which Seged of Ethiopia had appropriated to a short respiration from the fatigues of war and the cares of government. This narrative he has bequeathed to future generations, that no man hereafter may presume to say, "This day shall be a day of happiness."

o. 206.] Saturday, March 7, 1752.

—*Proposití nondum pudet, atque eadem est mens,*
t bona summa putes, aliena vivere quadra.

JUV.

at harden'd by affronts, and still the same,
ost to all sense of honour and of fame,
ou yet canst love to haunt the great man's board,
nd think no supper good but with a lord.

BOWLES.

When Diogenes was once asked, what kind of ine he liked best, he answered, "That which drunk at the cost of others."

Though the character of Diogenes has never cited any general zeal of imitation, there are any who resemble him in his taste of wine; any who are frugal, though not abstemious; hose appetites, though too powerful for reason, e kept under restraint by avarice; and to hom all delicacies lose their flavour, when ey cannot be obtained but at their own exnse.

Nothing produces more singularity of manrs, and inconstancy of life, than the conflict of pposite vices in the same mind. He that unirmly pursues any purpose, whether good or d, has a settled principle of action; and, as he ay always find associates who are travelling e same way, is countenanced by example, and eltered in the multitude; but a man actuated once by different desires must move in a dicction peculiar to himself, and suffer that reoach which we are naturally inclined to bestow those who deviate from the rest of the world, en without inquiring whether they are worse better.

Yet this conflict of desires sometimes produces onderful efforts. To riot in far-fetched dishes, surfeit with unexhausted variety, and yet ractise the most rigid economy, is surely an art hich may justly draw the eyes of mankind on them whose industry or judgment has enled them to attain it. To him, indeed, who content to break open the chests, or mortgage e manors of his ancestors, that he may hire e ministers of excess at the highest price, glutny is an easy science; yet we often hear the otaries of luxury boasting of the elegance which ey owe to the taste of others; relating with apture the succession of dishes with which their ooks and caterers supply them; and expecting eir share of praise with the discoverers of arts d the civilizers of nations. But to shorten e way to convivial happiness, by eating without cost, is a secret hitherto in few hands, but hich certainly deserves the curiosity of those hose principal employment is their dinner, and ho see the sun rise with no other hope than at they shall fill their bellies before it sets.

Of them that have within my knowledge attempted this scheme of happiness, the greater part have been immediately obliged to desist; and some, whom their first attempts flattered with success, were reduced by degrees to a few tables, from which they were at last chased to make way for others; and, having long habituated themselves to superfluous plenty, growled away their latter years in discontented competence.

None enter the regions of luxury with higher expectations than men of wit, who imagine that they shall never want a welcome to that company whose ideas they can enlarge, or whose imaginations they can elevate, and believe themselves able to pay for their wine with the mirth which it qualifies them to produce. Full of this opinion, they crowd with little invitation wherever the smell of a feast allures them, but are seldom encouraged to repeat their visits, being dreaded by the pert as rivals, and hated by the dull as disturbers of the company.

No man has been so happy in gaining and keeping the privilege of living at luxurious houses as Gulosulus, who, after thirty years of continual revelry, has now established, by uncontroverted prescription, his claim to partake of every entertainment, and whose presence they who aspire to the praise of a sumptuous table are careful to procure on a day of importance, by sending the invitation a fortnight before.

Gulosulus entered the world without any eminent degree of merit; but was careful to frequent houses where persons of rank resorted. By being often seen, he became in time known; and, from sitting in the same room, was suffered to mix in idle conversation, or assisted to fill up a vacant hour, when better amusement was not readily to be had. From the coffee-house he was sometimes taken away to dinner; and, as no man refuses the acquaintance of him whom he sees admitted to familiarity by others of equal dignity, when he had been met at a few tables, he with less difficulty found the way to more, till at last he was regularly expected to appear wherever preparations are made for a feast, within the circuit of his acquaintance.

When he was thus by accident initiated in luxury, he felt in himself no inclination to retire from a life of so much pleasure, and therefore very seriously considered how he might continue it. Great qualities or uncommon accomplishments he did not find necessary; for he had already seen that merit rather enforces respect than attracts fondness; and as he thought no folly greater than that of losing a dinner for any other gratification, he often congratulated himself, that he had none of that disgusting excellence which impresses awe upon greatness, and condemns its possessors to the society of those who are wise or brave, and indigent as themselves.

Gulosulus, having never allotted much of his time to books or meditation, had no opinion in

philosophy or politics, and was not in danger of injuring his interest by dogmatical positions, or violent contradiction. If a dispute arose, he took care to listen with earnest attention; and, when either speaker grew vehement and loud, turned towards him with eager quickness, and uttered a short phrase of admiration, as if surprised by such cogency of argument as he had never known before. By this silent concession, he generally preserved in either controvertist such a conviction of his own superiority, as inclined him rather to pity than irritate his adversary, and prevented those outrages which are sometimes produced by the rage of defeat or petulance of triumph.

Gulosulus was never embarrassed but when he was required to declare his sentiments before he had been able to discover to which side the master of the house inclined; for it was his invariable rule to adopt the notions of those that invited him.

It will sometimes happen that the insolence of wealth breaks into contemptuousness, or the turbulence of wine requires a vent; and Gulosulus seldom fails of being singled out on such emergencies, as one on whom any experiment of ribaldry may be safely tried. Sometimes his lordship finds himself inclined to exhibit a specimen of raillery, for the diversion of his guests, and Gulosulus always supplies him with a subject of merriment. But he has learned to consider rudeness and indignities as familiarities that entitle him to greater freedom: he comforts himself that those who treat and insult him pay for their laughter, and that he keeps his money while they enjoy their jest.

His chief policy consists in selecting some dish from every course, and recommending it to the company, with an air so decisive, that no one ventures to contradict him. By this practice he acquires at a feast a kind of dictatorial authority; his taste becomes the standard of pickles and seasoning, and he is venerated by the professors of epicurism, as the only man who understands the niceties of cookery.

Whenever a new sauce is imported, or any innovation made in the culinary system, he procures the earliest intelligence, and the most authentic receipt; and, by communicating his knowledge under proper injunctions of secrecy, gains a right of tasting his own dish whenever it is prepared, that he may tell whether his directions have been fully understood.

By this method of life Gulosulus has so impressed on his imagination the dignity of feasting, that he has no other topic of talk, or subject of meditation. His calendar is a bill of fare; he measures the year by successive dainties. The only common places of his memory are his meals; and if you ask him at what time an event happened, he considers whether he heard it after a dinner of turbot or venison. He knows, indeed, that those who value themselv upon sense, learning, or piety, speak of him wi contempt; but he considers them as wretch envious or ignorant, who do not know his ha piness, or wish to supplant him; and declares his friends, that he is fully satisfied with his ow conduct, since he has fed every day on twen dishes, and yet doubled his estate.

No. 207.] Tuesday, March 10, 1752.

Solve senescentem mature sanus equum, ne
Peccet ad extremum ridendus. HO

The voice of reason cries with winning force,
Loose from the rapid car your aged horse,
Lest, in the race derided, left behind,
He drag his jaded limbs and burst his wind.
FRANCI

Such is the emptiness of human enjoyme that we are always impatient of the prese Attainment is followed by neglect, and poss sion by disgust; and the malicious remark of t Greek epigrammatist on marriage may be a plied to every other course of life, that its tw days of happiness are the first and the last.

Few moments are more pleasing than those which the mind is concerting measures for new undertaking. From the first hint th wakens the fancy till the hour of actual exec tion, all is improvement and progress, triumj and felicity. Every hour brings additions the original scheme, suggests some new expec ent to secure success, or discovers consequenti advantages not hitherto foreseen. While pr parations are made, and materials accumulate day glides after day through elysian prospec and the heart dances to the song of hope.

Such is the pleasure of projecting, that ma content themselves with a succession of visio ary schemes, and wear out their allotted time the calm amusement of contriving what th never attempt or hope to execute.

Others, not able to feast their imaginati with pure ideas, advance somewhat nearer the grossness of action, with great diligence co lect whatever is requisite to their design, an after a thousand researches and consultation are snatched away by death, as they stand *procinctu* waiting for a proper opportunity begin.

If there were no other end of life, than to fi some adequate solace for every day, I know n whether any condition could be preferred to th of the man who involves himself in his ow thoughts, and never suffers experience to sho him the vanity of speculation; for no sooner a notions reduced to practice, than tranquillity a confidence forsake the breast; every day brin its task, and often without bringing abilities perform it; difficulties embarrass, uncertain

perplexes, opposition retards, censure exasperates, or neglect depresses. We proceed because we have begun; we complete our design that the labour already spent may not be vain; but, as expectation gradually dies away, the gay smile of alacrity disappears, we are compelled to implore severer powers, and trust the event to patience and constancy.

When once our labour has begun, the comfort that enables us to endure it is the prospect of its end; for though in every long work there are some joyous intervals of self-applause, when the attention is recreated by unexpected facility, and the imagination soothed by incidental excellences; yet the toil with which performances struggles after idea is so irksome and disgusting, and so frequent is the necessity of resting below that perfection which we imagined within our reach, that seldom any man obtains more from his endeavours than a painful conviction of his defects, and a continual resuscitation of desires which he feels himself unable to gratify.

So certainly is weariness the concomitant of our undertakings, that every man, in whatever he is engaged, consoles himself with the hope of change; if he has made his way by assiduity to public employment, he talks among his friends of the delight of retreat; if, by the necessity of solitary application, he is secluded from the world, he listens with a beating heart to distant noises, longs to mingle with living beings, and resolves to take hereafter his fill of diversions, or display his abilities on the universal theatre, and enjoy the pleasure of distinction and applause.

Every desire, however innocent, grows dangerous, as by long indulgence it becomes ascendant in the mind. When we have been much accustomed to consider any thing as capable of giving happiness, it is not easy to restrain our ardour, or to forbear some precipitation in our advances, and irregularity in our pursuits. He that has cultivated the tree, watched the swelling bud and opening blossom, and pleased himself with computing how much every sun and shower add to its growth, scarcely stays till the fruit has obtained its maturity, but defeats his own cares by eagerness to reward them. When we have diligently laboured for any purpose, we are willing to believe that we have attained it, and because we have already done much, too suddenly conclude that no more is to be done.

All attraction is increased by the approach of the attracting body. We never find ourselves so desirous to finish, as in the latter part of our work, or so impatient of delay, as when we know that delay cannot be long. This unseasonable importunity of discontent may be partly imputed to languor and weariness, which must always oppress those more whose toil has been longer continued; but the greater part usually proceeds from frequent contemplation of that ease which is now considered as within reach and which, when it has once flattered our hopes, we cannot suffer to be withheld.

In some of the noblest compositions of wit, the conclusion falls below the vigour and spirit of the first books; and as a genius is not to be degraded by the imputation of human failings, the cause of this declension is commonly sought in the structure of the work, and plausible reasons are given why in the defective part less ornament was necessary, or less could be admitted. But, perhaps, the author would have confessed, that his fancy was tired, and his perseverance broken; that he knew his design to be unfinished, but that, when he saw the end so near, he could no longer refuse to be at rest.

Against the instillations of this frigid opiate, the heart should be secured by all the considerations which once concurred to kindle the ardour of enterprise. Whatever motive first incited action, has still greater force to stimulate perseverance; since he that might have lain still at first in blameless obscurity, cannot afterwards desist but with infamy and reproach. He whom a doubtful promise of distant good could encourage to set difficulties at defiance, ought not to remit his vigour when he has almost obtained his recompense. To faint or loiter, when only the last efforts are required, is to steer the ship through tempests, and abandon it to the winds in sight of land; it is to break the ground and scatter the seed, and at last to neglect the harvest.

The masters of rhetoric direct, that the most forcible arguments be produced in the latter part of an oration, lest they should be effaced or perplexed by supervenient images. This precept may be justly extended to the series of life: nothing is ended with honour, which does not conclude better than it began. It is not sufficient to maintain the first vigour; for excellence loses its effect upon the mind by custom, as light after a time ceases to dazzle. Admiration must be continued by that novelty which first produced it, and how much soever is given, there must always be reason to imagine that more remains.

We not only are most sensible of the last impressions; but such is the unwillingness of mankind to admit transcendant merit, that though it be difficult to obliterate the reproach of miscarriages by any subsequent achievement, however illustrious, yet the reputation raised by a long train of success may be finally ruined by a single failure; for weakness or error will be always remembered by that malice and envy which it gratifies.

For the prevention of that disgrace, which lassitude and negligence may bring at last upon the greatest performances, it is necessary to proportion carefully our labour to our strength. If the design comprises many parts, equally

essential, and therefore not to be separated, the only time for caution is before we engage; the powers of the mind must be then impartially estimated, and it must be remembered, that not to complete the plan is not to have begun it; and that nothing is done, while any thing is omitted.

But if the task consists in the repetition of single acts, no one of which derives its efficacy from the rest, it may be attempted with less scruple, because there is always opportunity to retreat with honour. The danger is only, lest we expect from the world the indulgence with which most are disposed to treat themselves; and in the hour of listlessness imagine, that the diligence of one day will atone for the idleness of another, and that applause begun by approbation will be continued by habit.

He that is himself weary will soon weary the public. Let him therefore lay down his employment, whatever it be, who can no longer exert his former activity or attention; let him not endeavour to struggle with censure, or obstinately infest the stage till a general hiss commands him to depart.

No. 208.] SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 1752.

Ἡράκλειτος ἐγώ· τί με ὦ κάτω ἕλκετ' ἀμουσοι;
Οὐχ' ὑμῖν ἐπόνουν, τοις δέ μ' ἐπισταμένοις·
Εἷς ἐμοὶ ἄνθρωπος τρισμύριοι· οἱ δ' ἀναριθμοι
Οὐδείς· ταῦτ' αὐδῶ καὶ παρὰ Περσεφόνη·

DIOG. LAERT.

Begone, ye blockheads, Heraclitus cries,
And leave my labours to the learn'd and wise;
By wit, by knowledge, studious to be read,
I scorn the multitude, alive and dead.

TIME, which puts an end to all human pleasures and sorrows, has likewise concluded the labours of the Rambler. Having supported, for two years, the anxious employment of a periodical writer, and multiplied my essays to upwards of two hundred, I have now determined to desist.

The reasons of this resolution it is of little importance to declare, since justification is unnecessary when no objection is made. I am far from supposing that the cessation of my performances will raise any inquiry, for I have never been much a favourite of the public, nor can boast that, in the progress of my undertaking, I have been animated by the rewards of the liberal, the caresses of the great, or the praises of the eminent.

But I have no design to gratify pride by submission, or malice by lamentation; nor think it reasonable to complain of neglect from those whose regard I never solicited. If I have not been distinguished by the distributors of literary honours, I have seldom descended to the arts by which favour is obtained. I have seen the meteors of fashion rise and fall, without any attempt t add a moment to their duration. I have neve complied with temporary curiosity, nor enable my readers to discuss the topic of the day; have rarely exemplified my assertions by livin characters; in my papers, no man could loo for censures of his enemies, or praises of him self; and they only were expected to perus them, whose passions left them leisure for al stracted truth, and whom virtue could please b its naked dignity.

To some however, I am indebted for encou agement, and to others for assistance. Th number of my friends was never great, but the have been such as would not suffer me to thin that I was writing in vain, and I did not fe much dejection from the want of popularity.

My obligations having not been frequent, m acknowledgments may be soon despatched. can restore to all my correspondents their pr ductions, with little diminution of the bulk my volumes, though not without the loss some pieces to which particular honours ha been paid.

The parts from which I claim no other pra than that of having given them an opportuni of appearing, are the four billets in the ten paper, the second letter in the fifteenth, t thirtieth, the forty-fourth, the ninty-sevent and the hundreth papers, and the second lett in the hundred-and-seventh.

Having thus deprived myself of many excus which candour might have admitted for t inequality of my compositions, being no long able to alledge the necessity of gratifying corre pondents, the importunity with which public tion was solicited, or obstinacy with which co rection was rejected, I must remain account ble for all my faults, and submit, without su terfuge, to the censures of criticism, whic however, I shall not endeavour to soften by formal deprecation, or to overbear by the infl ence of a patron. The supplications of author never yet reprieved him a moment fro oblivion; and, though greatness has sometim sheltered guilt, it can afford no protection ignorance or dulness. Having hitherto attemp ed only the propagation of truth, I will not last violate it by the confession of terrors whi I do not feel; having laboured to maintain t dignity of virtue, I will not now degrade it the meanness of dedication.

The seeming vanity with which I have som times spoken of myself, would perhaps requi an apology, were it not extenuated by the exam ple of those who have published essays befo me, and by the privilege which every namele writer has been hitherto allowed. "A mask says Castiglione, "confers a right of acting a speaking with less restraint, even when t wearer happens to be known." He that is di covered without his own consent, may clai

some indulgence, and cannot be rigorously called to justify those sallies or frolics which his disguise must prove him desirous to conceal.

But I have been cautious lest this offence should be frequently or grossly committed; for, as one of the philosophers directs us to live with a friend, as with one that is some time to become an enemy, I have always thought it the duty of an anonymous author to write, as if he expected to be hereafter known.

I am willing to flatter myself with hopes, that, by collecting these papers, I am not preparing, for my future life, either shame or repentance. That all are happily imagined, or accurately polished, that the same sentiments have not sometimes recurred, or the same expressions been too frequently repeated, I have not confidence in my abilities sufficient to warrant. He that condemns himself to compose on a stated day, will often bring to his task an attention dissipated, a memory embarrassed, an imagination overwhelmed, a mind distracted with anxieties, a body languishing with disease: he will labour on a barren topic, till it is too late to change it; or, in the ardour of invention, diffuse his thoughts into wild exuberance, which the pressing hour of publication cannot suffer judgment to examine or reduce.

Whatever shall be the final sentence of mankind, I have at least endeavoured to deserve their kindness. I have laboured to refine our language to grammatical purity, and to clear it from colloquial barbarisms, licentious idioms, and irregular combinations. Something, perhaps, I have added to the elegance of its construction, and something to the harmony of its cadence. When common words were less pleasing to the ear, or less distinct in their signification, I have familiarised the terms of philosophy, by applying them to popular ideas, but have rarely admitted any word not authorised by former writers; for I believe that whoever knows the English tongue in its present extent, will be able to express his thoughts without further help from other nations.

As it has been my principal design to inculcate wisdom or piety, I have allotted few papers to the idle sports of imagination. Some, perhaps, may be found, of which the highest excellence is harmless merriment; but scarcely any man is so steadily serious as not to complain, that the severity of dictatorial instruction has been too seldom relieved, and that he is driven by the sternness of the Rambler's philosophy to more cheerful and airy companions.

Next to the excursions of fancy are the disquisitions of criticism, which, in my opinion, is only to be ranked among the subordinate and instrumental arts. Arbitrary decision and general exclamation I have carefully avoided, by asserting nothing without a reason, and establishing all my principles of judgment on unalterable and evident truth.

In the pictures of life I have never been so studious of novelty or surprise, as to depart wholly from all resemblance; a fault which writers deservedly celebrated frequently commit, that they may raise, as the occasion requires, either mirth or abhorrence. Some enlargement may be allowed to declamation, and some exaggeration to burlesque; but as they deviate further from reality, they become less useful, because their lessons will fail of application. The mind of the reader is carried away from the contemplation of his own manners; he finds in himself no likeness to the phantom before him; and, though he laughs or rages, is not reformed.

The essays professedly serious, if I have been able to execute my own intentions, will be found exactly conformable to the precepts of Christianity, without any accommodation to the licentiousness and levity of the present age. I therefore look back on this part of my work with pleasure, which no blame or praise of man can diminish or augment. I shall never envy the honours which wit and learning obtain in any other cause, if I can be numbered among the writers who have given ardour to virtue, and confidence to truth.

Αὐτῶν ἐκ μακάρων ἀνταξίος ἥν ἀμοιβή.

Celestial powers; that piety regard,
From you my labours wait their last reward.

THE END.

GLASGOW:
ANDREW & JOHN M. DUNCAN
Printers to the University

THE

IDLER:

BY

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.

"Duplex libelli dos est, quod risum movet,
Et quod prudenti vitam consilio monet."
PHÆDRUS.

Χάρις μικροῖσι.

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☞ The Authors of Nos. 9, 15, 42, 54, and 98, are unknown.—Nos. 33, 93, and 96, are by WARTON.—No. 67 by LANGTON.—Nos. 76, 79, and 82, by REYNOLDS.

HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL

PREFACE.

THIS work was written by Dr. Johnson for "The Universal Chronicle, or Weekly Gazette," rojected in the year 1751, by Mr. J. Newberry, ookseller. The preface to the Rambler conins an outline of the Life of the celebrated auor of these papers; we shall therefore here ly present our readers with a few observations the style, &c. of Dr. Johnson, which he will ot find so copiously described as we could wish our preliminary observations on the Rambler.

The Doctor is said to have been allowed a are in the profits of this newspaper, for which was to furnish a short essay on such subjects might suit the taste of the times, and distinish this publication from its contemporaries. he first Essay appeared on Saturday, April 5th, 1758, and continued to be published on the me day, weekly, until April 5th, 1760, when e Idler was concluded.

The Rambler may be considered as Johnson's reat work. It was the basis of that high reutation which went on increasing to the end f his days. The circulation of those periodical says was not, at first, equal to their merit. hey had not, like the Spectators, the art of harming by variety; and indeed how could it e expected? The wits of Queen Anne's reign ent their contributions to the Spectator; and ohnson stood alone. A stage-coach, says Sir Richard Steele, must go forward on stated days, whether there are passengers or not. So it was with the Rambler, every Tuesday and Saturday, for two years. In this collection Johnson is the great moral teacher of his countrymen; his essays form a body of ethics; the observations on life and manners are acute and instructive; and the papers, professedly critical, serve to promote the cause of literature. It must, however, be acknowledged, that a settled gloom hangs over the author's mind; and all the essays, except eight or ten, coming from the same fountain head, no wonder that they have the raciness of the soil from which they sprung. Of this uniformity Johnson was sensible. He used to say, that if he had joined a friend or two, who would have been able to intermix papers of a sprightly turn, the collection would have been more miscellaneous, and, by consequence, more agreeable to the generality of readers.

It is remarkable, that the pomp of diction, which has been objected to Johnson, was first assumed in the Rambler. His Dictionary was going on at the same time, and, in the course of that work, as he grew familiar with technical and scholastic words, he thought the bulk of his readers were equally learned; or at least would admire the splendour and dignity of the style. And yet it is well known, that he praised in Cowley the ease and unaffected structure of the sentences. Cowley may be placed at the head

of those who cultivated a clear and natural style. Dryden, Tillotson, and Sir William Temple, followed. Addison, Swift, and Pope, with more correctness, carried our language well nigh to perfection. Of Addison, Johnson was used to say, "He is the Raphael of Essay Writers." How he differed so widely from such elegant models is a problem not to be solved, unless it be true that he took an early tincture from the writers of the last century, particularly Sir Thomas Browne. Hence the peculiarities of his style, new combinations, sentences of an unusual structure, and words derived from the learned languages. His own account of the matter is, "When common words were less pleasing to the ear, or less distinct in their signification, I familiarized the terms of philosophy, by applying them to popular ideas." But he forgot the observation of Dryden:—"If too many foreign words are poured in upon us, it looks as if they were designed, not to assist the natives, but to conquer them." There is, it must be admitted, a swell of language, often out of all proportion to the sentiment; but there is, in general, a fulness of mind, and the thought seems to expand with the sound of the words. Determined to discard colloquial barbarisms and licentious idioms, he forgot the elegant simplicity that distinguishes the writings of Addison. He had what Locke calls a round-about view of his subject; and, though he was never tainted, like many modern wits, with the ambition of shining in paradox, he may be fairly called an Original Thinker. His reading was extensive. He treasured in his mind whatever was worthy of notice, but he added to it from his own meditation. He collected, *quæ reconderet, auctaque promeret.* Addison was not so profound a thinker. He was born to write, converse, and live with ease; and he found an early patron in Lord Somers. He depended, however, more upon a fine taste than the vigour of his mind. His Latin poetry shows, that he relished, with a just selection, all the refined and delicate beauties of the R man classics; and when he cultivated his n tive language, no wonder that he formed th graceful style, which has been so justly admi ed; simple, yet elegant; adorned, yet nev over-wrought; rich in allusion, yet pure a perspicuous; correct without labour, and, theu sometimes deficient in strength, yet always m sical. His essays in general, are on the surfa of life; if ever original, it was in pieces of h mour. Sir Roger de Coverly, and the Te Fox-hunter, need not to be mentioned. Joh son had a fund of humour, but he did not kn it, nor was he willing to descend to the famil idiom and the variety of diction which th mode of composition required. The letter, the Rambler, No. 12, from a young girl th wants a place, will illustrate this observati Addison possessed an unclouded imaginati alive to the first objects of nature and of a He reaches the sublime without any appar effort. When he tells us, "If we consider fixed stars as so many oceans of flame, that each of them attended with a different set planets; if we still discover new firmame and new lights that are sunk further in th unfathomable depths of æther, we are lost i labyrinth of suns and worlds, and confo und with the magnificence and immensity of n ture;" the ease, with which this passage ri to unaffected grandeur, is the secret charm th captivates the reader. Johnson is always loft he seems, to use Dryden's phrase, to be o'er formed with meaning, and his words do not a pear to himself adequate to his conception. moves in state, and his periods are always h monious. His Oriental Tales are in the true st of eastern magnificence, and yet none of th are so much admired as the Visions of Mir In matters of criticism, Johnson is never echo of preceding writers. He thinks and cides for himself. If we except the Essays the pleasures of imagination, Addison can be called a philosophical critic. His me

ssays are beautiful; but in that province no-
ing can exceed the Rambler, though Johnson
ed to say, that the Essay on "The Burthens of
ankind" (in the Spectator, No. 558) was the
ost exquisite he had ever read. Talking of
mself, Johnson said, "Topham Beauclark has
it, and every thing comes from him with ease;
t when I say a good thing, I seem to labour."
hen we compare him with Addison, the con-
ast is still stronger. Addison lends grace and
nament to truth; Johnson gives it force and
ergy. Addison makes virtue amiable; John-
n represents it as an awful duty. Addison in-
nuates himself with an air of modesty; John-
n commands like a dictator; but a dictator in
s splendid robes, not labouring at the plough.
ddison is the Jupiter of Virgil, with placid
renity talking to Venus:

"Vultu, quo cœlum tempestatesque serenat."

ohnson is Jupiter Tonans; he darts his
ghtning, and rolls his thunder, in the cause
f virtue and piety. The language seems to
ll short of his ideas; he pours along, familiar-
ing the terms of philosophy, with bold inver-
ons, and sonorous periods; but we may apply
o him what Pope has said of Homer:—"It is
he sentiment that swells and fills out the diction,
hich rises with it, and forms itself about it;
ke glass in the furnace, which grows to a greater
agnitude, as the breath within is more power-
l, and the heat more intense."

It is not the design of this comparison to de-
ide between those two eminent writers. In
natters of taste every reader will choose for him-
elf. Johnson is always profound, and of course
ives the fatigue of thinking. Addison charms
hile he instructs; and writing, as he always
oes, a pure, an elegant, and idiomatic style, he
ay be pronounced the safest model for imita-
on.

The Essays written by Johnson in the Ad-
venturer may be called a continuation of the
Rambler. The Idler, in order to be consistent with the assumed character, is written with abated vigour, in a style of ease and unlaboured elegance. It is the Odyssey after the Iliad. Intense thinking would not become the Idler. The first number presents a well drawn portrait of an Idler, and from that character no deviation could be made. Accordingly, Johnson forgets his austere manner, and plays us into sense. He still continues his lectures on human life, but he adverts to common occurrences, and is often content with the topic of the day. An advertisement in the beginning of the first volume informs us, that twelve entire Essays were a contribution from different hands. One of these, No. 33, is the journal of a Senior fellow at Cambridge, but, as Johnson, being himself an original thinker, always revolted from servile imitation, he has printed the piece, with an apology, importing that the journal of a citizen in the Spectator almost precluded the attempt of any subsequent writer. This account of the Idler may be closed, after observing, that the author's mother being buried on the 23d of January 1759, there is an admirable paper, occasioned by that event, on Saturday the 27th of the same month, No. 41. The reader, if he pleases, may compare it with another fine paper in the Rambler, No. 54, on the conviction that rushes on the mind at the bed of a dying friend.

The Idlers, during the time of their publication, were frequently copied into contemporary works without any acknowledgment. The author who was also a proprietor of the Universal Chronicle, in which they appeared, hurled his vengeance on the pirates in the following "Hue and Cry," which, as coming from Dr. Johnson's pen, may justly be deemed a literary curiosity.

"London, Jan. 5, 1759. Advertisement. The proprietors of the paper, entitled "The Idler," having found that those essays are inserted in the newspapers and magazines with so little regard to justice or decency, that the

Universal Chronicle in which they first appear, is not always mentioned, think it necessary to declare to the publishers of those collections, that however patiently they have hitherto endured these injuries, made yet more injurious by contempt, they have now determined to endure them no longer.—They have already seen essays, for which a very large price is paid, transferred with the most shameless rapacity into the weekly or monthly compilations, and their right, at least for the present, alienated from them, before they could themselves be said to enjoy it. But they would not willingly be thought to want tenderness even for men by whom no tenderness hath been shown. The past is without remedy, and shall be without resentment. But those who have been thus busy with their sickles in the fields of their neighbours, are henceforward to take notice, that the time of impunity is at an end. Whoever shall without our leave, lay the hand of rapine upon our papers, is to expect that we shall vindicate our due, by the means which justice prescribes, and which are warranted by the immemorial prescriptions of honourable trade. We shall lay hold, in our turn, on their copies, degrade them from the pomp of wide margin and diffuse typography, contract them into a narrow space, and sell them at an humble price; yet not with a view of growing rich by confiscations, for we think not much better of money got by punishment than by crimes: we shall therefore, when our losses are repaid, give what profit shall remain to the Magdelens: for we know not who can be more properly taxed for the support of penitent prostitutes than prostitutes in whom there yet appears neither penitence nor shame."——

The effect of this singular manifesto is not now known; but if "essays for which a large price has been paid" be not words of course, they may prove that the author received an immediate remuneration for his labour, independent of his share in the general profits.

Nos. 33, 93, and 96, were written by M
Thomas Warton. Thomas Warton was t
younger brother of Dr. Joseph Warton, a
was born at Basingstoke in 1728. He ve
early manifested a taste for verse; and there
extant a well-turned translation of an epigr
of Martial composed by him in his ninth ye
He was educated under his father, who kep
school at Basingstoke, till he was admitted
1743 a commoner of Trinity College, Oxfo
Here he exercised his poetical talent to so mu
advantage, that on the appearance of Mas
Elegy of "Isis," which severely reflected
the disloyalty of Oxford at that period, he
encouraged by Dr. Huddesford, president
his college, to vindicate the cause of the univ
sity. This task he performed with great
plause by writing, in his 21st year, "
Triumph of Isis;" a piece of much spirit
fancy, in which he retaliated upon the bard
Cam by satirising the courtly venality th
supposed to distinguish the loyal university,
sung in no common strains the past and pres
glories of Oxford. This on his part was
warfare, though as a peace-offering he aft
wards excluded the poem from his volume
collected pieces. His "Progress of Disconten
published in 1750 in a miscellany entitled "T
Student," exhibited to great advantage
power in the familiar style, and his talent
humour, with a knowledge of life extraordin
at his early age, especially if composed, as
said, for a college-exercise in 1746. In 1750
took the degree of M. A., and in the follow
year became a Fellow of his college. He
pears now to have unalterably devoted hi
self to the pursuit of poetry and elegant lite
ture in a university-residence. His spiri
satire, entitled "Newmarket," and poin
against the ruinous passion for the turf;
"Ode for Music;" and "Verses on the Death
the Prince of Wales;" were written about t
time; and in 1753 he was the editor of a su
collection of poems, which, under the title

"The Union," was printed at Edinburgh, and contained several of his own pieces. In 1754 he made himself known as a critic and a diligent student of poetical antiquities, by his observations on Spenser's Fairy Queen, in one volume, afterwards enlarged to two volumes; a work well received by the public, and which made a considerable addition to his literary reputation. These various proofs of his abilities caused him very properly to be elected in 1757 professor of poetry to the university, an office which he held for the usual period of ten years, and rendered respectable by the erudition and taste displayed in his lectures. Dr. Johnson was at this time publishing his "Idler," and Warton, who had long been intimately acquainted with him, contributed the three papers we have mentioned to that work. He gave a specimen of his classical proficiency in 1758 by the publication "Inscriptionum Romanarum Metricarum Delectus," a collection of select Latin epigrams and inscriptions, to which were annexed a few modern ones, on the antique model, five of them by himself. He drew up in 1760, for the Biographica Britannica, the life of Sir Thomas Pope, which he published separately, much enlarged, in 1772 and 1780. Another contribution to literary biography was his "Life and literary Remains of Dr. Bathurst," published in 1761. A piece of local humour, which was read at the time with great avidity, dropped from his pen in 1760, with the title, "A Companion to the Guide, and a Guide to the Companion; being a complete Supplement to all the Accounts of Oxford hitherto published." The lapse of time, and the new reign, had now entirely restored to Oxford its ancient virtue of loyalty; and Warton, who had lamented the death of George II. in a copy of verses addressed to Mr. Pitt, continued the courtly strain, though with due dignity, in lines on the marriage of George III. and on the birth of the Prince of Wales, printed in the university collection. Still ranking equally with the wits and with the poets of Isis, he edited in 1764 the "Oxford Sausage," of several pieces in which lively miscellany he was the writer. In 1766 he again appeared as a classical editor by superintending the Anthology of Cephalus, printed at the Clarendon-press, to which he prefixed a learned and ingenious preface. He took the degree of B. D. in 1761, and in 1771 was instituted to the small living of Kiddington in Oxfordshire, on the presentation of the Earl of Litchfield, then chancellor of the university. An edition of Theocritus in 2 vols. 4to. which was published in 1770, gave him celebrity not only at home, but among the scholars of the continent.

A History of English Poetry is said to have been meditated by Pope, who was but indifferently qualified by learning, whatever he might have been by taste, for such an undertaking. Gray, who possessed every requisite for the work, except industry, entertained a distant idea of engaging in it, with the assistance of Mason; but he shrunk from the magnitude of the task, and readily relinquished his project, when he heard that a similar design was adopted by Warton. At what period he first occupied himself in this extensive plan of writing and research, we are not informed; but in 1774 he had proceeded so far as to publish the first volume in quarto; and he pursued an object, now apparently become the great mark of his studies, with so much assiduity, that he brought out a second volume in 1778, and a third in 1781. He now relaxed in his labours, and never executed more than a few sheets of a fourth volume. The work had grown upon his hands, and had greatly exceeded his first estimate; so that the completion of the design, which was to have terminated only with the commencement of the eighteenth century, was still very remote, supposing a due proportion to have been preserved throughout. Warton's "History of English Poetry" is regarded as his *opus magnum;* and is indeed an ample monument of his reading, as well as of his taste and critical judgment. The majority of its readers, however, will probably be of opinion that he has dwelt too minutely upon those early periods in which

Idler.

poetry can scarcely be said to have existed in this country, and has been too profuse of transcripts from pieces destitute of all merit but their age. Considered, however, as literary antiquarianism, the work is very interesting; and though inaccuracies have been detected, it cannot be denied to abound with curious information. His brother gave some expectation of carrying on the history to the completion of the fourth volume, but seems to have done little or nothing towards fulfilling it. As a proof that Warton began to be weary of his task, it appears that about 1781 he had turned his thoughts to another laborious undertaking, which was a county-history of Oxfordshire; and in 1782 he published as a specimen a topographical account of his parish of Kiddington. In the same year he entered into the celebrated Chattertonian controversy, and published An Inquiry into the Authenticity of the Poems ascribed to Rowley, which he decidedly pronounced to be the fabrication of their pretended editor. His income was augmented in this year by presentation to a donative in Somersetshire; and as he was free both from ambition and avarice he seems to have looked no farther for ecclesiastical promotion. In 1785 the place of Camden-professor of history at Oxford, vacant by the resignation of the present Sir W. Scott, was conferred upon him. He attended to his duties so far as to deliver a learned and ingenious inaugural lecture, but that was the limit of his professional exertions. Another office at this time demanded new efforts. At his Majesty's express desire the post of Poet-laureat, vacated by the death of Whitehead, was offered to him; and, in accepting it, he laudably resolved to use his best endeavours for rendering it respectable. He varied the monotony of anniversary court compliment by retrospective views of the splendid period of English history and the glories of chivalry, and by other topics adapted to poetical description, though little connected with the proper theme of the day; and though his lyric strains underwent some ridicule on that account, they in general enhanced the literary valuation of laureat odes. His concluding publication was an edition of the juvenile poems of Milton, in which it was his purpose to explain his allusions, point out his imitations, illustrate his beauties, and elucidate his obsolete diction and peculiar phraseology. This was a task of no great effort to one qualified like Warton; and engaging in it, rather than in the completion of his elaborate plans, seems to prove that the indolence of advancing years and a collegiate life was gaining upon him. Of this work the first edition appeared in 1785, and the second in 1791, a short time before his death. He had intended to include in his plan a similar edition of the Paradise Regained, and the Samson Agonistes, of the great author, of whom notwithstanding religious and political differences, he was a warm admirer; and he left notes on both these pieces. But his constitution now began to give way, though the period of old age was yet distant. In his 62nd year an attack of the gout shattered his frame, and was succeeded, in May 1790, by a paralytic seizure which carried him off at his lodgings in Oxford. His remains were interred, with every academical honour, in the chapel of Trinity College.

The character of Thomas Warton was marked by some of those peculiarities which commonly fix upon a man the appellation of an humorist; and a variety of stories current among the collegians show that he was more intent upon gratifying his own habitual tastes than regardful of the usual modes and decorums of society. But he was substantially good-humoured, friendly, and placid; and if his dislike of form and restraint sometimes made him prefer the company of inferiors to that of equals, the choice was probably in some measure connected with that love of nature, and spirit of independence, which may be discerned in his writings. That he employed a large portion of his time in the cultivation of his mind by curious and elegant literature, his various productions abundantly testify; yet he appears to have wanted the resolution and steady industry necessary for the completion of a great design; and some remarkable instances of inaccuracy or

forgetfulness prove that his exertions were rather desultory than regular. This disposition was less injurious to him in his poetical capacity than in any other, whence he will probably live longest in fame as a poet. Scarcely any one of that tribe has noted with finer observation the minute circumstances in rural nature that afford pleasure in description, or has derived from the regions of fiction more animated and picturesque scenery. His pieces are very various in subject, and none of them long. He can only rank among the minor poets; but perhaps few volumes in that class will more frequently be taken up for real amusement. Several editions of his poems were called for in his life-time, and since his death an edition of his works has been given by Mr. Mant, in 2 vols. octavo, 1802, with a biographical account of the author prefixed.

When Mr. Warton wrote his three papers in the Idler, he lived in habits of intimacy and correspondence with Dr. Johnson; he was likewise a member of the Literary Club, and made occasional journeys to London, to attend that, and to enjoy the pleasures of Sir Joshua Reynolds' company, of whom some notice is now to be taken as writer of the Essays Nos. 76, 79, and 82, in this work.

Sir Joshua Reynolds was the son of a clergyman at Plympton, in Devonshire, and born there in 1723. Being intended for the church, he received a suitable education under his father, and then removed to Oxford, where he took his degrees in arts; but having a great taste for drawing, he resolved to make painting his profession, and accordingly was placed under Hudson the portrait painter. About 1749 he went to Italy, in company with the honourable Mr. Keppel, his early friend and patron. After studying the works of the most illustrious masters two years, Mr. Reynolds returned to London, where he found no encouragement given to any other branch of the art than to portrait painting. He was of course under the necessity of complying with the prevailing taste, and in that walk soon became unrivalled. The first picture by which he distinguished himself, after his return, was the portrait of Mr. Keppel. He did not, however, confine himself to portraits, but painted several historical pictures of high and acknowledged merit. When the royal academy was instituted he was appointed president, which station he held with honour to himself and advantage to the arts till 1791, and then resigned it. He was also appointed principal painter to the king, and knighted. His literary merits, and other accomplishments, procured him the friendship of the most distinguished men of genius in his time, particularly Johnson, Burke, Goldsmith, and Garrick: and Sir Joshua had the honour of instituting the literary club, of which they were members. He was likewise a member of the royal society, and of that of antiquaries; and was created doctor of laws by the universities of Oxford and Dublin. Sir Joshua's academical discourses display the soundest judgment, the most refined taste, and a perfect acquaintance with the works of different masters; and are written in a clear and elegant style. He died in 1792, and lies buried in St. Paul's cathedral. Having no children, he bequeathed the principal part of his property to his niece, since married to the Earl of Inchiquin, now Marquis of Thomond.

We shall conclude our sketch of the life of this illustrious artist, by quoting his opinion of Dr. Johnson, which is equally honourable to himself and his friend. Speaking of his own discourses, our great artist says, "Whatever merit they have must be imputed, in a great measure, to the education which I may be said to have had under Dr. Johnson. I do not mean to say, though it certainly would be to the credit of these discourses if I could say it with truth, that he contributed even a single sentiment to them; but he qualified my mind to think justly. No man had, like him, the faculty of teaching inferior minds the art of thinking. Perhaps other men might have equal knowledge, but few were so communicative. His great pleasure was to talk to those who

looked up to him. It was here he exhibited his wonderful powers. In mixed company, and frequently in company that *ought* to have looked up to him, many, thinking they had a character for learning to support, considered it as beneath them to enlist in the train of his auditors; and to such persons he certainly did not appear to advantage, being often impetuous and overbearing. The desire of shining in conversation was in him indeed a predominant passion; and if it must be attributed to vanity, let it at the same time be recollected, that it produced that loquaciousness from which his more intimate friends derived considerable advantage. The observations which he made on poetry, on life and on every thing about us, I applied to our art, with what success others must judge."

No. 67 was written by another intimate and affectionate friend of Dr. Johnson's, Bennet Langton, Esq. of Langton in Lincolnshire. His acquaintaince with Dr. Johnson commenced soon after the conclusion of the Rambler, which Mr. Langton, then a youth, had read with so much admiration that Mr. Boswell says he came to London chiefly with a view of being introduced to its author. Mr. Langton died December the 18th, 1801.

THE IDLER.

No. 1.] SATURDAY, APRIL 15, 1758.

Vacui sub umbra
Lusimus. HOR.

THOSE who attempt periodical essays seem to e often stopped in the beginning by the difficul- of finding a proper title. Two writers, since he time of the *Spectator*, have assumed his ame, without any pretensions to lawful inher- ance; an effort was once made to revive the *atler*; and the strange appellations by which her papers have been called, show that the thors were distressed, like the natives of *merica*, who come to the *Europeans* to beg a me.

It will be easily believed of the *Idler*, that if s title had required any search, he never ould have found it. Every mode of life has conveniences. The *Idler*, who habituates mself to be satisfied with what he can most sily obtain, not only escapes labours which e often fruitless, but sometimes succeeds tter than those who despise all that is within eir reach, and think every thing more valua- e as it is harder to be acquired.

If similitude of manners be a motive to kind- ss, the *Idler* may flatter himself with univer- patronage. There is no single character der which such numbers are comprised. very man is, or hopes to be, an *Idler*. Even ose who seem to differ most from us are hast- ing to increase our fraternity; as peace is the d of war, so to be idle is the ultimate pur- se of the busy.

There is, perhaps, no appellation by which a iter can better denote his kindred to the hu- n species. It has been found hard to de- ibe man by an adequate definition. Some ilosophers have called him a reasonable ani- l; but others have considered reason as a ality of which many creatures partake. He s been termed, likewise, a laughing animal; It is said that some men have never laughed. Perhaps man may be more properly distin- guished as an idle animal; for there is no man who is not sometimes idle. It is at least a de- finition from which none that shall find it in this paper can be excepted; for who can be more idle than the reader of the *Idler?*

That the definition may be complete, idleness must be not only the general, but the peculiar characteristic of man; and, perhaps, man is the only being that can properly be called idle, that does by others what he might do himself, or sacrifices duty or pleasure to the love of ease.

Scarcely any name can be imagined from which less envy or competition is to be dreaded. The *Idler* has no rivals or enemies. The man of business forgets him; the man of enterprise despises him; and though such as tread the same track of life fall commonly into jealousy and discord, *Idlers* are always found to associate in peace; and he who is most famed for doing nothing, is glad to meet another as idle as him- self.

What is to be expected from this paper, whether it will be uniform or various, learned or familiar, serious or gay, political or moral, continued or interrupted, it is hoped that no reader will inquire. That the *Idler* has some scheme cannot be doubted; for to form schemes is the *Idler's* privilege. But though he has many projects in his head, he is now grown sparing of communication, having observed, that his hearers are apt to remember what he for- gets himself; that his tardiness of execution exposes him to the encroachments of those who catch a hint and fall to work; and that very specious plans, after long contrivance and pom- pous displays, have subsided in weariness with- out a trial, and without miscarriage have been blasted by derision.

Something the *Idler's* character may be sup- posed to promise. Those that are curious after diminutive history, who watch the revolutions of families, and the rise and fall of charr ters

either male or female, will hope to be gratified by this paper; for the *Idler* is always inquisitive and seldom retentive. He that delights in obloquy and satire, and wishes to see clouds gathering over any reputation that dazzles him with its brightness, will snatch up the *Idler's* essays with a beating heart. The *Idler* is naturally censorious; those who attempt nothing themselves, think every thing easily performed, and consider the unsuccessful always as criminal.

I think it necessary to give notice, that I make no contract, nor incur any obligation. If those who depend on the *Idler* for intelligence and entertainment, should suffer the disappointment which commonly follows ill-placed expectations, they are to lay the blame only on themselves.

Yet hope is not wholly to be cast away. The *Idler*, though sluggish, is yet alive, and may sometimes be stimulated to vigour and activity. He may descend into profoundness, or tower into sublimity; for the diligence of an *Idler* is rapid and impetuous, as ponderous bodies forced into velocity move with violence proportionate to their weight.

But these vehement exertions of intellect cannot be frequent, and he will therefore gladly receive help from any correspondent, who shall enable him to please without his own labour. He excludes no style, he prohibits no subject; only let him that writes to the *Idler* remember, that his letters must not be long: no words are to be squandered in declaration of esteem, or confessions of inability; conscious dulness has little right to be prolix, and praise is not so welcome to the *Idler* as quiet.

No. 2.] SATURDAY, APRIL 22, 1758.

Toto vix quater anno
Memorandum. HOR.

MANY positions are often on the tongue, and seldom in the mind; there are many truths which every human being acknowledges and forgets. It is generally known, that he who expects much will be often disappointed; yet disappointment seldom cures us of expectation, or has any other effect than that of producing a moral sentence, or peevish exclamation. He that embarks in the voyage of life, will always wish to advance rather by the impulse of the wind, than the strokes of the oar; and many founder in the passage, while they lie waiting for the gale that is to waft them to their wish.

It will naturally be suspected that the *Idler* has lately suffered some disappointment, and that he does not talk thus gravely for nothing. No man is required to betray his own secrets. I will, however, confess, that I have now been a writer almost a week, and have not yet heard a single word of praise, nor received one line from any correspondent.

Whence this negligence proceeds I am not able to discover. Many of my predecessors have thought themselves obliged to return their acknowledgments in the second paper, for the kind reception of the first, and in a short time apologies have become necessary to those ingenious gentlemen and ladies whose performances, though in the highest degree elegant and learned, have been unavoidably delayed.

What then will be thought of me, who, having experienced no kindness, have no thanks to return; whom no gentleman or lady has yet enabled to give any cause of discontent, and who have, therefore, no opportunity of showing how skilfully I can pacify resentment, extenuate negligence, or palliate rejection?

I have long known that splendour of reputation is not to be counted among the necessaries of life, and therefore shall not much repine if praise be withheld till it is better deserved. But surely I may be allowed to complain that, in a nation of authors, not one has thought me worthy of notice after so fair an invitation.

At the time when the rage of writing has seized the old and the young, when the cook warbles her lyrics in the kitchen, and the thrasher vociferates his heroics in the barn, when our traders deal out knowledge in bulky volumes, and our girls forsake their samplers to teach kingdoms wisdom, it may seem very unnecessary to draw any more from their proper occupations, by affording new opportunities of literary fame.

I should be, indeed, unwilling to find that, for the sake of corresponding with the *Idler*, the smith's iron had cooled on the anvil, or the spinster's distaff stood unemployed. I solicit only the contributions of those who have already devoted themselves to literature, or, without any determinate intention, wander at large, though the expanse of life, and wear out the day in hearing at one place what they utter at another.

Of these, a great part are already writers. One has a friend in the country upon whom he exercises his powers; whose passions he raises and depresses; whose understanding he perplexes with paradoxes, or strengthens by argument; whose admiration he courts, who praises he enjoys; and who serves him instead of a senate or a theatre; as the young soldier in the Roman camp learned the use of the weapons by fencing against a post in the place of an enemy.

Another has his pockets filled with essays and epigrams, which he reads from house to house, to select parties, and which his acquaintances are daily entreating him to withhold no longer from the impatience of the public.

If among these any one is persuaded that, by such preludes of composition, he has qualified himself to appear in the open world, and is yet afraid of those censures which they who have already written, and they who cannot write, are equally ready to fulminate against public pretenders to fame, he may, by transmitting his performances to the *Idler*, make a cheap experiment of his abilities, and enjoy the pleasure of success, without the hazard of miscarriage.

Many advantages not generally known arise from this method of stealing on the public. The standing author of the paper is always the object of critical malignity. Whatever is mean will be imputed to him, and whatever is excellent be ascribed to his assistants. It does not much alter the event, that the author and his correspondents are equally unknown; for the author, whoever he be, is an individual, of whom every reader has some fixed idea, and whom he is, therefore, unwilling to gratify with applause; but the praises given to his correspondents are scattered in the air, none can tell on whom they will light, and therefore none are unwilling to bestow them.

He that is known to contribute to a periodical work, needs no other caution than not to tell what particular pieces are his own; such secrecy is, indeed, very difficult; but if it can be maintained, it is scarcely to be imagined at how small an expense he may grow considerable.

A person of quality, by a single paper, may engross the honour of a volume. Fame is, indeed, dealt with a hand less and less bounteous through the subordinate ranks, till it descends to the professed author, who will find it very difficult to get more than he deserves; but every man who does not want it, or who needs not value it, may have liberal allowances; and, for five letters in the year sent to the *Idler*, of which perhaps only two are printed, will be promoted to the first rank of writers by those who are weary of the present race of wits, and wish to sink them into obscurity before the lustre of a name not yet known enough to be detested.

No. 3.] SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 1758.

Otia vitæ
Solamur cantu. STAT.

IT has long been the complaint of those who frequent the theatre, that all the dramatic art has been long exhausted, and that the vicissitudes of fortune, and accidents of life, have been shown in every possible combination, till the first scene informs us of the last, and the play no sooner opens, than every auditor knows how it will conclude. When a conspiracy is formed in a tragedy, we guess by whom it will be detected; when a letter is dropt in a comedy, we can tell by whom it will be found. Nothing is now left for the poet but character and sentiment, which are to make their way as they can, without the soft anxiety of suspense, or the enlivening agitation of surprise.

A new paper lies under the same disadvantages as a new play. There is danger lest it be new without novelty.

My earlier predecessors had their choice of vices and follies, and selected such as were most likely to raise merriment or attract attention; they had the whole field of life before them, untrodden and unsurveyed; characters of every kind shot up in their way, and those of the most luxuriant growth, or most conspicuous colours, were naturally cropt by the first sickle. They that follow are forced to peep into neglected corners, to note the casual varieties of the same species, and to recommend themselves by minute industry, and distinctions too subtle for common eyes.

Sometimes it may happen that the haste or negligence of the first inquirers has left enough behind to reward another search; sometimes new objects start up under the eye, and he that is looking for one kind of matter, is amply gratified by the discovery of another. But still it must be allowed, that, as more is taken, less can remain; and every truth brought newly to light impoverishes the mine from which succeeding intellects are to dig their treasures.

Many philosophers imagine that the elements themselves may be in time exhausted; that the sun, by shining long, will effuse all its light; and that, by the continual waste of aqueous particles, the whole earth will at last become a sandy desert.

I would not advise my readers to disturb themselves by contriving how they shall live without light and water. For the days of universal thirst and perpetual darkness are at a great distance. The ocean and the sun will last our time, and we may leave posterity to shift for themselves.

But if the stores of nature are limited, much more narrow bounds must be set to the modes of life; and mankind may want a moral or amusing paper, many years before they shall be deprived of drink or day-light. This want, which to the busy and inventive may seem easily remediable by some substitute or other, the whole race of *Idlers* will feel with all the sensibility that such torpid animals can suffer.

When I consider the innumerable multitudes that, having no motive of desire, or determination of will, lie freezing in perpetual inactivity, till some external impulse puts them in motion; who awake in the morning, vacant of thought, with minds gaping for the intellectual food, which some kind essayist has been accustomed to supply, I am moved by the commiseration

with which all human beings ought to behold the distresses of each other, to try some expedients for their relief, and to inquire by what methods the listless may be actuated, and the empty be replenished.

There are said to be pleasures in madness known only to madmen. There are certainly miseries in idleness which the *Idler* only can conceive. These miseries I have often felt and often bewailed. I know by experience how welcome is every avocation that summons the thoughts to a new image; and how much languor and lassitude are relieved by that officiousness which offers a momentary amusement to him who is unable to find it for himself.

It is naturally indifferent to this race of men what entertainment they receive, so they are but entertained. They catch, with equal eagerness, at a moral lecture, or the memoirs of a robber; a prediction of the appearance of a comet, or the calculation of the chances of a lottery.

They might therefore, easily be pleased if they consulted only their own minds; but those who will not take the trouble to think for themselves, have always somebody that thinks for them; and the difficulty of writing is to please those from whom others learn to be pleased.

Much mischief is done in the world with very little interest or design. He that assumes the character of a critic, and justifies his claim by perpetual censure, imagines that he is hurting none but the author, and him he considers as a pestilent animal, whom every other being has a right to persecute; little does he think how many harmlesss men he involves in his own guilt, by teaching them to be noxious without malignity, and to repeat objections which they do not understand; or how many honest minds he debars from pleasure, by exciting an artificial fastidiousness, and making them too wise to concur with their own sensations. He who is taught by a critic to dislike that which pleased him in his natural state, has the same reason to complain of his instructor, as the madman to rail at his doctor, who when he thought himself master of Peru, physicked him to poverty.

If men will struggle against their own advantage they are not to expect that the *Idler* will take much pains upon them; he has himself to please as well as them, and has long learned, or endeavoured to learn, not to make the pleasure of others too necessary to his own.

No. 4.] SATURDAY, MAY. 6, 1758.

Πάντας γὰς φιλεῖτε. HOM.

CHARITY, or tenderness for the poor, which is now justly considered, by a great part of mankind, as inseparable from piety, and in which almost all the goodness of the present age co sists, is, I think, known only to those wh enjoy, either immediately or by transmissio the light of revelation.

Those ancient nations who have given us th wisest models of government, and the brighte examples of patriotism, whose institutions hav been transcribed by all succeeding legislature and whose history is studied by every candidat for political or military reputation, have le behind them no mention of alms-houses or hos pitals, of places where age might repose, or sick ness be relieved.

The Roman emperors, indeed, gave larg donatives to the citizens and soldiers, but thes distributions were always reckoned rathe popular than virtuous; nothing more was in tended than an ostentation of liberality, no was any recompense expected, but suffrages an acclamations.

Their beneficence was merely occasional; h that ceased to need the favour of the peopl ceased likewise to court it; and therefore, n man thought it either necessary or wise to mak any standing provision for the needy, to loo forwards to the wants of posterity, or to secur successions of charity, for successions of di tress.

Compassion is, by some reasoners, on whos the name of philosophers has been too easil conferred, resolved into an affection merely sel ish, an involuntary perception of pain at th involuntary sight of a being like ourselves la guishing in misery. But this sensation, if eve it be felt at all from the brute instinct of unin structed nature, will only produce effects desul tory and transient; it will never settle into principle of action, or extend relief to calamitie unseen, in generations not yet in being.

The devotion of life or fortune to the succou of the poor, is a height of virtue to which hu manity has never risen by its own power. Th charity of the Mahometans is a precept whic their teacher evidently transplanted from th doctrines of Christianity; and the care wit which some of the Oriental sects attend, as it i said, to the necessities of the diseased and indi gent, may be added to the other argument which prove Zoroaster to have borrowed his in stitutions from the law of Moses.

The present age, though not likely to shin hereafter among the most splendid periods o history, has yet given examples of charity which may be very properly recommended t imitation. The equal distribution of wealth which long commerce has produced, does not en able any single hand to raise edifices of piet like fortified cities, to appropriate manors to re ligious uses, or deal out such large and lastin beneficence as was scattered over the land i ancient times, by those who possessed countie or provinces. But no sooner is a new species o

isery brought to view, and a design of relieving it professed, than every hand is open to contribute something, every tongue is busied in olicitation, and every art of pleasure is employed for a time in the interest of virtue.

The most apparent and pressing miseries indent to man, have now their peculiar houses reception and relief; and there are few nong us, raised however little above the danr of poverty, who may not justly claim, what implored by the Mahometans in their most dent benedictions, the prayers of the poor.

Among those actions which the mind can ost securely review with unabated pleasure, is at of having contributed to an hospital for the ck. Of some kinds of charity the consenences are dubious; some evils which benefince has been busy to remedy, are not certainly nown to be very grievous to the sufferer or trimental to the community; but no man can estion whether wounds and sickness are not ally painful; whether it be not worthy of a od man's care to restore those to ease and usedness, from whose labour infants and women pect their bread, and who, by a casual hurt, or ngering disease, lie pining in want and nguish, burthensome to others, and weary of emselves.

Yet, as the hospitals of the present time subst only by gifts bestowed at pleasure, without ny solid fund of support, there is danger lest e blaze of charity, which now burns with so uch heat and splendour, should die away for anting of lasting fuel; lest fashion should ddenly withdraw her smile, and inconstancy ansfer the public attention to something which ay appear more eligible, because it will be ew.

Whatever is left in the hands of chance must subject to vicissitude; and when any establishment is found to be useful, it ought to be e next care to make it permanent.

But man is a transitory being, and his designs ust partake of the imperfections of their uthor. To confer duration is not always in ir power. We must snatch the present moent, and employ it well, without too much licitude for the future, and content ourselves ith reflecting that our part is performed. He at waits for an opportunity to do much at nce, may breathe out his life in idle wishes, nd regret, in the last hour, his useless intenons, and barren zeal.

The most active promoters of the present hemes of charity, cannot be cleared from some stances of misconduct, which may awaken ntempt or censure, and hasten that neglect hich is likely to come too soon of itself. The en competitions between different hospitals, nd the animosity with which their patrons ppose one another, may prejudice weak minds gainst them all. For it will not be easily believed, that any man can, for good reasons, wish to exclude another from doing good. The spirit of charity can only be continued by a reconciliation of these ridiculous feuds; and, therefore, instead of contentions who shall be the only benefactors to the needy, let there be no other struggle than who shall be the first.

No. 5.] SATURDAY, MAY 13, 1758.

Κάλλος
Αντ' ἐγχείων ἁπάντων
Αντ' ἀσπίδων ἐκεσσῶν. ANAC.

OUR military operations are at last begun; our troops are marching in all the pomp of war, and a camp is marked out on the Isle of Wight; the heart of every Englishman now swells with confidence, though somewhat softened by generous compassion for the consternation and distresses of our enemies.

This formidable armament, and splendid march, produce different effects upon different minds, according to the boundless diversities of temper, occupation, and habits of thought.

Many a tender maiden considers her lover as already lost, because he cannot reach the camp but by crossing the sea; men of a more political understanding are persuaded that we shall now see, in a few days, the ambassadors of France supplicating for pity. Some are hoping for a bloody battle, because a bloody battle makes a vendible narrative; some are composing songs of victory; some planning arches of triumph; and some are mixing fireworks for the celebration of a peace.

Of all extensive and complicated objects different parts are selected by different eyes; and minds are variously affected, as they vary their attention. The care of the public is now fixed upon our soldiers, who are leaving their native country to wander, none can tell how long, in the pathless deserts of the Isle of Wight. The tender sigh for their sufferings, and the gay drink to their success. I who look, or believe myself to look, with more philosophic eyes on human affairs, must confess, that I saw the troops march with little emotion; my thoughts were fixed upon other scenes, and the tear stole into my eyes, not for those who were going away, but for those who were left behind.

We have no reason to doubt but our troops will proceed with proper caution; there are men among them who can take care of themselves. But how shall the ladies endure without them? By what arts can they, who have long had no joy but from the civilities of a soldier, now amuse their hours, and solace their separation?

Of fifty thousand men, now destined to different stations, if we allow each to have been occa-

sionally necessary only to four women, a short computation will inform us, that two hundred thousand ladies are left to languish in distress; two hundred thousand ladies, who must run to sales and auctions without an attendant; sit at the play without a critic to direct their opinion; buy their fans by their own judgment; dispose shells by their own invention; walk in the Mall without a gallant; go to the gardens without a protector; and shuffle cards with vain impatience, for want of a fourth to complete the party.

Of these ladies, some, I hope, have lap-dogs, and some monkeys; but they are unsatisfactory companions. Many useful offices are performed by men of scarlet, to which neither dog nor monkey has adequate abilities. A parrot, indeed, is as fine as a colonel, and, if he has been much used to good company, is not wholly without conversation; but a parrot, after all, is a poor little creature, and has neither sword nor shoulder-knot, can neither dance nor play at cards.

Since the soldiers must obey the call of their duty, and go to that side of the kingdom which faces France, I know not why the ladies, who cannot live without them, should not follow them. The prejudices and pride of man have long presumed the sword and spindle made for different hands, and denied the other sex to partake the grandeur of military glory. This notion may be consistently enough received in France, where the salique law excludes females from the throne; but we, who allow them to be sovereigns, may surely suppose them capable to be soldiers.

It were to be wished that some men, whose experience and authority might enforce regard, would propose that our encampments for the present year should comprise an equal number of men and women, who should march and fight in mingled bodies. If proper colonels were once appointed, and the drums ordered to beat for female volunteers, our regiments would soon be filled without the reproach or cruelty of an impress.

Of these heroines some might serve on foot, under the denomination of the *Female Buffs*, and some on horseback, with the title of *Lady Hussars*.

What objections can be made to this scheme I have endeavoured maturely to consider, and cannot find that a modern soldier has any duties except that of obedience, which a lady cannot perform. If the hair has lost its powder, a lady has a puff; if a coat be spotted, a lady has a brush. Strength is of less importance since fire-arms have been used; blows of the hand are now seldom exchanged; and what is there to be done in the charge or the retreat beyond the powers of a sprightly maiden?

Our masculine squadrons will not suppose themselves disgraced by their auxiliaries, till they have done something which women cou not have done. The troops of Braddock ne saw their enemies, and perhaps were defeated women. If our American general had head an army of girls, he might still have built a f and taken it. Had Minorca been defended a female garrison, it might have been surre dered, as it was, without a breach; and I ca not but think, that seven thousand wom might have ventured to look at Rochfort, sac village, rob a vineyard, and return in safety.

No. 6.] SATURDAY, MAY 20, 1758.

Ταμεῖον ἀρετῆς γεναῖα γυνή. GR. PR

THE lady who had undertaken to ride on o horse a thousand miles in a thousand hours, h completed her journey in little more than tw thirds of the time stipulated, and was conduct through the last mile with triumphal honou Acclamation shouted before her, and all flowers of the spring were scattered in h way.

Every heart ought to rejoice when true me is distinguished with public notice. I am from wishing either to the Amazon or h horse any diminution of happiness or fame, a cannot but lament that they were not m amply and suitably rewarded.

There was once a time when wreaths of ba or oak were considered as recompenses equal the most wearisome labours and terrific da gers, and when the miseries of long marc and stormy seas were at once driven from remembrance by the fragrance of a garland.

If this heroine had been born in anci times, she might, perhaps, have been deligh with the simplicity of ancient gratitude; or any thing was wanting to full satisfaction, might have supplied the deficiency with hope of deification, and anticipated the alt that would be raised, and the vows that wo be made, by future candidates for equestr glory, to the patroness of the race, and the g dess of the stable.

But fate reserved her for a more enlighte age, which has discovered leaves and flower be transitory things; which considers profit the end of honour; and rates the event of ev undertaking only by the money that is gai or lost. In these days, to strew the road w daises and lilies is to mock merit, and del hope. The toyman will not give his jewels, the mercer measure out his silks for vegeta coin. A primrose, though picked up under feet of the most renowned courser, will neit be received as a stake at cards, nor procur seat at an opera, nor buy candles for a rout, lace for a livery. And though there are ma virtuosos, whose sole ambition is to poss something which can be found in no ot

and, yet some are more accustomed to store heir cabinets by theft than purchase, and none f them would either steal or buy one of the owers of gratulation till he knows that all the st are totally destroyed.

Little, therefore, did it avail this wonderful dy to be received, however joyfully, with such bsolete and barren ceremonies of praise. Had ie way been covered with guineas, though but r the tenth part of the last mile, she would ave considered her skill and diligence as not holly lost; and might have rejoiced in the peed and perseverance which had left her such superfluity of time, that she could at leisure ather her reward without the danger of Atanta's miscarriage.

So much ground could not, indeed, have been aved with gold but at a large expense, and we re at present engaged in a war, which demands nd enforces frugality. But common rules are made only for common life, and some deviation rom general policy may be allowed in favour of lady that rode a thousand miles in a thousand ours.

Since the spirit of antiquity so much prevails mongst us, that even on this great occasion we ave given flowers instead of money, let us at east complete our imitation of the ancients, and ndeavour to transmit to posterity the memory f that virtue which we consider as superior to ecuniary recompense. Let an equestrian statue f this heroine be erected, near the starting-post n the heath of Newmarket, to fill kindred ouls with emulation, and tell the grand-daughers of our grand-daughters what an English naiden has once performed.

As events, however illustrious, are soon obcured if they are intrusted to tradition, I think t necessary that the pedestal should be inscribed vith a concise account of this great performance. The composition of this narrative ought not to e committed rashly to improper hands. If he rhetoricians of Newmarket, who may be upposed likely to conceive in its full strength he dignity of the subject, should undertake to xpress it, there is danger lest they admit some hrases which, though well understood at preent, may be ambiguous in another century. If osterity should read on a public monument, hat *the lady carried her horse a thousand miles in a thousand hours*, they may think that the statue nd inscription are at variance, because one will epresent the horse as carrying his lady, and the ther tell that the lady carried her horse.

Some doubts likewise may be raised by specuatists, and some controversies be agitated among istorians, concerning the motive as well as the nanner of the action. As it will be known that his wonder was performed in a time of war, ome will suppose that the lady was frightened y invaders, and fled to preserve her life or her hastity: others will conjecture that she was thus honoured for some intelligence carried of the enemy's designs: some will think that she brought news of a victory: others that she was commissioned to tell of a conspiracy: and some will congratulate themselves on their acuter penetration, and find, that all these notions of patriotism and public spirit are improbable and chimerical; they will confidently tell, that she only ran away from her guardians, and the true causes of her speed were, fear and love.

Let it therefore be carefully mentioned, that by this performance *she won her wager*; and, lest this should, by any change of manners, seem an inadequate or incredible incitement, let it be added, that at this time the original motives of human actions had lost their influence; that the love of praise was extinct; the fear of infamy was become ridiculous; and the only wish of an Englishman was, *to win his wager*.

No. 7.] SATURDAY, MAY 27, 1758.

ONE of the principal amusements of the *Idler* is, to read the works of those minute historians the writers of news, who, though contemptuously overlooked by the composers of bulky volumes, are yet necessary in a nation where much wealth produces much leisure, and one part of the people has nothing to do but to observe the lives and fortunes of the other.

To us, who are regaled every morning and evening with intelligence, and are supplied from day to day with materials for conversation, it is difficult to conceive how man can subsist without a newspaper, or to what entertainment companies can assemble in those wide regions of the earth that have neither Chronicles nor Magazines, neither Gazettes nor Advertisers, neither Journals nor Evening Posts.

There are never great numbers in any nation, whose reason or invention can find employment for their tongues, who can raise a pleasing discourse from their own stock of sentiments and images; and those few who have qualified themselves by speculation for general disquisitions are soon left without an audience. The common talk of men must relate to facts in which the talkers have, or think they have an interest; and where such facts cannot be known, the pleasures of society will be merely sensual. Thus the natives of the Mahometan empires, who approach most nearly to European civility, have no higher pleasure at their convivial assemblies than to hear a piper, or gaze upon a tumbler; and no company can keep together longer than they are diverted by sounds or shows.

All foreigners remark, that the knowledge of the common people of England is greater than

that of any other vulgar. This superiority we undoubtedly owe to the rivulets of intelligence which are continually trickling among us, which every one may catch, and of which every one partakes.

This universal diffusion of instruction is, perhaps, not wholly without its inconveniences; it certainly fills the nation with superficial disputants; enables those to talk who were born to work; and affords information sufficient to elate vanity, and stiffen obstinacy, but too little to enlarge the mind into complete skill for full comprehension.

Whatever is found to gratify the public will be multiplied, by the emulation of venders, beyond necessity or use. This plenty, indeed, produces cheapness, but cheapness always ends in negligence and depravation.

The compilation of newspapers is often committed to narrow and mercenary minds, not qualified for the task of delighting or instructing; who are content to fill their paper, with whatever matter, without industry to gather, or discernment to select.

Thus journals are daily multiplied without increase of knowledge. The tale of the morning paper is told again in the evening, and the narratives of the evening are bought again in the morning. These repetitions, indeed, waste time, but they do not shorten it. The most eager peruser of news is tired before he has completed his labour; and many a man, who enters the coffee-house in his night-gown and slippers, is called away to his shop, or his dinner, before he has well considered the state of Europe.

It is discovered by Reaumur, that spiders might make silk, if they could be persuaded to live in peace together. The writers of news, if they could be confederated, might give more pleasure to the public. The morning and evening authors might divide an event between them; a single action, and that not of much importance, might be gradually discovered, so as to vary a whole week with joy, anxiety, and conjecture.

We know that a French ship of war was lately taken by a ship of England; but this event was suffered to burst upon us all at once, and then what we knew already was echoed from day to day, and from week to week.

Let us suppose these spiders of literature to spin together, and inquire to what an extensive web such another event might be regularly drawn, and how six morning and six evening writers might agree to retail their articles.

On Monday morning the captain of a ship might arrive, who left the Friseur of France, and the Bull-dog, captain Grim, in sight of one another, so that an engagement seemed unavoidable.

Monday evening. A sound of cannon was heard off Cape Finisterre, supposed to be tho of the Bull-dog and Friseur.

Tuesday morning. It was this morning r ported, that the Bull-dog engaged the Frisen yard-arm and yard-arm, three glasses and half, but was obliged to sheer off for want powder. It is hoped that inquiry will be mad into this affair in a proper place.

Tuesday evening. The account of the en gagement between the Bull-dog and Frise was premature.

Wednesday morning. Another express arrived, which brings news, that the Frise had lost all her masts, and three hundred her men, in the late engagement; and that ca tain Grim is come into harbour much shattere

Wednesday evening. We hear that the bra captain Grim, having expended his powde proposed to enter the Friseur sword in hand but that his lieutenant, the nephew of a certa nobleman, remonstrated against it.

Thursday morning. We wait impatient for a full account of the late engagement b tween the Bull-dog and Friseur.

Thursday evening. It is said the order the Bath will be sent to captain Grim.

Friday morning. A certain Lord of the A miralty has been heard to say of a certain ca tain, that if he had done his duty, a certa French ship might have been taken. It w not thus that merit was rewarded in the days Cromwell.

Friday evening. There is certain inform tion at the Admiralty, that the Friseur taken, after a resistance of two hours.

Saturday morning. A letter from one of t gunners of the Bull-dog, mentions the taking the Friseur, and attributes their success whol to the bravery and resolution of captain Grim who never owed any of his advancement borough-jobbers, or any other corrupters of t people.

Saturday evening. Captain Grim arrived the Admiralty, with an account that he enga ed the Friseur, a ship of equal force with h own, off Cape Finisterre, and took her, aft an obstinate resistance, having killed one hu dred and fifty of the French, with the loss ninety five of his own men.

No. 8.] Saturday, June 3, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

In the time of public danger, it is every man duty to withdraw his thoughts in some measu from his private interest, and employ part his time for the general welfare. National co duct ought to be the result of national wisdo a plan formed by mature consideration a

diligent selection out of all the schemes which may be offered, and all the information which can be procured.

In a battle, every man should fight as if he was the single champion; in preparations for war, every man should think, as if the last event depended on his counsel. None can tell what discoveries are within his reach, or how much he may contribute to the public safety.

Full of these considerations, I have carefully reviewed the process of the war, and find, what every other man has found, that we have hitherto added nothing to our military reputation: that at one time we have been beaten by enemies whom we did not see; and, at another, have avoided the sight of enemies lest we should be beaten.

Whether our troops are defective in discipline or in courage, is not very useful to inquire; they evidently want something necessary to success; and he that shall supply that want will deserve well of his country.

To learn of an enemy has always been accounted politic and honourable; and, therefore, I hope it will raise no prejudice against my project, to confess that I borrowed it from a Frenchman.

When the Isle of Rhodes was, many centuries ago, in the hands of that military order now called the Knights of Malta, it was ravaged by a dragon, who inhabited a den under a rock, from which he issued forth when he was hungry or wanton, and without fear or mercy devoured men and beasts as they came in his way. Many councils were held, and many devices offered, for his destruction; but as his back was armed with impenetrable scales, none would venture to attack him. At last Dudon, a French knight, undertook the deliverance of the island. From some place of security he took a view of the dragon, or, as a modern soldier would say, *reconnoitred* him, and observed that his belly was naked and vulnerable. He then returned home to take his *arrangements;* and, by a very exact imitation of nature, made a dragon of pasteboard, in the belly of which he put beef and mutton, and accustomed two sturdy mastiffs to feed themselves by tearing their way to the concealed flesh. When his dogs were well practised in his method of plunder, he marched out with them at his heels, and showed them the dragon; they rushed upon him in quest of their dinner; Dudon battered his skull, while they lacerated his belly; and neither his sting nor claws were able to defend him.

Something like this might be practised in our present state. Let a fortification be raised on Salisbury-Plain, resembling Brest, or Toulon, or Paris itself, with all the usual preparation for defence: let the inclosure be filled with beef and ale; let the soldiers from some proper eminence, see shirts waving upon lines, and here and there a plump landlady hurrying about with pots in their hands. When they are sufficiently animated to advance, lead them in exact order, with fife and drum, to that side whence the wind blows, till they come within the scent of roast meat and tobacco. Contrive that they may approach the place fasting, about half an hour after dinner-time, assure them that there is no danger, and command an attack.

If nobody within either moves or speaks, it is not unlikely that they may carry the place by storm; but if a panic should seize them, it will be proper to defer the enterprise to a more hungry hour. When they have entered, let them fill their bellies and return to the camp.

On the next day let the same place be shown them again, but with some additions of strength or terror. I cannot pretend to inform our generals through what gradations of danger they should train their men to fortitude. They best know what the soldiers and what themselves can bear. It will be proper that the war should every day vary its appearance. Sometimes, as they mount the rampart, a cook may throw fat upon the fire, to accustom them to a sudden blaze; and sometimes by the clatter of empty pots, they may be inured to formidable noises. But let it never be forgotten, that victory must repose with a full belly.

In time it will be proper to bring our French prisoners from the coast, and place them upon the walls in martial order. At their first appearance their hands must be tied, but they may be allowed to grin. In a month they may guard the place with their hands loosed, provided that on pain of death they be forbidden to strike.

By this method our army will soon be brought to look an enemy in the face. But it has been lately observed, that fear is received by the ear as well as the eyes; and the Indian war-cry is represented as too dreadful to be endured; as a sound that will force the bravest veteran to drop his weapon, and desert his rank; that will deafen his ear and chill his breast; that will neither suffer him to hear orders or to feel shame, or retain any sensibility but the dread of death.

That the savage clamours of naked barbarians should thus terrify troops disciplined to war, and ranged in array with arms in their hands, is surely strange. But this is no time to reason. I am of opinion, that by a proper mixture of asses, bulls, turkeys, geese, and tragedians, a noise might be procured equally horrid with the war-cry. When our men have been encouraged by frequent victories, nothing will remain but to qualify them for extreme danger, by a sudden concert of terrific vociferation. When they have endured this last trial, let them be led to action, as men who are no longer to be frightened; as men who can bear at once the grimaces of the Gauls, and the howl of the Americans.

No. 9.] Saturday, June 10, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

I have read you; that is a favour few authors can boast of having received from me besides yourself. My intention in telling you of it is to inform you, that you have both pleased and angered me. Never did writer appear so delightful to me as you did when you adopted the name of the *Idler*. But what a falling-off was there when your first production was brought to light! A natural, irresistible attachment to that favourite passion, *idling*, had led me to hope for indulgence from the *Idler*, but I find him a stranger to the title.

What rules has he proposed totally to unbrace the slackened nerve; to shade the heavy eye of inattention; to give the smooth feature and the uncontracted muscle; or procure insensibility to the whole animal composition?

These were some of the placid blessings I promised myself the enjoyment of, when I committed violence upon myself by mustering up all my strength to set about reading you; but I am disappointed in them all, and the stroke of eleven in the morning is still as terrible to me as before, and I find putting on my clothes still as painful and laborious. Oh that our climate would permit that original nakedness which the thrice happy Indians to this day enjoy! How many unsolicitous hours should I bask away, warmed in bed by the sun's glorious beams, could I, like them, tumble from thence in a moment, when necessity obliges me to endure the torment of getting upon my legs!

But wherefore do I talk to you upon subjects of this delicate nature? you, who seem ignorant of the inexpressible charms of the elbow-chair, attended with a soft stool for the elevation of the feet! Thus, vacant of thought, do I indulge the live-long day.

You may define happiness as you please; I embrace that opinion which makes it consist in the absence of pain. To reflect is pain; to stir is pain; therefore I never reflect or stir but when I cannot help it. Perhaps you will call my scheme of life indolence, and therefore think the *Idler* excused from taking any notice of me: but I have always looked upon indolence and idleness as the same; and so desire you will now and then, while you profess yourself of our fraternity, take some notice of me, and others in my situation, who think they have a right to your assistance; or relinquish the name.

You may publish, burn, or destroy this, just as you are in the humour; it is ten to one but I forget that I wrote it before it reaches you. I believe you may find a motto for it in Horace, but I cannot reach him without getting out of my chair; that is a sufficient reason for my no affixing any.—And being obliged to sit upright to ring the bell for my servant to convey this t the penny-post, if I slip the opportunity of hi being now in the room, makes me break of abruptly.

This correspondent, whoever he be, is not t be dismissed without some tokens of regard. There is no mark more certain of a genuine *Idler* than uneasiness without molestation, and complaint without a grievance.

Yet my gratitude to the contributor of hal a paper shall not wholly overpower my sincerity. I must inform you, that, with all his pretensions, he that calls for directions to be idle is yet but in the rudiments of idleness, and ha attained neither the practice nor theory of wast ing life. The true nature of idleness he wil know in time, by continuing to be idle. Virgi tells us of an impetuous and rapid being, tha acquires strength by motion. The *Idler* ac quires weight by lying still.

The *vis inertiæ*, the quality of resisting all ex ternal impulse, is hourly increasing; the rest less and troublesome faculties of attention an distinction, reflection on the past, and solicitud for the future, by a long indulgence of idlenes will, like tapers in unelastic air, be gradually extinguished; and the officious lover, the vigi lant soldier, the busy trader, may, by a judicious composure of his mind, sink into a state ap proaching to that of brute matter; in which h shall retain the consciousness of his own exis ence, only by an obtuse langour and drowsy discontent.

This is the lowest stage to which the favour ites of idleness can descend; these regions o undelighted quiet can be entered by few. O those that are prepared to sink down into the shade, some are roused into action by avarice o ambition, some are awakened by the voice o fame, some allured by the smile of beauty, an many withheld by the importunities of want Of all the enemies of idleness, want is the mos formidable. Fame is soon found to be a sound and love a dream; avarice and ambition ma be justly suspected of privy confederacies wit idleness; for when they have for a while pro tected their votaries, they often deliver them u to end their lives under her dominion. War always struggles against idleness, but War herself is often overcome; and every hou shows the careful observer those who had rathe live in ease than in plenty.

So wide is the region of Idleness, and s powerful her influence. But she does not im mediately confer all her gifts. My correspon dent, who seems, with all his errors, worth advice, must be told, that he is calling too hast ly for the last effusion of total insensibility Whatever he may have been taught by unskilfu

dlers to believe, labour is necessary in his initiation to idleness. He that never labours may now the pains of idleness, but not the pleasure. The comfort is, that if he devotes himself to insensibility, he will daily lengthen the intervals of idleness, and shorten those of labour, till at last he will lie down to rest, and no longer disturb the world or himself by bustle or competition.

Thus I have endeavoured to give him that information which, perhaps, after all, he did not want: for a true *Idler* often calls for that which he knows is never to be had, and asks questions which he does not desire ever to be answered.

No. 10.] SATURDAY, JUNE 17, 1758.

CREDULITY, or confidence of opinion too great for the evidence from which opinion is derived, we find to be a general weakness imputed by every sect and party to all others; and, indeed, by every man to every other man.

Of all kinds of credulity, the most obstinate and wonderful is that of political zealots; of men, who being numbered, they know not how or why, in any of the parties that divide a state, resign the use of their own eyes and ears, and resolve to believe nothing that does not favour those whom they profess to follow.

The bigot of philosophy is seduced by authorities which he has not always opportunities to examine, is entangled in systems by which truth and falsehood are inextricably complicated, or undertakes to talk on subjects which nature did not form him able to comprehend.

The Cartesian, who denies that his horse feels the spur, or that the hare is afraid when the hounds approach her; the disciple of Malbranche, who maintains that the man was not hurt by the bullet, which, according to vulgar apprehension, swept away his legs; the follower of Berkeley, who, while he sits writing at his table, declares that he has neither table, paper, nor fingers; have all the honour at least of being deceived by fallacies not easily detected, and may plead that they did not forsake truth, but for appearances which they were not able to distinguish from it.

But the man who engages in a party has seldom to do with any thing remote or abstruse. The present state of things is before his eyes; and, if he cannot be satisfied without retrospection, yet he seldom extends his views beyond the historical events of the last century. All the knowledge that he can want is within his attainment, and most of the arguments which he can hear are within his capacity.

Yet so it is that an *Idler* meets every hour of his life with men who have different opinions upon every thing past, present, and future; who deny the most notorious facts, contradict the most cogent truths, and persist in asserting today what they asserted yesterday, in defiance of evidence, and contempt of confutation.

Two of my companions, who are grown old in idleness, are Tom Tempest and Jack Sneaker. Both of them consider themselves as neglected by their parties, and therefore entitled to credit; for why should they favour ingratitude? They are both men of integrity, where no factious interest is to be promoted; and both lovers of truth, when they are not heated with political debate.

Tom Tempest is a steady friend to the house of Stuart. He can recount the prodigies that have appeared in the sky, and the calamities that have afflicted the nation every year from the Revolution; and is of opinion, that, if the exiled family had continued to reign, there would have neither been worms in our ships, nor caterpillars in our trees. He wonders that the nation was not awakened by the hard frost to a revocation of the true king, and is hourly afraid that the whole island will be lost in the sea. He believes that king William burnt Whitehall that he might steal the furniture; and that Tillotson died an atheist. Of queen Anne he speaks with more tenderness, owns that she meant well, and can tell by whom and why she was poisoned. In the succeeding reigns all has been corruption, malice, and design. He believes that nothing ill has ever happened for these forty years by chance or error; he holds that the battle of Dettingen was won by mistake, and that of Fontenoy lost by contract; that the Victory was sunk by a private order; that Cornhill was fired by emissaries from the council; and the arch of Westminster-bridge was so contrived as to sink, on purpose that the nation might be put to charge. He considers the new road to Islington as an encroachment on liberty, and often asserts that *broad wheel* will be the ruin of England.

Tom is generally vehement and noisy, but nevertheless has some secrets which he always communicates in a whisper. Many and many a time has Tom told me, in a corner, that our miseries were almost at an end, and that we should see, in a month, another monarch on the throne; the time elapses without a revolution; Tom meets me again with new intelligence, the whole scheme is now settled, and we shall see great events in another month.

Jack Sneaker is a hearty adherent to the present establishment; he has known those who saw the bed into which the Pretender was conveyed in a warming pan. He often rejoices that the nation was not enslaved by the Irish. He believes that king William never lost a battle, and that if he had lived one year longer he would have conquered France. He holds that Charles the First was a Papist. He allows there were

some good men in the reign of queen Anne, but the peace of Utrecht brought a blast upon the nation, and has been the cause of all the evil that we have suffered to the present hour. He believes that the scheme of the South Sea was well intended, but that it miscarried by the influence of France. He considers a standing army as the bulwark of liberty; thinks us secured from corruption by septennial parliaments; relates how we are enriched and strengthened by the electoral dominions, and declares that the public debt is a blessing to the nation.

Yet, amidst all this prosperity, poor Jack is hourly disturbed by the dread of Popery. He wonders that some stricter laws are not made against Papists, and is sometimes afraid that they are busy with French gold among the bishops and judges.

He cannot believe that the Nonjurors are so quiet for nothing; they must certainly be forming some plot for the establishment of popery; he does not think the present oath sufficiently binding, and wishes that some better security could be found for the succession of Hanover. He is zealous for the naturalization of foreign Protestants, and rejoiced at the admission of the Jews to the English privileges, because he thought a Jew would never be a Papist.

No. 11.] SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 1758.

IT is commonly observed, that when two Englishmen meet, their first talk is of the weather; they are in haste to tell each other, what each must already know, that it is hot or cold, bright or cloudy, windy or calm.

There are, among the numerous lovers of subtilties and paradoxes, some who derive the civil institutions of every country from its climate, who impute freedom and slavery to the temperature of the air, can fix the meridian of vice and virtue, and tell at what degree of latitude we are to expect courage or timidity, knowledge or ignorance.

From these dreams of idle speculation, a slight survey of life, and a little knowledge of history, is sufficient to awaken any inquirer, whose ambition of distinction has not overpowered his love of truth. Forms of government are seldom the result of much deliberation; they are framed by chance in popular assemblies, or in conquered countries by despotic authority. Laws are often occasional, often capricious, made always by a few, and sometimes by a single voice. Nations have changed their characters; slavery is now no where more patiently endured, than in countries once inhabited by the zealots of liberty.

But national customs can arise only from general agreement; they are not imposed, but chosen, and are continued only by the continuance of their cause. An Englishman's notice of the weather, is the natural consequence of changeable skies and uncertain seasons. In many parts of the world, wet weather and dry are regularly expected at certain periods; but in our island every man goes to sleep, unable to guess whether he shall behold in the morning a bright or cloudy atmosphere, whether his rest shall be lulled by a shower, or broken by a tempest. We therefore rejoice mutually at good weather, as at an escape from something that we feared; and mutually complain of bad, as of the loss of something that we hoped. Such is the reason of our practice; and who shall treat it with contempt? Surely not the attendant on a court, whose business is to watch the looks of a being weak and foolish as himself, and whose vanity is, to recount the names of men who might drop into nothing, and leave no vacuity; nor the proprietor of funds, who stops his acquaintance in the street to tell him of the loss of half-a-crown; nor the inquirer after news, who fills his head with foreign events, and talks of skirmishes and sieges, of which no consequence will ever reach his hearers or himself. The weather is a nobler and more interesting subject; it is the present state of the skies and of the earth, on which plenty and famine are suspended, on which millions depend for the necessaries of life.

The weather is frequently mentioned for another reason, less honourable to my dear countrymen. Our dispositions too frequently change with the colour of the sky; and when we find ourselves cheerful and good-natured, we naturally pay our acknowledgements to the powers of sunshine; or, if we sink into dulness and peevishness, look round the horizon for an excuse and charge our discontent upon an easterly wind or a cloudy day.

Surely nothing is more reproachful to a being endowed with reason, than to resign its powers to the influence of the air, and live in dependence on the weather and the wind, for the only blessings which nature has put into our power, tranquillity and benevolence. To look up to the sky for the nutriment of our bodies, is the condition of nature; to call upon the sun for peace and gayety, to deprecate the clouds lest sorrow should overwhelm us, is the cowardice of idleness, and idolatry of folly.

Yet, even in this age of inquiry and knowledge, when superstition is driven away, and omens and prodigies have lost their terrors, we find this folly countenanced by frequent examples. Those that laugh at the portentous glare of a comet, and hear a crow with equal tranquillity from the right or left, will yet talk of times and situations proper for intellectual performances, will imagine the fancy exalted by verna

reezes, and the reason invigorated by a bright
ılm.

If men who have given up themselves to fan-
ful credulity, would confine their conceits in
ıeir own minds, they might regulate their
ves by the barometer, with inconvenience only
themselves; but to fill the world with ac-
ounts of intellects subject to ebb and flow, of
ıe genius that awakened in the spring, and
ıother that ripened in the autumn, of one
ind expanded in the summer, and of another
ncentrated in the winter, is no less dangerous
ıan to tell children of bugbears and goblins.
ear will find every house haunted; and idle-
ss will wait for ever for the moment of illum-
ıation.

This distinction of seasons is produced only
y imagination operating on luxury. To tem-
erance every day is bright, and every hour is
opitious to diligence. He that shall resolute-
excite his faculties, or exert his virtues, will
on make himself superior to the seasons, and
ay set at defiance the morning mist, and the
ening damp, the blasts of the east, and the
ouds of the south.

It was the boast of the Stoic philosophy, to
ake man unshaken by calamity, and unelated
y success; incorruptible by pleasure, and in-
ılnerable by pain; these are heights of wisdom
hich none ever attained, and to which few
ı aspire; but there are lower degrees of con-
ancy necessary to common virtue; and every
an, however he may distrust himself in the
xtremes of good or evil, might at least struggle
ainst the tyranny of the climate, and refuse
enslave his virtue or his reason to the most
ıriable of all variations, the changes of the
eather.

o. 12.] SATURDAY, JULY 1, 1758.

HAT every man is important in his own eyes,
a position of which we all, either voluntarily
unwarily, at least once an hour confess the
ıth; and it will unavoidably follow, that
ery man believes himself important to the
ıblic.

The right which this importance gives us to
neral notice and visible distinction, is one of
ose disputable privileges which we have not
ways courage to assert, and which we there-
re suffer to lie dormant, till some elation of
ind, or vicissitude of fortune, incites us to de-
ure our pretensions, and enforce our demands.
nd hopeless as the claim of vulgar characters
ay seem to the supercilious and severe, there
e few who do not at one time or other endea-
our to step forward beyond their rank, who do
ot make some struggles for fame, and show
that they think all other conveniences and de-
lights imperfectly enjoyed without a name.

To get a name can happen but to few. A name, even in the most commercial nation, is one of the few things which cannot be bought. It is the free gift of mankind, which must be deserved before it will be granted, and is at last unwillingly bestowed. But this unwillingness only increases desire in him who believes his merit sufficient to overcome it.

There is a particular period of life in which this fondness for a name seems principally to predominate in both sexes. Scarce any couple comes together but the nuptials are declared in the newspapers with encomiums on each party. Many an eye, ranging over the page with eager curiosity in quest of statesmen and heroes, is stopped by a marriage celebrated between Mr. Buckram, an eminent salesman in Threadneedle-street, and Miss Dolly Juniper, the only daughter of an eminent distiller of the parish of St. Giles's in the Fields, a young lady adorned with every accomplishment that can give happiness to the married state. Or we are told amidst our impatience for the event of a battle, that on a certain day Mr. Winker, a tide-waiter at Yarmouth, was married to Mrs. Cackle, a widow lady of great accomplishments; and that as soon as the ceremony was performed they set out in a post chaise for Yarmouth.

Many are the inquiries which such intelligence must undoubtedly raise, but nothing in the world is lasting. When the reader has contemplated with envy, or with gladness, the felicity of Mr. Buckram and Mr. Winker, and ransacked his memory for the names of Juniper and Cackle, his attention is diverted to other thoughts, by finding that Mirza will not cover this season; or that a spaniel has been lost or stolen, that answers to the name of Ranger.

Whence it arises that on the day of marriage all agree to call thus openly for honours, I am not able to discover. Some, perhaps, think it kind, by a public declaration, to put an end to the hopes of rivalry and the fears of jealousy, to let parents know that they may set their daughters at liberty whom they have locked up for fear of the bridegroom, or to dismiss to their counters and their offices the amorous youths that had been used to hover round the dwelling of the bride.

These connubial praises may have another cause. It may be the intention of the husband and wife to dignify themselves in the eyes of each other, and, according to their different tempers or expectations, to win affection, or enforce respect.

It was said of the family of Lucas that it was *noble*, for *all the brothers were valiant, and all the sisters were virtuous*. What would a stranger say of the English nation, in which, on the day of marriage, all the men are *eminent*,

and all the women *beautiful*, *accomplished*, and *rich*?

How long the wife will be persuaded of the eminence of her husband, or the husband continue to believe that his wife has the qualities required to make marriage happy, may reasonably be questioned. I am afraid that much time seldom passes before each is convinced that praises are fallacious, and particularly those praises which we confer upon ourselves.

I should, therefore, think that this custom might be omitted without any loss to the community; and that the sons and daughters of lanes and alleys might go hereafter to the next church, with no witnesses of their worth or happiness but their parents and their friends; but if they cannot be happy on their bridal day without some gratification of their vanity, I hope they will be willing to encourage a friend of mine who proposes to devote his powers to their service.

Mr. Settle, a man whose *eminence* was once allowed by the *eminent*, and whose *accomplishments* were confessed by the *accomplished*, in the latter part of a long life supported himself by an uncommon expedient. He had a standing elegy and epithalamium, of which only the first and last leaves were varied occasionally, and the intermediate pages were, by general terms, left applicable alike to every character. When any marriage became known, Settle ran to the bridegroom with his epithalamium; and when he heard of any death, ran to the heir with his elegy.

Who can think himself disgraced by a trade that was practised so long by the rival of Dryden, by the poet whose Empress of Morocco was played before princes by ladies of the court?

My friend purposes to open an office in the Fleet for matrimonial panegyrics, and will accommodate all with praise who think their own powers of expression inadequate to their merit. He will sell any man or woman the virtue or qualification which is most fashionable or most desired; but desires his customers to remember, that he sets beauty at the highest price, and riches at the next; and if he be well paid, throws in virtue for nothing.

No. 13.] Saturday, July 8, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Dear Mr. Idler,

Though few men of prudence are much inclined to interpose in disputes between man and wife, who commonly make peace at the expense of the arbitrator, yet I will venture to lay before you a controversy, by which the quiet of my house has been long disturbed, and which unless you can decide it, is likely to produce lasting evils, and embitter those hours which nature seems to have appropriated to tenderness and repose.

I married a wife with no great fortune, but of a family remarkable for domestic prudence and elegant frugality. I lived with her at ease if not with happiness, and seldom had any reason of complaint. The house was always clean, the servants very active and regular, dinner was on the table every day at the same minute, and the ladies of the neighbourhood were frightened when I invited their husbands, lest their own economy should be less esteemed.

During this gentle lapse of life my dear brought me three daughters. I wished for a son, to continue the family; but my wife often tells me, that boys are dirty things, and are always troublesome in a house; and declares that she has hated the sight of them ever since she saw lady Fondle's eldest son ride over a cart with his hobby-horse all mire.

I did not much attend to her opinion, but knew that girls could not be made boys; and therefore composed myself to bear what I could not remedy, and resolved to bestow that care on my daughters to which only the sons are commonly thought entitled.

But my wife's notions of education differ widely from mine. She is an irreconcileable enemy to idleness, and considers every state of life as idleness, in which the hands are not employed, or some art acquired, by which she thinks money may be got or saved.

In pursuance of this principle, she calls up her daughters at a certain hour, and appoints them a task of needlework to be performed before breakfast. They are confined in a garret which has its window in the roof, both because the work is best done at a skylight, and because children are apt to lose time by looking about them.

They bring down their work to breakfast, and as they deserve are commended or reproved; they are then sent up with a new task till dinner; if no company is expected, their mother sits with them the whole afternoon, to direct their operations, and to draw patterns, and sometimes denied to her nearest relations, when she is engaged in teaching them a new stitch.

By this continual exercise of their diligence she has obtained a very considerable number of laborious performances. We have twice as many fire-screens as chimneys, and three floor-ished quilts for every bed. Half the rooms are adorned with a kind of *sutile pictures*, which imitate tapestry. But all their work is not set out to show; she has boxes filled with knit garters and braided shoes. She has twenty covers for side-saddles embroidered with silver flowers, and has curtains wrought with gold in various

gures, which she resolves some time or other hang up. All these she displays to her comany whenever she is elate with merit, and iger for praise; and amidst the praises which er friends and herself bestow upon her merit, ie never fails to turn to me, and ask what all iese would cost, if I had been to buy them.

I sometimes venture to tell her that many of ie ornaments are superfluous; that what is done ith so much labour might have been supplied y a very easy purchase; that the work is not ways worth the materials; and that I know ot why the children should be persecuted with eless tasks, or obliged to make shoes that are ever worn. She answers with a look of conmpt, that men never care how money goes, id proceeds to tell of a dozen new chairs for hich she is contriving covers, and of a couch hich she intends to stand as a monument of eedlework.

In the meantime the girls grow up in total norance of every thing past, present, and fuire. Molly asked me the other day, whether reland was in France, and was ordered by her other to mind her hem. Kitty knows not, sixteen, the difference between a protestant id a papist, because she has been employed iree years in filling a side of a closet with a anging that is to represent Cranmer in the ames. And Dolly, my eldest girl, is now unble to read a chapter in the Bible, having spent l the time, which other children pass at hool, in working the interview between Solon and the queen of Sheba.

About a month ago Tent and Turkey-stitch emed at a stand; my wife knew not what ew work to introduce; I ventured to propose iat the girls should now learn to read and rite, and mentioned the necessity of a little ithmetic; but, unhappily, my wife has disvered that linen wears out, and has bought ie girls three little wheels, that they may spin ickaback for the servants' table. I remonrated, that with larger wheels they might spatch in an hour what must now cost them day; but she told me, with irresistible thority, that any business is better than idleess; that when these wheels are set upon ble, with mats under them, they will turn ithout noise and keep the girls upright; that reat wheels are not fit for gentlewomen; and iat with these, small as they are, she does ot doubt but that the three girls, if they are ept close, will spin every year as much cloth would cost five pounds if one were to buy it.

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o. 14.] Saturday, July 15, 1758.

When Diogenes received a visit in his tub from lexander the Great, and was asked, according to the ancient forms of royal courtesy, what petition he had to offer; *I have nothing*, said he, *to ask, but that you would remove to the other side, that you may not, by intercepting the sunshine, take from me what you cannot give.*

Such was the demand of Diogenes from the greatest monarch of the earth, which those, who have less power than Alexander, may, with yet more propriety, apply to themselves. He that does much good, may be allowed to do sometimes a little harm. But if the opportunities of beneficence be denied by fortune, innocence should at least be vigilantly preserved.

It is well known that time once past never returns; and that the moment which is lost, is lost for ever. Time, therefore, ought, above all other kinds of property, to be free from invasion; and yet there is no man who does not claim the power of wasting that time which is the right of others.

This usurpation is so general, that a very small part of the year is spent by choice; scarcely any thing is done when it is intended, or obtained when it is desired. Life is continually ravaged by invaders; one steals away an hour, and another a day: one conceals the robbery by hurrying us into business, another by lulling us with amusement; the depredation is continued through a thousand vicissitudes of tumult and tranquillity, till, having lost all, we can lose no more.

This waste of the lives of men has been very frequently charged upon the Great, whose followers linger from year to year in expectations, and die at last with petitions in their hands. Those who raise envy will easily incur censure. I know not whether statesmen and patrons do not suffer more reproaches than they deserve, and may not rather themselves complain, that they are given up a prey to pretensions without merit, and to importunity without shame.

The truth is, that the inconveniences of attendance are more lamented than felt. To the greater number solicitation is its own reward. To be seen in good company, to talk of familiarities with men of power, to be able to tell the freshest news, to gratify an inferior circle with predictions of increase or decline of favour, and to be regarded as a candidate for high offices, are compensations more than equivalent to the delay of favours, which, perhaps, he that begs them has hardly confidence to expect.

A man, conspicuous in a high station, who multiplies hopes that he may multiply dependents, may be considered as a beast of prey, justly dreaded, but easily avoided; his den is known, and they who would not be devoured, need not approach it. The great danger of the waste of time is from caterpillars and moths, who are not resisted, because they are not feared, and who work on with unheeded mischiefs, and invisible encroachments.

He whose rank or merit procures him the notice of mankind, must give up himself, in a great measure, to the convenience or humour of those who surround him. Every man who is sick of himself will fly to him for relief; he that wants to speak will require him to hear; and he that wants to hear will expect him to speak. Hour passes after hour, the noon succeeds to morning, and the evening to noon, while a thousand objects are forced upon his attention, which he rejects as fast as they are offered, but which the custom of the world requires to be received with appearance of regard.

If we will have the kindness of others, we must endure their follies. He who cannot persuade himself to withdraw from society, must be content to pay a tribute of his time to a multitude of tyrants; to the loiterer, who makes appointments which he never keeps; to the consulter who asks advice which he never takes; to the boaster, who blusters only to be praised; to the complainer, who whines only to be pitied; to the projector, whose happiness is to entertain his friends with expectations which all but himself know to be vain; to the economist, who tells of bargains and settlements; to the politician, who predicts the fate of battles and breach of alliances; to the usurer, who compares the different funds; and to the talker, who talks only because he loves to be talking.

To put every man in possession of his own time, and rescue the day from the succession of usurpers, is beyond my power, and beyond my hope. Yet, perhaps, some stop might be put to this unmerciful persecution, if all would seriously reflect, that whoever pays a visit that is not desired, or talks longer than the hearer is willing to attend, is guilty of an injury which he cannot repair, and takes away that which he cannot give.

No. 15.] Saturday, July 22, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

I have the misfortune to be a man of business; that, you will say, is a most grievous one; but what makes it the more so to me is, that my wife has nothing to do; at least she had too good an education, and the prospect of too good a fortune in reversion when I married her, to think of employing herself either in my shop affairs, or the management of my family.

Her time, you know, as well as my own, must be filled up some way or other. For my part, I have enough to mind in weighing my goods out, and waiting on my customers; but my wife, though she could be of as much use as a shopman to me, if she would put her hand to it, is now only in my way. She walks all morning sauntering about the shop, with h arms through her pocket-holes, or stands gapi at the door-sill, and looking at every person th passes by. She is continually asking me thousand frivolous questions about every cust mer that comes in and goes out; and all t while that I am entering any thing in my da book, she is lolling over the counter, and stari at it, as if I was only scribbling or drawi figures for her amusement. Sometimes, inde she will take a needle; but as she always wor at the door, or in the middle of the shop, s has so many interruptions, that she is long hemming a towel, or darning a stocking, th I am in breaking forty loaves of sugar, a making it up into pounds.

In the afternoon I am sure, likewise, have her company, except she is called up by some of her acquaintance: and then, we let out all the upper part of our hou and have only a little room backwards for ou selves, they either keep such a chattering, else are calling out every moment to me, that cannot mind my business for them.

My wife, I am sure, might do all the lit matters our family requires; and I could wi that she would employ herself in them; but, i stead of that, we have a girl to do the wo and look after a little boy about two years o which I may fairly say is the mother's ov child. The brat must be humoured in eve thing: he is, therefore, suffered constantly play in the shop, pull all the goods about, a clamber up the shelves to get at the plums a sugar. I dare not correct him; because, if did, I should have wife and maid both upon at once. As to the latter, she is as lazy a sluttish as her mistress; and because she co plains she has too much work, we can scarc get her to do any thing at all; nay, what worse than that, I am afraid she is harc honest; and as she is entrusted to buy in all o provisions, the jade, I am sure, makes a mark penny out of every article.

But to return to my deary.—The evenin are the only time, when it is fine weather, th I am left to myself; for then she generally tak the child out to give it milk in the park. Wh she comes home again she is so fatigued wi walking, that she cannot stir from her cha and it is an hour after shop is shut, before can get a bit of supper, while the maid is tak up in undressing and putting the child to bed

But you will pity me much more when I t you the manner in which we generally pass o Sundays. In the morning she is common too ill to dress herself to go to church; s therefore, never gets up till noon; and wh is still more vexatious, keeps me in bed wi her, when I ought to be busily engaged in bett employment. It is well if she can get her thin

on by dinner-time; and when that is over I am sure to be dragged out by her, either to Georgia, or Hornsey Wood, or the White-Conduit House. Yet even these near excursions are so very fatiguing to her, that, besides what it costs me in tea and hot rolls, and syllabubs, and cakes for the boy, I am frequently forced to take a hackney-coach, or drive them home in a one-horse chair. At other times, as my wife is rather of the fattest, and a very poor walker, besides bearing her whole weight upon my arm, I am obliged to carry the child myself.

Thus, Sir, does she constantly drawl out her time, without either profit or satisfaction; and, while I see my neighbours' wives helping in the shop, and almost earning as much as their husbands, I have the mortification to find, that mine is nothing but a dead weight upon me. In short, I do not know any greater misfortune can happen to a plain hard-working tradesman, as I am, than to be joined to such a woman, who is rather a clog than a help-mate to him.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

ZACHARY TREACLE.

No. 16.] SATURDAY, JULY 29, 1758.

I PAID a visit yesterday to my old friend Ned Drugget, at his country lodgings. Ned began trade with a very small fortune; he took a small house in an obscure street, and for some years dealt only in remnants. Knowing that *light gains make a heavy purse*, he was content with moderate profit; having observed or heard the effects of civility, he bowed down to the counter-edge at the entrance and departure of every customer, listened without impatience to the objections of the ignorant, and refused without resentment the offers of the penurious. His only recreation was, to stand at his own door and look into the street. His dinner was sent him from a neighbouring alehouse, and he opened and shut the shop at a certain hour with his own hands.

His reputation soon extended from one end of the street to the other; and Mr. Drugget's exemplary conduct was recommended by every master to his apprentice, and by every father to his son. Ned was not only considered as a thriving trader, but as a man of elegance and politeness, for he was remarkably neat in his dress, and would wear his coat threadbare without spotting it; his hat was always brushed, his shoes glossy, his wig nicely curled, and his stockings without a wrinkle. With such qualifications it was not very difficult for him to gain the heart of Miss Comfit, the only daughter of Mr. Comfit the confectioner.

Ned is one of those whose happiness marriage has increased. His wife had the same disposition with himself; and his method of life was very little changed, except that he dismissed the lodgers from the first floor, and took the whole house into his own hands.

He had already, by his parsimony, accumulated a considerable sum, to which the fortune of his wife was now added. From this time he began to grasp at greater acquisitions, and was always ready with money in his hand, to pick up the refuse of a sale, or to buy the stock of a trader who retired from business. He soon added his parlour to his shop, and was obliged a few months afterwards, to hire a warehouse.

He had now a shop splendidly and copiously furnished with every thing that time had injured, or fashion had degraded, with fragments of tissues, odd yards of brocade, vast bales of faded silk, and innumerable boxes of antiquated ribbons. His shop was soon celebrated through all quarters of the town, and frequented by every form of ostentatious poverty. Every maid, whose misfortune it was to be taller than her lady, matched her gown at Mr. Drugget's; and many a maiden who had passed a winter with her aunt in London, dazzled the rustics, at her return, with cheap finery which Drugget had supplied. His shop was often visited in a morning by ladies who left their coaches in the next street, and crept through the alley in linen gowns. Drugget knows the rank of his customers by their bashfulness; and when he finds them unwilling to be seen, invites them up stairs, or retires with them to the back window.

I rejoiced at the increasing prosperity of my friend, and imagined that as he grew rich, he was growing happy. His mind has partaken the enlargement of his fortune. When I stepped in for the first five years, I was welcomed only with a shake of the hand; in the next period of his life, he beckoned across the way for a pot of beer; but for six years past, he invited me to dinner; and if he bespeaks me the day before, never fails to regale me with a fillet of veal.

His riches neither made him uncivil nor negligent; he rose at the same hour, attended with the same assiduity, and bowed with the same gentleness. But for some years he has been much inclined to talk of the fatigues of business, and the confinement of a shop, and to wish that he had been so happy as to have renewed his uncle's lease of a farm, that he might have lived without noise and hurry, in a pure air, in the artless society of honest villagers, and the contemplation of the works of nature.

I soon discovered the cause of my friend's philosophy. He thought himself grown rich enough to have a lodging in the country, like the mercers on Ludgate-hill, and was resolved to enjoy himself in the decline of life. This was a revolution not to be made suddenly. He

talked three years of the pleasures of the country, but passed every night over his own shop. But at last he resolved to be happy, and hired a lodging in the country, that he may steal some hours in the week from business; for, says he, *when a man advances in life, he loves to entertain himself sometimes with his own thoughts.*

I was invited to this seat of quiet and contemplation among those whom Mr. Drugget considers as his most reputable friends, and desires to make the first witnesses of his elevation to the highest dignities of a shopkeeper. I found him at Islington, in a room which overlooked the high road, amusing himself with looking through the window, which the clouds of dust would not suffer him to open. He embraced me, told me I was welcome into the country, and asked me, if I did not feel myself refreshed. He then desired that dinner might be hastened, for fresh air always sharpened his appetite, and ordered me a toast and a glass of wine after my walk. He told me much of the pleasure he found in retirement, and wondered what had kept him so long out of the country. After dinner, company came in, and Mr. Drugget again repeated the praises of the country, recommended the pleasures of meditation, and told them, that he had been all the morning at the window, counting the carriages as they passed before him.

No. 17.] Saturday, Aug. 5, 1758.

The rainy weather, which has continued the last month, is said to have given great disturbance to the inspectors of barometers. The oraculous glasses have deceived their votaries; shower has succeeded shower, though they predicted sunshine and dry skies; and by fatal confidence in these fallacious promises, many coats have lost their gloss, and many curls have been moistened to flaccidity.

This is one of the distresses to which mortals subject themselves by the pride of speculation. I had no part in this learned disappointment, who am content to credit my senses, and to believe that rain will fall when the air blackens, and that the weather will be dry when the sun is bright. My caution indeed does not always preserve me from a shower. To be wet, may happen to the genuine *Idler;* but to be wet in opposition to theory, can befall only the *Idler* that pretends to be busy. Of those that spin out life in trifles, and die without a memorial, many flatter themselves with high opinions of their own importance, and imagine that they are every day adding some improvement to human life. To be idle and to be poor, have always been reproaches, and therefore every man endeavours, with his utmost care, to hide his poverty from others, and his *idleness* from himself.

Among those whom I never could persuade to rank themselves with *Idlers,* and who speak with indignation of my morning sleeps and nocturnal rambles, one passes the day in catching spiders, that he may count their eyes with a microscope; another erects his head, and exhibits the dust of a marigold separated from the flower with a dexterity worthy of Leuwenhoeck himself. Some turn the wheel of electricity, some suspend rings to a loadstone, and find that what they did yesterday they can do again to-day. Some register the changes of the wind, and die fully convinced that the wind is changeable.

There are men yet more profound, who have heard that two colourless liquors may produce a colour by union, and that two cold bodies will grow hot if they are mingled; they mingle them, and produce the effect expected, say it is strange, and mingle them again.

The *Idlers* that sport only with inanimate nature may claim some indulgence; if they are useless, they are still innocent; but there are others, whom I know not how to mention without more emotion than my love of quiet willingly admits. Among the inferior professors of medical knowledge, is a race of wretches whose lives are only varied by varieties of cruelty; whose favourite amusement is, to nail dogs to tables and open them alive; to try how long life may be continued in various degrees of mutilation, or with the excision or laceration of the vital parts; to examine whether burning irons are felt more acutely by the bone or tendon; and whether the most lasting agonies are produced by poison forced into the mouth, or injected into the veins.

It is not without reluctance that I offend the sensibility of the tender mind with images like these. If such cruelties were not practised, it were to be desired that they should not be conceived; but, since they are published every day with ostentation, let me be allowed once to mention them, since I mention them with abhorrence.

Mead has invidiously remarked of Woodward, that he gathered shells and stones, and would pass for a philosopher. With pretensions much less reasonable, the anatomical novice tears out the living bowels of an animal, and styles himself physician, prepares himself by familiar cruelty for that profession which he is to exercise upon the tender and the helpless, upon feeble bodies and broken minds, and by which he has opportunities to extend his arts of torture and continue those experiments upon infancy and age, which he has hitherto tried upon cats and dogs.

What is alleged in defence of these hateful

practices, every one knows; but the truth is, that by knives, fire, and poison, knowledge is not always sought, and is very seldom attained. The experiments that have been tried, are tried again; he that burned an animal with irons yesterday, will be willing to amuse himself with burning another to-morrow. I know not, that any living dissections any discovery has been made by which a single malady is more easily cured. And if the knowledge of physiology has been somewhat increased, he surely buys knowledge dear, who learns the use of the lacteals at the expense of his humanity. It is time that universal resentment should arise against these horrid operations, which tend to harden the heart, extinguish those sensations which give man confidence in man, and make the physician more dreadful than the gout or stone.

No. 18.] Saturday, Aug. 12, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

It commonly happens to him who endeavours to obtain distinction by ridicule, or censure, that he teaches others to practise his own arts against himself; and that, after a short enjoyment of the applause paid to his sagacity, or of the mirth excited by his wit, he is doomed to suffer the same severities of scrutiny, to hear inquiry detecting his faults, and exaggeration sporting with his failings.

The natural discontent of inferiority will seldom fail to operate in some degree of malice against him who professes to superintend the conduct of others, especially if he seats himself uncalled in the chair of judicature, and exercises authority by his own commission.

You cannot, therefore, wonder that your observations on human folly, if they produce laughter at one time, awaken criticism at another; and that among the numbers whom you have taught to scoff at the retirement of Drugget, there is one who offers his apology.

The mistake of your old friend is by no means peculiar. The public pleasures of far the greater part of mankind are counterfeit. Very few carry their philosophy to places of diversion, or are very careful to analyse their enjoyments. The general condition of life is so full of misery, that we are glad to catch delight without inquiring whence it comes, or by what power it is bestowed.

The mind is seldom quickened to very vigorous operations but by pain, or the dread of pain. We do not disturb ourselves with the detection of fallacies which do us no harm, nor willingly decline a pleasing effect to investigate its cause. He that is happy, by whatever means, desires nothing but the continuance of happiness, and is no more solicitous to distribute his sensations into their proper species, than the common gazer on the beauties of the spring to separate light into its original rays.

Pleasure is therefore seldom such as it appears to others, nor often such as we represent it to ourselves. Of the ladies that sparkle at a musical performance, a very small number has any quick sensibility of harmonious sounds. But every one that goes has her pleasure. She has the pleasure of wearing fine clothes, and of showing them, of outshining those whom she suspects to envy her; she has the pleasure of appearing among other ladies in a place whither the race of meaner mortals seldom intrudes, and of reflecting that, in the conversations of the next morning, her name will be mentioned among those that sat in the first row; she has the pleasure of returning courtesies, or refusing to return them, of receiving compliments with civility, or rejecting them with disdain. She has the pleasure of meeting some of her acquaintance, of guessing why the rest are absent, and of telling them that she saw the opera, on pretence of inquiring why they would miss it. She has the pleasure of being supposed to be pleased with a refined amusement, and of hoping to be numbered among the votaresses of harmony. She has the pleasure of escaping for two hours the superiority of a sister, or the control of a husband; and from all these pleasures she concludes, that heavenly music is the balm of life.

All assemblies of gayety are brought together by motives of the same kind. The theatre is not filled with those that know or regard the skill of the actor, nor the ball-room by those who dance, or attend to the dancers. To all places of general resort, where the standard of pleasure is erected, we run with equal eagerness, or appearance of eagerness, for very different reasons. One goes that he may say he has been there, another because he never misses. This man goes to try what he can find, and that to discover what others find. Whatever diversion is costly will be frequented by those who desire to be thought rich; and whatever has, by any accident become fashionable, easily continues its reputation, because every one is ashamed of not partaking it.

To every place of entertainment we go with expectation and desire of being pleased; we meet others who are brought by the same motives; no one will be the first to own the disappointment; one face reflects the smile of another, till each believes the rest delighted, and endeavours to catch and transmit the circulating rapture. In time all are deceived by the cheat to which all contribute. The fiction of happiness is propagated by every tongue, and confirmed by every look, till at last all profess the joy which they do not feel, consent to yield to the

general delusion; and when the voluntary dream is at an end, lament that bliss is of so short a duration.

If Drugget pretended to pleasures of which he had no perception, or boasted of one amusement where he was indulging another, what did he which is not done by all those who read his story? of whom some pretend delight in conversation, only because they dare not be alone; some praise the quiet of solitude, because they are envious of sense, and impatient of folly; and some gratify their pride, by writing characters which expose the vanity of life.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant.

No. 19.] Saturday, Aug. 19, 1758.

Some of those ancient sages that have exercised their abilities in the inquiry after the *supreme good*, have been of opinion, that the highest degree of earthly happiness is quiet; a calm repose both of mind and body, undisturbed by the sight of folly or the noise of business, the tumults of public commotion, or the agitations of private interest; a state in which the mind has no other employment, but to observe and regulate her own motions, to trace thought from thought, combine one image with another, raise systems of science, and form theories of virtue.

To the scheme of these solitary speculatists, it has been justly objected, that if they are happy, they are happy only by being useless. That mankind is one vast republic, where every individual receives many benefits from the labours of others, which, by labouring in his turn for others, he is obliged to repay; and that where the united efforts of all are not able to exempt all from misery, none have a right to withdraw from their task of vigilance, or to be indulged in idle wisdom or solitary pleasures.

It is common for controvertists, in the heat of disputation, to add one position to another till they reach the extremities of knowledge, where truth and falsehood lose their distinction. Their admirers follow them to the brink of absurdity, and then start back from each side towards the middle point. So it has happened in this great disquisition. Many perceive alike the force of the contrary arguments, find quiet shameful, and business dangerous; and therefore pass their lives between them, in bustle without business, and negligence without quiet.

Among the principal names of this moderate set is that great philosopher Jack Whirler, whose business keeps him in perpetual motion, and whose motion always eludes his business; who is always to do what he never does, who cannot stand still because he is wanted in another place, and who is wanted in many places because he stays in none.

Jack has more business than he can conveniently transact in one house; he has therefore one habitation near Bow-Church, and another about a mile distant. By this ingenious distribution of himself between two houses, Jack has contrived to be found at neither. Jack's trade is extensive, and he has many dealers; his conversation is sprightly, and he has many companions; his disposition is kind, and he has many friends. Jack neither forbears pleasure for business, nor omits business for pleasure, but is equally invisible to his friends and his customers; to him that comes with an invitation to a club, and to him that waits to settle an account.

When you call at his house, his clerk tells you that Mr. Whirler has just stept out, but will be at home exactly at two; you wait at a coffee-house till two, and then find that he has been at home, and is gone out again, but left word that he should be at the Half-moon tavern at seven, where he hopes to meet you. At seven you go to the tavern. At eight in comes Mr. Whirler to tell you, that he is glad to see you, and only begs leave to run for a few minutes to a gentleman that lives near the Exchange, from whom he will return before supper can be ready. Away he runs to the Exchange, to tell those who are waiting for him, that he must beg them to defer the business till to-morrow, because his time is come at the Half-moon.

Jack's cheerfulness and civility rank him among those whose presence never gives pain, and whom all receive with fondness and caresses. He calls often on his friends to tell them, that he will come again to-morrow; on the morrow he comes again, to tell them how an unexpected summons hurries him away.—When he enters a house his first declaration is, that he cannot sit down, and so short are his visits, that he seldom appears to have come for any other reason but to say he must go.

The dogs of Egypt, when thirst brings them to the Nile, are said to run as they drink for fear of the crocodiles. Jack Whirler always dines at full speed. He enters, finds the family at table, sits familiarly down, and fills his plate; but while the first morsel is in his mouth, hears the clock strike, and rises; then goes to another house, sits down again, recollects another engagement; has only time to taste the soup, makes a short excuse to the company, and continues through another street his desultory dinner.

But, overwhelmed as he is with business, his chief desire is to have still more. Every new proposal takes possession of his thoughts; he soon balances probabilities, engages in the project, brings it almost to completion, and then forsakes it for another, which he catches with some alacrity, urges with the same vehemence, and abandons with the same coldness.

Every man may be observed to have a certain strain of lamentation, some peculiar theme of complaint on which he dwells in his moments of dejection. Jack's topic of sorrow is his want of time. Many an excellent design languishes in empty theory for want of time. For the omission of any civilities, want of time is his plea to others; for the neglect of any affairs, want of time is his excuse to himself. That he wants time he sincerely believes; for he once pined away many months with a lingering distemper, for want of time to attend to his health.

Thus Jack Whirler lives in perpetual fatigues without proportionate advantage, because he does not consider that no man can see all with his own eyes, or do all with his own hands; that whoever is engaged in multiplicity of business, must transact much by substitution, and leave something to hazard; and that he who attempts to do all, will waste his life in doing little.

No. 20.] SATURDAY, AUG. 26, 1758.

THERE is no crime more infamous than the violation of truth. It is apparent that men can be social beings no longer than they believe each other. When speech is employed only as the vehicle of falsehood, every man must disunite himself from others, inhabit his own cave, and seek prey only for himself.

Yet the law of truth, thus sacred and necessary, is broken without punishment, without censure, in compliance with inveterate prejudice and prevailing passions. Men are willing to credit what they wish, and encourage rather those who gratify them with pleasures, than those that instruct them with fidelity.

For this reason every historian discovers his country; and it is impossible to read the different accounts of any great event, without a wish that truth had more power over partiality.

Amidst the joy of my countrymen for the acquisition of Louisbourg, I could not forbear to consider how differently this revolution of American power is not only now mentioned by the contending nations, but will be represented by the writers of another century.

The English historian will imagine himself barely doing justice to English virtue, when he relates the capture of Louisbourg in the following manner:—

"The English had hitherto seen, with great indignation, their attempts baffled and their force defied by an enemy, whom they considered themselves as entitled to conquer by the right of prescription, and whom many ages of hereditary superiority had taught them to despise. Their fleets were more numerous, and their seamen braver, than those of France; yet they only floated useless on the ocean, and the French derided them from their ports. Misfortunes, as is usual, produced discontent, the people murmured at the ministers, and the ministers censured the commanders.

"In the summer of this year, the English began to find their success answerable to their cause. A fleet and an army were sent to America to dislodge the enemies from the settlements which they had so perfidiously made, and so insolently maintained, and to repress that power which was growing more every day by the association of the Indians with whom these degenerate Europeans intermarried, and whom they secured to their party by presents and promises.

"In the beginning of June the ships of war and vessels containing the land forces appeared before Louisbourg, a place so secure by nature that art was almost superfluous, and yet fortified by art as if nature had left it open. The French boasted that it was impregnable, and spoke with scorn of all attempts that could be made against it. The garrison was numerous, the stores equal to the longest siege, and their engineers and commanders high in reputation.

"The mouth of the harbour was so narrow, that three ships within might easily defend it against all attacks from the sea. The French had, with that caution which cowards borrow from fear, and attribute to policy, eluded our fleets, and sent into that port five great ships and six smaller, of which they sunk four in the mouth of the passage, having raised batteries and posted troops at all the places where they thought it possible to make a descent. The English, however, had more to dread from the roughness of the sea, than from the skill or bravery of the defendants. Some days passed before the surges, which rise very high round that island, would suffer them to land. At last their impatience could be restrained no longer; they got possession of the shore with little loss by the sea, and with less by the enemy. In a few days the artillery was landed, the batteries were raised, and the French had no other hope than to escape from one post to another. A shot from the batteries fired the powder in one of their largest ships, the flame spread to the two next, and all three were destroyed; the English admiral sent his boats against the two large ships yet remaining, took them without resistance, and terrified the garrison to an immediate capitulation."

Let us now oppose to this English narrative the relation which will be produced, about the same time, by the writer of the age of Louis XV.

"About this time the English admitted to the conduct of affairs a man who undertook to save from destruction that ferocious and turbulent people, who from the mean insolence of wealthy

traders, and the lawless confidence of successful robbers, were now sunk in despair and stupified with horror. He called in the ships which had been dispersed over the ocean to guard their merchants, and sent a fleet and an army, in which almost the whole strength of England was comprised, to secure their possessions in America, which were endangered alike by the French arms and the French virtue. We had taken the English fortresses by force, and gained the Indian nations by humanity. The English, wherever they come, are sure to have the natives for their enemies: for, the only motive of their settlements is avarice, and the only consequence of their success is oppression. In this war they acted like other barbarians, and, with a degree of outrageous cruelty which the gentleness of our manners scarcely suffers us to conceive, offered rewards by open proclamation to those who should bring in the scalps of Indian women and children. A trader always makes war with the cruelty of a pirate.

"They had long looked with envy and with terror upon the influence which the French exerted over all the northern regions of America by the possession of Louisbourg, a place naturally strong, and new fortified with some slight outworks. They hoped to surprise the garrison unprovided; but that sluggishness which always defeats their malice, gave us time to send supplies, and to station ships for the defence of the harbour. They came before Louisbourg in June, and were for some time in doubt whether they should land. But the commanders, who had lately seen an admiral beheaded for not having done what he had not power to do, durst not leave the place unassaulted. An Englishman has no ardour for honour, nor zeal for duty; he neither values glory nor loves his king, but balances one danger with another, and will fight rather than be hanged. They therefore landed, but with great loss; their engineers had, in the last war with the French, learned something of the military science, and made their approaches with sufficient skill; but all their efforts had been without effect, had not a ball unfortunately fallen into the powder of one our ships, which communicated the fire to the rest, and, by opening the passage of the harbour, obliged the garrison to capitulate. Thus was Louisbourg lost, and our troops marched out with the admiration of their enemies, who durst hardly think themselves masters of the place."

No. 21.] Saturday, Sept. 2, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Dear Mr. Idler,

There is a species of misery, or of disease, for which our language is commonly supposed to h without a name, but which I think is emphat cally enough denominated *listlessness*, and whic is commonly termed a want of something to d

Of the unhappiness of this state I do not ex pect all your readers to have an adequate ide Many are overburthened with business, and ca imagine no comfort but in rest; many hav minds so placid, as willingly to indulge a v luntary lethargy; or so narrow, as easily to l filled to their utmost capacity. By these shall not be understood, and therefore cannot b pitied. Those only will sympathise with m complaint, whose imagination is active and r solution weak, whose desires are ardent, a whose choice is delicate; who cannot satis themselves with standing still, and yet cann find a motive to direct their course.

I was the second son of a gentleman, who estate was barely sufficient to support hims and his heir in the dignity of killing game. I therefore made use of the interest which t alliances of his family afforded him, to procu me a post in the army. I passed some years the most contemptible of all human statio that of a soldier in time of peace. I wander with the regiment as the quarters were change without opportunity for business, taste for know ledge, or money for pleasure. Wherever came, I was for some time a stranger witho curiosity, and afterwards an acquaintance wit out friendship. Having nothing to hope these places of fortuitous residence, I resign my conduct to chance; I had no intention offend, I had no ambition to delight.

I suppose every man is shocked when he hea how frequently soldiers are wishing for wa The wish is not always sincere; the great part are content with sleep and lace, and cou terfeit an ardour which they do not feel; b those who desire it most are neither prompt by malevolence nor patriotism; they neith pant for laurels nor delight in blood; but lo to be delivered from the tyranny of idleness, a restored to the dignity of active beings.

I never imagined myself to have more coura than other men, yet was often involuntary wis ing for a war, but of a war at that time I h no prospect; and being enabled, by the death an uncle, to live without my pay, I quitted t army, and resolved to regulate my own motio

I was pleased, for a while, with the novelty independence, and imagined that I had n found what every man desires. My time w in my own power, and my habitation w wherever my choice should fix it. I amus myself for two years in passing from place place, and comparing one convenience with a other; but being at last ashamed of inquir and weary of uncertainty, I purchased a hou and established my family.

I now expected to begin to be happy, and w

happy for a short time with that expectation. But I soon perceived my spirits to subside, and my imagination to grow dark. The gloom thickened every day around me. I wondered by what malignant power my peace was blasted, till I discovered at last that I had nothing to do.

Time, with all its celerity, moves slowly to him whose whole employment is to watch its flight. I am forced upon a thousand shifts to enable me to endure the tediousness of the day. I rise when I can sleep no longer, and take my morning walk; I see what I have seen before, and return. I sit down and persuade myself that I sit down to think, find it impossible to think without a subject, rise up to inquire after news, and endeavour to kindle in myself an artificial impatience for intelligence of events, which will never extend any consequence to me, but that a few minutes they abstract me from myself.

When I have heard any thing that may gratify curiosity, I am busied for a while in running to relate it. I hasten from one place of concourse to another, delighted with my own importance, and proud to think that I am doing something, though I know that another hour would spare my labour.

I had once a round of visits, which I paid very regularly; but I have now tired most of my friends. When I have sat down I forget to rise, and have more than once overheard one asking another when I would be gone. I perceive the company tired, I observe the mistress of the family whispering to her servants, I find orders given to put off business till to-morrow, I see the watches frequently inspected, and yet cannot withdraw to the vacuity of solitude, or venture myself in my own company.

Thus burthensome to myself and others, I form many schemes of employment which may make my life useful or agreeable, and exempt me from the ignominy of living by sufferance. This new course I have long designed, but have not yet begun. The present moment is never proper for the change, but there is always a time in view when all obstacles will be removed, and I shall surprise all that know me with a new distribution of my time. Twenty years have passed since I have resolved a complete amendment, and twenty years have been lost in delays. Age is coming upon me; and I should look back with rage and despair upon the waste of life, but that I am now beginning in earnest to begin a reformation.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

DICK LINGER.

No. 22.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 16, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

As I was passing lately under one of the gates of this city, I was struck with horror by a rueful cry which summoned me to *remember the poor debtors*.

The wisdom and justice of the English laws are, by Englishmen at least, loudly celebrated: but scarcely the most zealous admirers of our institutions can think that law wise, which, when men are capable of work, obliges them to beg; or just, which exposes the liberty of one to the passions of another.

The prosperity of a people is proportionate to the number of hands and minds usefully employed. To the community, sedition is a fever, corruption is a gangrene, and idleness is an atrophy. Whatever body, and whatever society wastes more than it acquires, must gradually decay; and every being that continues to be fed, and ceases to labour, takes away something from the public stock.

The confinement, therefore, of any man in the sloth and darkness of a prison, is a loss to the nation, and no gain to the creditor. For of the multitudes who are pining in those cells of misery, a very small part is suspected of any fraudulent act by which they retain what belongs to others. The rest are imprisoned by the wantonness of pride, the malignity of revenge, or the acrimony of disappointed expectation.

If those, who thus rigorously exercise the power which the law has put into their hands, be asked, why they continue to imprison those whom they know to be unable to pay them? one will answer, that his debtor once lived better than himself; another, that his wife looked above her neighbours, and his children went in silk clothes to the dancing-school; and another, that he pretended to be a joker and a wit. Some will reply, that if they were in debt, they should meet with the same treatment; some, that they owe no more than they can pay, and need therefore give no account of their actions. Some will confess their resolution that their debtors shall rot in gaol; and some will discover, that they hope, by cruelty, to wring the payment from their friends.

The end of all civil regulations is, to secure private happiness from private malignity; to keep individuals from the power of one another: but this end is apparently neglected, when a man, irritated with loss, is allowed to be the judge of his own cause, and to assign the punishment of his own pain; when the distinction between guilt and happiness, between casualty and design, is entrusted to eyes blind with interest, to understandings depraved by resentment.

Since poverty is punished among us as a crime, it ought at least to be treated with the same lenity as other crimes: the offender ought not to languish at the will of him whom he has offended, but to be allowed some appeal to the

justice of his country. There can be no reason why any debtor should be imprisoned, but that he may be compelled to payment; and a term should therefore be fixed, in which the creditor should exhibit his accusation of concealed property. If such property can be discovered, let it be given to the creditor; if the charge is not offered, or cannot be proved, let the prisoner be dismissed.

Those who made the laws have apparently supposed, that every deficiency of payment is the crime of the debtor. But the truth is, that the creditor always shares the act, and often more than shares the guilt of improper trust. It seldom happens that any man imprisons another but for debts which he suffered to be contracted in hope of advantage to himself, and for bargains in which he proportioned his profit to his own opinion of the hazard; and there is no reason why one should punish the other for a contract in which both concurred.

Many of the inhabitants of prisons may justly complain of harder treatment. He that once owes more than he can pay, is often obliged to bribe his creditor to patience, by increasing his debt. Worse and worse commodities, at a higher and higher price, are forced upon him; he is impoverished by compulsive traffic, and at last overwhelmed, in the common receptacles of misery, by debts, which, without his own consent, were accumulated on his head. To the relief of this distress, no other objection can be made, but that by an easy dissolution of debts, fraud will be left without punishment, and imprudence without awe; and that when insolvency should be no longer punishable, credit will cease.

The motive to credit is the hope of advantage. Commerce can never be at a stop, while one man wants what another can supply; and credit will never be denied, while it is likely to be repaid with profit. He that trusts one whom he designs to sue, is criminal by the act of trust: the cessation of such insiduous traffic is to be desired, and no reason can be given why a change of the law should impair any other.

We see nation trade with nation, where no payment can be compelled. Mutual convenience produces mutual confidence; and the merchants continue to satisfy the demands of each other, though they have nothing to dread but the loss of trade.

It is vain to continue an institution, which experience shows to be ineffectual. We have now imprisoned one generation of debtors after another, but we do not find that their numbers lessen. We have now learned that rashness and imprudence will not be deterred from taking credit; let us try whether fraud and avarice may be more easily restrained from giving it.

I am, Sir, &c.

No. 23.] Saturday, Sept. 23, 1758.

Life has no pleasure higher or nobler than that of friendship. It is painful to consider, that this sublime enjoyment may be impaired or destroyed by innumerable causes, and that there is no human possession of which the duration is less certain.

Many have talked, in very exalted language, of the perpetuity of friendship, of invincible constancy, and unalienable kindness; and some examples have been seen of men who have continued faithful to their earliest choice, and whose affection has predominated over changes of fortune, and contrariety of opinion.

But these instances are memorable, because they are rare. The friendship which is to be practised or expected by common mortals, must take its rise from mutual pleasure, and must end when the power ceases of delighting each other.

Many accidents therefore may happen, by which the ardour of kindness will be abated without criminal baseness or contemptible inconstancy on either part. To give pleasure is not always in our power; and little does he know himself, who believes that he can be always able to receive it.

Those who would gladly pass their days together may be separated by the different courses of their affairs: and friendship, like love, is destroyed by long absence, though it may be increased by short intermissions. What we have missed long enough to want it, we value more when it is regained; but that which has been lost till it is forgotten, will be found at last with little gladness, and with still less, if a substitute has supplied the place. A man deprived of the companion to whom he used to open his bosom, and with whom he shared the hours of leisure and merriment, feels the day at first hanging heavy on him; his difficulties oppress, and his doubts distract him; he sees time come and go without his wonted gratification, and all is sadness within and solitude about him. But this uneasiness never lasts long; necessity produces expedients, new amusements are discovered, and new conversation is admitted.

No expectation is more frequently disappointed, than that which naturally arises in the mind from the prospect of meeting an old friend after long separation. We expect the attraction to be revived, and the coalition to be renewed: no man considers how much alteration time has made in himself, and very few inquire what effect it has had upon others. The first hour convinces them, that the pleasure which they have formerly enjoyed, is for ever at an end: different scenes have made different impressions; the opinions of both are changed; and that similitude of manners and sentiment

lost, which confirmed them both in the approbation of themselves.

Friendship is often destroyed by opposition of interest, not only by the ponderous and visible interest which the desire of wealth and greatness forms and maintains, but by a thousand secret and slight competitions, scarcely known to the mind upon which they operate. There is scarcely any man without some favourite trifle which he values above greater attainments, some desire of petty praise which he cannot patiently suffer to be frustrated. This minute ambition is sometimes crossed before it is known, and sometimes defeated by wanton petulance; but such attacks are seldom made without the loss of friendship; for whoever has once found the vulnerable part will always be feared, and the resentment will burn on in secret, of which shame hinders the discovery.

This, however, is a slow malignity, which a wise man will obviate as inconsistent with quiet, and a good man will repress as contrary to virtue; but human happiness is sometimes violated by some more sudden strokes.

A dispute begun in jest upon a subject which a moment before was on both parts regarded with careless indifference, is continued by the desire of conquest, till vanity kindles into rage, and opposition rankles into enmity. Against this hasty mischief, I know not what security can be obtained; men will be sometimes surprised into quarrels; and though they might both hasten to reconciliation, as soon as their tumult had subsided, yet two minds will seldom be found together, which can at once subdue their discontent, or immediately enjoy the sweets of peace, without remembering the wounds of the conflict.

Friendship has other enemies. Suspicion is always hardening the cautious, and disgust repelling the delicate. Very slender differences will sometimes part those whom long reciprocation of civility or beneficence has united. Lonelove and Ranger retired into the country to enjoy the company of each other, and returned in six weeks cold and petulant: Ranger's pleasure was, to walk in the fields, and Lonelove's to sit in a bower; each had complied with the other in his turn, and each was angry that compliance had been exacted.

The most fatal disease of friendship is gradual decay, or dislike hourly increased by causes too slender for complaint and too numerous for removal.—Those who are angry may be reconciled; those who have been injured may receive a recompence; but when the desire of pleasing and willingness to be pleased is silently diminished, the renovation of friendship is hopeless; as, when the vital powers sink into languor, there is no longer any use of the physician.

No. 24.] Saturday, Sept. 30, 1758.

When man sees one of the inferior creatures perched upon a tree, or basking in the sunshine, without any apparent endeavour or pursuit, he often asks himself, or his companion, *On what that animal can be supposed to be thinking?*

Of this question, since neither bird nor beast can answer it, we must be content to live without the resolution. We know not how much the brutes recollect of the past, or anticipate of the future; what power they have of comparing and preferring; or whether their faculties may not rest in motionless indifference, till they are moved by the presence of their proper object, or stimulated to act by corporal sensations.

I am the less inclined to these superfluous inquiries, because I have always been able to find sufficient matter for curiosity in my own species. It is useless to go far in quest of that which may be found at home; a very narrow circle of observation will supply a sufficient number of men and women, who might be asked, with equal propriety, *On what they can be thinking?*

It is reasonable to believe, that thought, like every thing else, has its causes and effects; that it must proceed from something known, done, or suffered; and must produce some action or event. Yet how great is the number of those in whose minds no source of thought has ever been opened, in whose life no thought of consequence is ever discovered; who have learned nothing upon which they can reflect; who have neither seen nor felt any thing which could leave its traces on the memory; who neither foresee nor desire any change of their condition, and have therefore neither fear, hope, nor design, and yet are supposed to be thinking beings.

To every act a subject is required. He that thinks, must think upon something. But tell me, ye that pierce deepest into nature, ye that take the widest surveys of life, inform me, kind shades of Malbranche and of Locke, what that something can be, which excites and continues thought in maiden aunts with small fortunes; in younger brothers that live upon annuities; in traders retired from business; in soldiers absent from their regiments; or in widows that have no children?

Life is commonly considered as either active or contemplative; but surely this division, how long soever it has been received, is inadequate and falacious. There are mortals whose life is certainly not active, for they do neither good nor evil; and whose life cannot be properly called contemplative, for they never attend either to the conduct of men, or the works of nature, but rise in the morning, look round them till

night in careless stupidity, go to bed and sleep, and rise again in the morning.

It has been lately a celebrated question in the schools of philosophy, *Whether the soul always thinks?* Some have defined the soul to be the *power of thinking*; concluded that its essence consists in act; that, if it should cease to act, it would cease to be; and that cessation of thought is but another name for extinction of mind. This argument is subtile, but not conclusive; because it supposes what cannot be proved, that the nature of mind is properly defined. Others affect to disdain subtilty, when subtilty will not serve their purpose, and appeal to daily experience. We spend many hours, they say, in sleep, without the least remembrance of any thoughts which then passed in our minds; and since we can only by our own consciousness be sure that we think, why should we imagine that we have had thought of which no consciousness remains?

This argument, which appeals to experience, may from experience be confuted. We every day do something which we forget when it is done, and know to have been done only by consequence. The waking hours are not denied to have been passed in thought; yet he that shall endeavour to recollect on one day the ideas of the former, will only turn the eye of reflection upon vacancy; he will find, that the greater part is irrevocably vanished, and wonder how the moments could come and go, and leave so little behind them.

To discover only that the arguments on both sides are defective, and to throw back the tenet into its former uncertainty, is the sport of wanton or malevolent scepticism, delighting to see the sons of philosophy at work upon a task which never can be decided. I shall suggest an argument hitherto overlooked, which may perhaps determine the controversy.

If it be impossible to think without materials, there must necessarily be minds that do not always think; and whence shall we furnish materials for the meditation of the glutton between his meals, of the sportsman in a rainy month, of the annuitant between the days of quarterly payment, of the politician when the mails are detained by contrary winds?

But how frequent soever may be the examples of existence without thought, it is certainly a state not much to be desired. He that lives in torpid insensibility, wants nothing of a carcass but putrefaction. It is the part of every inhabitant of the earth to partake the pains and pleasures of his fellow-beings; and, as in a road through a country desert and uniform, the traveller languishes for want of amusement, so the passage of life will be tedious and irksome to him who does not beguile it by diversified ideas.

No. 25.] Saturday, Oct. 7, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

I am a very constant frequenter of the playhouse, a place to which I suppose the *Idler* not much a stranger, since he can have no where else so much entertainment with so little concurrence of his own endeavour. At all other assemblies, he that comes to receive delight will be expected to give it; but in the theatre nothing is necessary to the amusement of two hours, but to sit down and be willing to be pleased.

The last week has offered two new actors to the town. The appearance and retirement of actors are the great events of the theatrical world; and their first performance fills the pit with conjecture and prognostication, as the first actions of a new monarch agitate nations with hope or fear.

What opinion I have formed of the future excellence of these candidates for dramatic glory, it is not necessary to declare. Their entrance gave me a higher and nobler pleasure than any borrowed character can afford. I saw the ranks of the theatre emulating each other in candour and humanity, and contending who should most effectually assist the struggles of endeavour, dissipate the blush of diffidence, and still the flutter of timidity.

This behaviour is such as becomes a people, too tender to repress those who wish to please, too generous to insult those who can make no resistance. A public performer is so much in the power of spectators, that all unnecessary severity is restrained by that general law of humanity which forbids us to be cruel, where there is nothing to be feared.

In every new performer something must be pardoned. No man can, by any force of resolution, secure to himself the full possession of his own powers under the eye of a large assembly. Variation of gesture, and flexion of voice, are to be obtained only by experience.

There is nothing for which such numbers think themselves qualified as for theatrical exhibition. Every human being has an action graceful to his own eye, a voice musical to his own ear, and a sensibility which nature forbids him to know that any other bosom can excel. An art in which such numbers fancy themselves excellent, and which the public liberally rewards, will excite many competitors, and in many attempts there must be many miscarriages.

The care of the critic should be to distinguish error from inability, faults of inexperience from defects of nature. Action irregular and turbulent may be reclaimed; vociferation vehement

and confused may be restrained and modulated; the stalk of the tyrant may become the gait of the man; the yell of inarticulate distress may be reduced to human lamentation. All these faults should be for a time overlooked, and afterwards censured with gentleness and candour. But if in an actor there appears an utter vacancy of meaning, a frigid equality, a stupid languor, a torbid apathy, the greatest kindness that can be shown him, is a speedy sentence of expulsion.

I am, Sir, &c.

The plea which my correspondent has offered for young actors, I am very far from wishing to invalidate. I always considered those combinations which are sometimes formed in the playhouse, as acts of fraud or of cruelty; he that applauds him who does not deserve praise, is endeavouring to deceive the public; he that hisses in malice or sport, is an oppressor and a robber.

But surely this laudable forbearance might be justly extended to young poets. The art of the writer, like that of the player, is attained by slow degrees. The power of distinguishing and discriminating comic characters, or of filling tragedy with poetical images, must be the gift of nature, which no instruction nor labour can supply; but the art of dramatic disposition, the contexture of the scenes, the opposition of characters, the involution of the plot, the expedients of suspension, and the stratagems of surprise, are to be learned by practice; and it is cruel to discourage a poet for ever, because he has not from genius what only experience can bestow.

Life is a stage. Let me likewise solicit candour for the young actor on the stage of life. They that enter into the world are too often treated with unreasonable rigour by those that were once as ignorant and heady as themselves; and distinction is not always made between the faults which require speedy and violent eradication, and those that will gradually drop away in the progression of life. Vicious solicitations of appetite, if not checked, will grow more importunate; and mean arts of profit or ambition will gather strength in the mind, if they are not early suppressed. But mistaken notions of superiority, desires of useless show, pride of little accomplishments, and all the train of vanity, will be brushed away by the wing of Time.

Reproof should not exhaust its power upon petty failings; let it watch diligently against the incursion of vice, and leave foppery and futility to die of themselves.

No. 26.] Saturday, Oct. 14, 1758.

Mr. Idler,

I never thought that I should write any thing to be printed; but having lately seen your first essay, which was sent down into the kitchen, with a great bundle of gazettes and useless papers, I find that you are willing to admit any correspondent, and therefore hope you will not reject me. If you publish my letter, it may encourage others, in the same condition with myself, to tell their stories, which may be perhaps as useful as those of great ladies.

I am a poor girl. I was bred in the country at a charity-school, maintained by the contributions of wealthy neighbours. The ladies, or patronesses, visited us from time to time, examined how we were taught, and saw that our clothes were clean. We lived happily enough, and were instructed to be thankful to those at whose cost we were educated. I was always the favourite of my mistress; she used to call me to read, and show my copy-book to all strangers, who never dismissed me without commendation, and very seldom without a shilling.

At last the chief of our subscribers, having passed a winter in London, came down full of an opinion new and strange to the whole country. She held it little less than criminal to teach poor girls to read and write. They who are born to poverty, said she, are born to ignorance, and will work the harder, the less they know.

She told her friends, that London was in confusion by the insolence of servants; that scarcely a wench was to be got for *all work*, since education had made such numbers of fine ladies, that nobody would now accept a lower title than that of a waiting-maid or something that might qualify her to wear laced shoes and long ruffles, and to sit at work in the parlour window. But she was resolved, for her part, to spoil no more girls; those, who were to live by their hands, should neither read nor write out of her pocket; the world was bad enough already, and she would have no part in making it worse.

She was for a short time warmly opposed; but she persevered in her notions, and withdrew her subscription. Few listen without a desire of conviction to those who advise them to spare their money. Her example and her arguments gained ground daily; and in less than a year the whole parish was convinced, that the nation would be ruined, if the children of the poor were taught to read and write.

Our school was now dissolved; my mistress kissed me when we parted, and told me, that, being old and helpless, she could not assist me,

advised me to seek a service, and charged me not to forget what I had learned.

My reputation for scholarship, which had hitherto recommended me to favour, was, by the adherents to the new opinion, considered as a crime; and, when I offered myself to any mistress, I had no other answer than *Sure, child, you would not work! hard work is not fit for a pen-woman; a scrubbing-brush would spoil your hand, child!*

I could not live at home; and while I was considering to what I should betake me, one of the girls, who had gone from our school to London, came down in a silk gown, and told her acquaintance how well she lived, what fine things she saw, and what great wages she received. I resolved to try my fortune, and took my passage in the next week's waggon to London. I had no snares laid for me at my arrival, but came safe to a sister of my mistress, who undertook to get me a place. She knew only the families of mean tradesmen; and I, having no high opinion of my own qualifications, was willing to accept the first offer.

My first mistress was wife of a working watchmaker, who earned more than was sufficient to keep his family in decency and plenty; but it was their constant practice to hire a chaise on Sunday, and spend half the wages of the week on Richmond hill; of Monday he commonly lay half in bed, and spent the other half in merriment; Tuesday and Wednesday consumed the rest of his money; and three days every week were passed in extremity of want by us who were left at home, while my master lived on trust at an ale-house. You may be sure, that of the sufferers, the maid suffered most; and I left them, after three months, rather than be starved.

I was then maid to a hatter's wife. There was no want to be dreaded, for they lived in perpetual luxury. My mistress was a diligent woman, and rose early in the morning to set the journeymen to work; my master was a man much beloved by his neighbours, and sat at one club or other every night. I was obliged to wait on my master at night, and on my mistress in the morning. He seldom came home before two, and she rose at five. I could no more live without sleep than without food, and therefore entreated them to look out for another servant.

My next removal was to a linen-draper's, who had six children. My mistress, when I first entered the house, informed me, that I must never contradict the children, nor suffer them to cry. I had no desire to offend, and readily promised to do my best. But when I gave them their breakfast, I could not help all first; when I was playing with one in my lap, I was forced to keep the rest in expectation. That which was not gratified always resented the injury with a loud outcry, which put my mistress in a fury at me, and procured sugar-plums to the child. I could not keep six children quiet, who were bribed to be clamorous; and was therefore dismissed, as a girl honest but not good-natured.

I then lived with a couple that kept a petty shop of remnants and cheap linen. I was qualified to make a bill, or keep a book; and being therefore often called, at a busy time, to serve the customers, expected that I should now be happy, in proportion as I was useful. But my mistress appropriated every day part of the profit to some private use, and, as she grew bolder in her theft, at last deducted such sums, that my master began to wonder how he sold so much, and gained so little. She pretended to assist his inquiries, and began, very gravely, to hope that *Betty was honest, and yet those sharp girls were apt to be light fingered.* You will believe that I did not stay there much longer.

The rest of my story I will tell you in another letter; and only beg to be informed, in some paper, for which of my places, except perhaps the last, I was disqualified by my skill in reading and writing.

I am, Sir,
Your very humble servant,
BETTY BROOM.

No. 27.] SATURDAY, OCT. 21, 1758.

IT has been the endeavour of all those whom the world has reverenced for superior wisdom, to persuade man to be acquainted with himself, to learn his own powers and his own weakness, to observe by what evils he is most dangerously beset, and by what temptations most easily overcome.

This counsel has been often given with serious dignity, and often received with appearance of conviction; but, as very few can search deep into their own minds without meeting what they wish to hide from themselves, scarcely any man persists in cultivating such disagreeable acquaintance, but draws the veil again between his eyes and his heart, leaves his passions and appetites as he found them, and advises others to look into themselves.

This is the common result of inquiry even among those that endeavour to grow wiser or better; but this endeavour is far enough from frequency; the greater part of the multitudes that swarm upon the earth have never been disturbed by such uneasy curiosity, but deliver themselves up to business or to pleasure, plunge into the current of life, whether placid or turbulent, and pass on from one point of prospect to another, attentive rather to any thing than the state of their minds; satisfied, at an easy

te, with an opinion, that they are no worse an others, that every man must mind his own terest, or that their pleasures hurt only themves, and are therefore no proper subjects of nsure.

Some, however, there are, whom the intruon of scruples, the recollection of better notions, the latent reprehension of good examples, ill not suffer to live entirely contented with eir own conduct; these are forced to pacify e mutiny of reason with fair promises, and iet their thoughts with designs of calling their actions to review, and planning a new heme for the time to come.

There is nothing which we estimate so fallaously as the force of our own resolutions, nor y fallacy which we so unwillingly and tardidetect. He that has resolved a thousand nes, and a thousand times deserted his own rpose, yet suffers no abatement of his confince, but still believes himself his own master; d able, by innate vigour of soul, to press forard to his end, through all the obstructions at inconveniences or delights can put in his ay.

That this mistake should prevail for a time is ry natural. When conviction is present, and mptation out of sight, we do not easily conive how any reasonable being can deviate om his true interest. What ought to be done, hile it yet hangs only in speculation, is so plain d certain, that there is no place for doubt; e whole soul yields itself to the predominance truth, and readily determines to do what, hen the time of action comes, will be at last nitted.

I believe most men may review all the lives at have past within their observation, without membering one efficacious resolution, or be able to tell a single instance of a course of actice suddenly changed in consequence of a ange of opinion, or an establishment of deterination. Many, indeed, alter their conduct, d are not at fifty what they were at thirty; t they commonly varied imperceptibly from emselves, followed the train of external causes, d rather suffered reformation than made it.

It is not uncommon to charge the difference tween promise and performance, between proion and reality, upon deep design and studi deceit; but the truth is, that there is very tle hypocrisy in the world: we do not so ten endeavour or wish to impose on others as ourselves; we resolve to do right, we hope keep our resolutions, we declare them to conm our own hope, and fix our own inconstanby calling witnesses of our actions; but last habit prevails, and those whom we vited to our triumph, laugh at our defeat.

Custom is commonly too strong for the most solute resolver, though furnished for the asult with all the weapons of philosophy. "He that endeavours to free himself from an ill habit," says Bacon, "must not change too much at a time, lest he should be discouraged by difficulty; nor too little, for then he will make but slow advances." This is a precept which may be applauded in a book, but will fail in the trial, in which every change will be found too great or too little. Those who have been able to conquer habit, are like those that are fabled to have returned from the realms of Pluto:

Pauci, quos æquus amavit
Jupiter, atque ardens evexit ad æthera virtus.

They are sufficient to give hope, but not security; to animate the contest, but not to promise victory.

Those who are in the power of evil habits, must conquer them as they can; and conquered they must be, or neither wisdom nor happiness can be attained; but those who are not yet subject to their influence may, by timely caution, preserve their freedom; they may effectually resolve to escape the tyrant, whom they will very vainly resolve to conquer.

No. 28.] Saturday, Oct. 28, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

It is very easy for a man who sits idle at home, and has nobody to please but himself, to ridicule or to censure the common practices of mankind; and those who have no present temptation to break the rules of propriety, may applaud his judgement, and join in his merriment; but let the author or his readers mingle with common life, they will find themselves irresistibly borne away by the stream of custom, and must submit, after they have laughed at others, to give others the same opportunity of laughing at them.

There is no paper published by the *Idler* which I have read with more approbation than that which censures the practice of recording vulgar marriages in the newspapers. I carried it about in my pocket, and read it to all those whom I suspected of having published their nuptials, or of being inclined to publish them, and sent transcripts of it to all the couples that transgressed your precepts for the next fortnight. I hoped that they were all vexed, and pleased myself with imagining their misery.

But short is the triumph of malignity. I was married last week to Miss Mohair, the daughter of a salesman; and, at my first appearance after the wedding night, was asked by my wife's mother whether I had sent our

marriage to the Advertiser; I endeavoured to show how unfit it was to demand the attention of the public to our domestic affairs; but she told me, with great vehemence, "That she would not have it thought to be a stolen match; that the blood of the Mohairs should never be disgraced; that her husband had served all the parish offices but one; that she had lived five-and-thirty years at the same house, and paid every body twenty shillings in the pound, and would have me know, though she was not as fine and as flaunting as Mrs. Gingham, the deputy's wife, she was not ashamed to tell her name, and would show her face with the best of them, and since I had married her daughter ——" At this instant entered my father-in-law, a grave man, from whom I expected succour: but upon hearing the case, he told me, "That it would be very imprudent to miss such an opportunity of advertising my shop; and that when notice was given of my marriage, many of my wife's friends would think themselves obliged to be my customers." I was subdued by clamour on one side, and gravity on the other, and shall be obliged to tell the town that *three days ago Timothy Mushroom, an eminent oilman in Sea-Coal-lane, was married to Miss Polly Mohair, of Lothbury, a beautiful young lady, with a large fortune.*

I am, Sir, &c.

Sir,

I am the unfortunate wife of the grocer whose letter you published about ten weeks ago, in which he complains, like a sorry fellow, that I loiter in the shop with my needle-work in my hand, and that I oblige him to take me out on Sundays, and keep a girl to look after the child. Sweet Mr. Idler, if you did but know all, you would give no encouragement to such an unreasonable grumbler. I brought him three hundred pounds, which set him up in a shop, and bought in a stock, on which, with good management, we might live comfortably; but now I have given him a shop, I am forced to watch him and the shop too. I will tell you, Mr. Idler, how it is. There is an alehouse over the way, with a nine-pin alley, to which he is sure to run when I turn my back, and there he loses his money, for he plays at nine-pins as he does every thing else. While he is at this favourite sport, he sets a dirty boy to watch his door, and call him to his customers; but he is long in coming, and so rude when he comes, that our custom falls off every day.

Those who cannot govern themselves, must be governed; I am resolved to keep him for the future behind his counter, and let him bounce at his customers if he dares. I cannot be above stairs and below at the same time, and have therefore taken a girl to look after the child, dress the dinner; and, after all, pray who to blame?

On a Sunday, it is true, I make him w abroad, and sometimes carry the child; wonder who should carry it! But I never t him out till after church-time, nor would d then, but that, if he is left alone, he will upon the bed. On a Sunday, if he stays home he has six meals; and, when he can no longer, has twenty stratagems to escape fr me to the ale-house; but I commonly keep door locked, till Monday produces someth for him to do.

This is the true state of the case, and th are the provocations for which he has writ his letter to you. I hope you will writ paper to show that, if a wife must spend whole time in watching her husband, she c not conveniently tend her child, or sit at needle.

I am, Sir, &c.

Sir,

There is in this town a species of oppres which the law has not hitherto prevented or dressed.

I am a chairman. You know, Sir, we c when we are called, and are expected to ca all who require our assistance. It is comm for men of the most unwieldy corpulence crowd themselves into a chair, and demand be carried for a shilling as far as an airy yo lady whom we scarcely feel upon our po Surely we ought to be paid like all other m tals, in proportion to our labour. Engi should be fixed in proper places to weigh ch as they weigh waggons; and those, whom e and plenty have made unable to carry th selves, should give part of their superfluitie those who carry them.

I am, Sir, &c.

No. 29.] Saturday, Nov. 4, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

I have often observed, that friends are lost discontinuance of intercourse, without any fence on either part, and have long known, t it is more dangerous to be forgotten than to blamed; I therefore make haste to send the rest of my story, lest, by the delay another fortnight, the name of Betty Bro might be no longer remembered by you or y readers.

Having left the last place in haste, to av

charge or the suspicion of theft, I had not ured another service, and was forced to take odging in a back-street. I had now got good thes. The woman who lived in the garret posite to mine was very officious, and offered take care of my room and clean it, while I nt round to my acquaintance to inquire for a stress. I knew not why she was so kind, r how I could recompense her; but in a few rs I missed some of my linen, went to other lodging, and resolved not to have other friend in the next garret.

In six weeks I became under-maid at the use of a mercer in Cornhill, whose son was apprentice. The young gentleman used to late at the tavern, without the knowledge of father; and I was ordered by my mistress let him in silently to his bed under the coun-, and to be very careful to take away his can-. The hours which I was obliged to watch, ilst the rest of the family was in bed, I sidered as supernumerary, and, having no siness assigned for them, thought myself at erty to spend them my own way: I kept rself awake with a book, and for some time ed my state the better for this opportunity of ding. At last, the upper-maid found my ok, and showed it to my mistress, who told , that wenches like me might spend their ne better; that she never knew any of the ders that had good designs in their heads; at she could always find something else to do th her time, than to puzzle over books; and not like that such a fine lady should sit up her young master.

This was the first time that I found it ought criminal or dangerous to know how to d. I was dismissed decently, lest I should l tales, and had a small gratuity above my ges.

I then lived with a gentlewoman of a small tune. This was the only happy part of my e. My mistress, for whom public diversions re too expensive, spent her time with books, l was pleased to find a maid who could par-e her amusements. I rose early in the rning, that I might have time in the after-on to read or listen, and was suffered to tell r opinion, or express my delight. Thus fif-n months stole away, in which I did not re-ne that I was born to servitude. But a burn-g fever seized my mistress, of whom I shall r no more, than that her servant wept upon r grave.

I had lived in a kind of luxury which made r very unfit for another place; and was rather o delicate for the conversation of a kitchen; that when I was hired in the family of an st India director, my behaviour was so dif-ent, as they said, from that of a common ser-nt, that they concluded me a gentlewoman disguise, and turned me out in three weeks, on suspicion of some design which they could not comprehend.

I then fled for refuge to the other end of the town, where I hoped to find no obstruction from my new accomplishments, and was hired under the housekeeper in a splendid family. Here I was too wise for the maids, and too nice for the footman; yet I might have lived on without much uneasiness, had not my mistress, the housekeeper, who used to employ me in buying necessaries for the family, found a bill which I had made of one day's expense. I suppose it did not quite agree with her own book, for she fiercely declared her resolution, that there should be no pen and ink in that kitchen but her own.

She had the justice, or the prudence, not to injure my reputation; and I was easily admitted into another house in the neighbourhood, where my business was, to sweep the rooms and make the beds. Here I was for some time the favourite of Mrs. Simper, my lady's woman, who could not bear the vulgar girls, and was happy in the attendance of a young woman of some education. Mrs. Simper loved a novel, though she could not read hard words, and therefore when her lady was abroad, we always laid hold on her books. At last, my abilities became so much celebrated, that the housesteward used to employ me in keeping his accounts. Mrs. Simper then found out, that my sauciness was grown to such a height that nobody could endure it, and told my lady, that there had never been a room well swept since Betty Broom came into the house.

I was then hired by a consumptive lady, who wanted a maid that could read and write. I attended her four years, and though she was never pleased, yet when I declared my resolution to leave her, she burst into tears, and told me that I must bear the peevishness of a sick bed, and I should find myself remembered in her will. I complied, and a codicil was added in my favour; but in less than a week, when I set her gruel before her, I laid the spoon on the left side, and she threw her will into the fire. In two days she made another, which she burnt in the same manner, because she could not eat her chicken. A third was made, and destroyed because she heard a mouse within the wainscot, and was sure that I should suffer her to be carried away alive. After this I was for some time out of favour, but as her illness grew upon her, resentment and sullenness gave way to kinder sentiments. She died, and left me five hundred pounds; with this fortune I am going to settle in my native parish, where I resolve to spend some hours every day in teaching poor girls to read and write.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

Betty Broom.

No. 30.] Saturday, Nov. 11, 1758.

The desires of man increase with his acquisitions; every step which he advances brings something within his view, which he did not see before, and which, as soon as he sees it, he begins to want. Where necessity ends, curiosity begins; and no sooner are we supplied with every thing that nature can demand, than we sit down to contrive artificial appetites.

By this restlessness of mind, every populous and wealthy city is filled with innumerable employments, for which the greater part of mankind is without a name; with artificers, whose labour is exerted in producing such petty conveniences, that many shops are furnished with instruments of which the use can hardly be found without inquiry, but which he that once knows them quickly learns to number among necessary things.

Such is the diligence with which, in countries completely civilized, one part of mankind labours for another, that wants are supplied faster than they can be formed, and the idle and luxurious find life stagnate for want of some desire to keep it in motion. This species of distress furnishes a new set of occupations; and multitudes are busied from day to day, in finding the rich and the fortunate something to do.

It is very common to reproach those artists as useless, who produce only such superfluities as neither accommodate the body, nor improve the mind; and of which no other effect can be imagined, than that they are the occasions of spending money and consuming time.

But this censure will be mitigated when it is seriously considered that money and time are the heaviest burdens of life, and that the unhappiest of all mortals are those who have more of either than they know how to use. To set himself free from these incumbrances, one hurries to Newmarket; another travels over Europe; one pulls down his house and calls architects about him; another buys a seat in the country, and follows his hounds over hedges and through rivers; one makes collections of shells; and another searches the world for tulips and carnations.

He is surely a public benefactor who finds employment for those to whom it is thus difficult to find it for themselves. It is true, that this is seldom done merely from generosity or compassion; almost every man seeks his own advantage in helping others, and therefore it is too common for mercenary officiousness to consider rather what is grateful, than what is right.

We all know that it is more profitable to be loved than esteemed; and ministers of pleasure will always be found, who study to themselves necessary, and to supplant thos are practising the same arts.

One of the amusements of idleness is re without the fatigue of close attention; an world, therefore, swarms with writers wish is not to be studied, but to be read.

No species of literary men has lately be much multiplied as the writers of news. many years ago the nation was content one gazette; but now we have not only i metropolis papers for every morning and evening, but almost every large town h weekly historian, who regularly circulat periodical intelligence, and fills the vi of his district with conjectures on the of war, and with debates on the true inter Europe.

To write news in its perfection requires a combination of qualities, that a man com ly fitted for the task is not always to be f In Sir Henry Wotton's jocular definitio *ambassador* is said to be *a man of virtue sent to tell lies for the advantage of his country*; a writer is *a man without virtue, who writes home for his own profit*. To these composit required neither genius nor knowledge, neit dustry nor sprightliness; but contempt of and indifference to truth, are absolutely sary. He who by a long familiarity with it has obtained these qualities, may confi tell to-day what he intends to contradi morrow; he may affirm fearlessly wh knows that he shall be obliged to recant may write letters from Amsterdam or D to himself.

In a time of war the nation is always mind, eager to hear something good of selves, and ill of the enemy. At this tim task of news-writers is easy; they have ing to do but to tell that the battle is exp and afterwards that a battle has been fou which we and our friends, whether conq or conquered, did all, and our enemies did ing.

Scarcely any thing awakens attention tale of cruelty. The writer of news neve in the intermission of action to tell ho enemies murdered children and ravishe gins; and if the scene of action be what distant, scalps half the inhabitant province.

Among the calamities of war, may be numbered the diminution of the love of by the falsehoods which interest dictate credulity encourages. A peace will leave the warrior and relator of wars desti employment; and I know not whether is to be dreaded from streets filled with s accustomed to plunder, or from garrets with scribblers accustomed to lie.

[o. 31.] SATURDAY, Nov. 18, 1758.

MANY moralists have remarked, that pride has f all human vices the widest dominion, appears t the greatest multiplicity of forms, and lies id under the greatest variety of disguises; f disguises which, like the moon's *veil of brightess*, are both its *lustre and its shade*, and be- ay it to others, though they hide it from our- alves.

It is not my intention to degrade pride from is pre-eminence of mischief; yet I know not hether idleness may not maintain a very oubtful and obstinate competition.

There are some that profess idleness in its ll dignity, who call themselves the *Idle* as Bu- ris in the play calls himself the *Proud;* who oast that they can do nothing, and thank eir stars that they have nothing to do; who leep every night till they can sleep no longer, nd rise only that exercise may enable them to eep again; who prolong the reign of darkness y double curtains; and never see the sun but *tell him how they hate his beams;* whose whole abour is to vary the posture of indulgence, and hose day differs from their night but as a ouch or chair differs from a bed.

These are the true and open votaries of idle- ess, for whom she weaves the garlands of pop- ies, and into whose cup she pours the waters f oblivion; who exist in a state of unruffled upidity, forgetting and forgotten; who have ong ceased to live, and at whose death the sur- ivors can only say that they have ceased to reathe.

But idleness predominates in many lives here it is not suspected; for, being a vice hich terminates in itself, it may be enjoyed ithout injury to others; and it is therefore ot watched like fraud, which endangers prop- rty; or like pride, which naturally seeks its ratifications in another's inferiority. Idleness a silent and peaceful quality, that neither aises envy by ostentation, nor hatred by opposi- ion; and therefore nobody is busy to censure r detect it.

As pride sometimes is hid under humility, lleness is often covered by turbulence and hur- y. He that neglects his known duty and real mployment, naturally endeavours to crowd his ind with something that may bar out the re- embrance of his own folly, and does any thing ut what he ought to do with eager diligence, hat he may keep himself in his own favour.

Some are always in a state of preparation, ccupied in previous measures, forming plans, ccumulating materials, and providing for the ain affair. These are certainly under the se- ret power of idleness. Nothing is to be expect- ed from the workman whose tools are for ever to be sought. I was once told by a great mas- ter that no man ever excelled in painting, who was eminently curious about pencils and col- ours.

There are others to whom idleness dictates another expedient, by which life may be passed unprofitably away without the tediousness of many vacant hours. The art is, to fill the day with petty business, to have always something in hand which may raise curiosity, but not solicitude, and keep the mind in a state of ac- tion, but not of labour.

This art has for many years been practised by my old friend Sober with wonderful success. Sober is a man of strong desires and quick imagination, so exactly balanced by the love of ease, that they can seldom stimulate him to any difficult undertaking; they have, however, so much power, that they will not suffer him to lie quite at rest; and though they do not make him sufficiently useful to others, they make him at least weary of himself.

Mr. Sober's chief pleasure is conversation; there is no end of his talk or his attention; to speak or to hear is equally pleasing; for he still fancies that he is teaching or learning something, and is free for the time from his own reproaches.

But there is one time at night when he must go home, that his friends may sleep; and anoth- er time in the morning, when all the world agrees to shut out interruption. These are the moments of which poor Sober trembles at the thought. But the misery of these irksome inter- vals he has many means of alleviating. He has persuaded himself that the manual arts are un- deservedly overlooked; he has observed in many trades the effects of close thought, and just ratiocination. From speculation he pro- ceeded to practice, and supplied himself with the tools of a carpenter, with which he mended his coalbox very successfully, and which he still continues to employ, as he finds occasion.

He has attempted at other times the crafts of shoe-maker, tinman, plumber, and potter; in all these arts he has failed, and resolves to qual- ify himself for them, by better information. But his daily amusement is chemistry. He has a small furnace, which he employs in distil- lation, and which has long been the solace of his life. He draws oils and waters and essen- ces and spirits, which he knows to be of no use; sits and counts the drops as they come from his retort, and forgets that, whilst a drop is falling, a moment flies away.

Poor Sober! I have often teazed him with reproof, and he has often promised reformation; for no man is so much open to conviction as the *Idler*, but there is none on which it operates so little. What will be the effect of this paper I know not; perhaps he will read it and laugh, and light the fire in his furnace; but my hope

is, that he will quit his trifles, and betake himself to rational and useful diligence.

No. 82.] Saturday, Nov. 25, 1758.

Among the innumerable mortifications that waylay human arrogance on every side, may well be reckoned our ignorance of the most common objects and effects, a defect of which we become more sensible, by every attempt to supply it. Vulgar and inactive minds confound familiarity with knowledge, and conceive themselves informed of the whole nature of things when they are shown their form or told their use; but the speculatist, who is not content with superficial views, harasses himself with fruitless curiosity, and still as he acquires more, perceives only that he knows less.

Sleep is a state in which a great part of every life is passed. No animal has yet been discovered, whose existence is not varied with intervals of insensibility; and some late philosophers have extended the empire of sleep over the vegetable world.

Yet of this change, so frequent, so great, so general, and so necessary, no searcher has yet found either the efficient or final cause; or can tell by what power the mind and body are thus chained down in irresistible stupefaction; or what benefits the animal receives from this alternate suspension of its active powers.

Whatever may be the multiplicity or contrariety of opinions upon this subject, Nature has taken sufficient care that theory shall have little influence on practice. The most diligent inquirer is not able long to keep his eyes open; the most eager disputant will begin about midnight to desert his argument; and once in four-and-twenty hours, the gay and the gloomy, the witty and the dull, the clamorous and the silent, the busy and the idle, are all overpowered by the gentle tyrant, and all lie down in the equality of sleep.

Philosophy has often attempted to repress insolence, by asserting that all conditions are levelled by death; a position which, however it may deject the happy, will seldom afford much comfort to the wretched. It is far more pleasing to consider, that sleep is equally a leveller with death; that the time is never at a great distance, when the balm of rest shall be diffused alike upon every head, when the diversities of life shall stop their operation, and the high and low shall lie down together.

It is somewhere recorded of Alexander, that in the pride of conquests, and intoxication of flattery, he declared that he only perceived himself to be a man by the necessity of sleep. Whether he considered sleep as necessary to his mind or body, it was indeed a sufficient evide of human infirmity; the body which requi such frequency of renovation, gave but fe promises of immortality: and the mind whi from time to time, sunk gladly into insensib ty, had made no very near approaches to felicity of the supreme and self-sufficient natu

I know not what can tend more to repress the passions that disturb the peace of the wor than the consideration that there is no hei of happiness or honour from which man d not eagerly descend to a state of unconscious pose; that the best condition of life is su that we contentedly quit its good to be die tangled from its evils; that in a few ho splendour fades before the eye, and praise its deadens in the ear; the senses withdraw fr their objects, and reason favours the retreat.

What then are the hopes and prospects covetousness, ambition, and rapacity? Let h that desires most have all his desires gratifi he never shall attain a state which he can fo day and a night contemplate with satisfacti or from which, if he had the power of perpet vigilance, he would not long for periodi separations.

All envy would be extinguished, if it w universally known that there are none to envied, and surely none can be much env who are not pleased with themselves. There reason to suspect, that the distinctions of m kind have more show than value, when it found that all agree to be weary alike of ple ures and of cares; that the powerful and weak, the celebrated and obscure, join in common wish, and implore from Nature's ha the nectar of oblivion.

Such is our desire of abstraction from o selves, that very few are satisfied with quantity of stupefaction which the needs of body force upon the mind. Alexander him added intemperance to sleep, and solaced w the fumes of wine the sovereignty of the wor and almost every man has some art by wh he steals his thoughts away from his pres state.

It is not much of life that is spent in close tention to any important duty. Many ho of every day are suffered to fly away with any traces left upon the intellects. We su phantoms to rise up before us, and amuse o selves with the dance of airy images, wh after a time, we dismiss for ever, and know how we have been busied.

Many have no happier moments than th that they pass in solitude, abandoned to t own imagination, which sometimes puts c tres in their hands or mitres on their he shifts the scene of pleasure with endless vari bids all the forms of beauty sparkle before th and gluts them with every change of vision luxury.

It is easy in these semi-slumbers to collect all the possibilities of happiness, to alter the course of the sun, to bring back the past, and anticipate the future, to unite all the beauties of all seasons, and all the blessings of all climates, to receive and bestow felicity, and forget that misery is the lot of man. All this is a voluntary dream, a temporary recession from the realities of life to airy fictions; an habitual subjection of reason to fancy.

Others are afraid to be alone, and amuse themselves by a perpetual succession of companions; but the difference is not great: in solitude we have our dreams to ourselves, and in company we agree to dream in concert. The end sought in both is, forgetfulness of ourselves.

No. 33.] Saturday, Dec. 2, 1758.

[I hope the author of the following letter will excuse the omission of some parts, and allow me to remark, that the Journal of the Citizen in the Spectator has almost precluded the attempt of any future writer.]

——Non ita Romuli
Præscriptum, & intonsi Catonis
Auspiciis, veterumque norma. HOR.

Sir,

You have often solicited correspondence. I have sent you the Journal of a Senior Fellow, or Genuine *Idler*, just transmitted from Cambridge by a facetious correspondent, and warranted to have been transcribed from the common-place book of the journalist.

Monday, nine o'clock. Turned off my bedmaker for waking me at night. Weather rainy. Consulted my weather-glass. No hopes of a ride before dinner.

Ditto, ten. After breakfast transcribed half a sermon from Dr. Hickman. N. B. Never to transcribe any more from Calamy; Mrs. Pilsocks, at my curacy, having one volume of that author lying in her parlour-window.

Ditto, eleven. Went down into my cellar. Item. My *mountain* will be fit to drink in a month's time. N. B. To remove the five year old port into the new bin on the left hand.

Ditto, twelve. Mended a pen. Looked at my weather-glass again. Quicksilver very low. Shaved. Barber's hand shakes.

Ditto, one. Dined alone in my room on a cal. N. B. The shrimp-sauce not so good as Mr. H. of Peterhouse and I used to eat in London last winter, at the Mitre in Fleet-street. Sat down to a pint of Madeira. Mr. H. surprised me over it. We finished two bottles of port together, and were very cheerful. Mem. To dine with Mr. H. at Peterhouse next Wednesday. One of the dishes a leg of pork and peas, by my desire.

Ditto, six. Newspaper in the common room.

Ditto, seven. Returned to my room. Made a tiff of warm punch, and to bed before nine; did not fall asleep till ten, a young fellow-commoner being very noisy over my head.

Tuesday, nine. Rose squeamish. A fine morning. Weather-glass very high.

Ditto, ten. Ordered my horse, and rode to the five-mile stone on the Newmarket road. Appetite gets better. A pack of hounds in full cry crossed the road, and startled my horse.

Ditto, twelve. Dressed. Found a letter on my table to be in London the 19th inst. Bespoke a new wig.

Ditto, one. At dinner in the hall. Too much water in the soup. Dr. Dry always orders the beef to be salted too much for me.

Ditto, two. In the common-room. Dr. Dry gave us an instance of a gentleman who kept the gout out of his stomach by drinking old Madeira. Conversation chiefly on the expeditions. Company broke up at four. Dr. Dry and myself played at back-gammon for a brace of snipes. Won.

Ditto, five. At the coffee-house. Met Mr. H. there. Could not get a sight of the Monitor.

Ditto, seven. Returned home, and stirred my fire. Went to the common-room, and supped on the snipes with Dr. Dry.

Ditto, eight. Began the evening in the common-room. Dr. Dry told several stories. Were very merry. Our new fellow that studies physic, very talkative toward twelve. Pretends he will bring the youngest Miss —— to drink tea with me soon. Impertinent blockhead!

Wednesday, nine. Alarmed with a pain in my ankle. Q. The gout? Fear I can't dine at Peterhouse; but I hope a ride will set all to rights. Weather-glass below *fair*.

Ditto, ten. Mounted my horse, though the weather suspicious. Pain in my ankle entirely gone. Catched in a shower coming back. Convinced that my weather-glass is the best in Cambridge.

Ditto, twelve. Dressed. Sauntered up to the Fishmonger's-hill. Met Mr. H. and went with him to Peterhouse. Cook made us wait thirty six minutes beyond the time. The company, some of my Emanuel friends. For dinner, a pair of soals, a leg of pork and peas among other things. Mem. Peas-pudding not boiled enough. Cook reprimanded and sconced in my presence.

Ditto, after dinner. Pain in my ankle returns. Dull all the afternoon. Rallied for being no company. Mr. H.'s account of the

accommodations on the road in his Bath journey.

Ditto, six. Got into spirits. Never was more chatty. We sat late at whist. Mr. H. and self agreed at parting to take a gentle ride, and dine at the old house on the London road to-morrow.

Thursday, nine. My sempstress. She has lost the measure of my wrist. Forced to be measured again. The baggage has got a trick of smiling.

Ditto, ten to eleven. Made some rappee-snuff. Read the magazines. Received a present of pickles from Miss Pilcocks. Mem. To send in return some collared eel, which I know both the old lady and miss are fond of.

Ditto, eleven. Glass very high. Mounted at the gate with Mr. H. Horse skittish and wants exercise. Arrive at the old house. All the provisions bespoke by some rakish fellow-commoner in the next room, who had been on a scheme to Newmarket. Could get nothing but mutton chops off the worst end. Port very new. Agree to try some other house to-morrow.

Here the Journal breaks off: for the next morning, as my friend informs me, our genial academic was waked with a severe fit of the gout; and, at present, enjoys all the dignity of that disease. But I believe we have lost nothing by this interruption; since a continuation of the remainder of the Journal, through the remainder of the week, would most probably have exhibited nothing more than a repeated relation of the same circumstances of idling and luxury.

I hope it will not be concluded, from this specimen of academic life, that I have attempted to decry our universities. If literature is not the essential requisite of the modern academic, I am yet persuaded that Cambridge and Oxford, however degenerated, surpass the fashionable academies of our metropolis, and the gymnasia of foreign countries. The number of learned persons in these celebrated seats is still considerable, and more conveniences and opportunities for study still subsist in them, than in any other place. There is at least one very powerful incentive to learning; I mean the Genius of the place. It is a sort of inspiring deity, which every youth of quick sensibility and ingenious disposition creates to himself, by reflecting, that he is placed under those venerable walls, where a Hooker and a Hammond, a Bacon and a Newton, once pursued the same course of science, and from whence they soared to the most elevated heights of literary fame. This is that incitement which Tully, according to his own testimony, experienced at Athens, when he contemplated the porticos where Socrates sat, and the laurel-groves where Plato disputed. But there are other circumstances, a of the highest importance, which render o colleges superior to all other places of educatio Their institutions, although somewhat fall from their primæval simplicity, are such as i fluence, in a particular manner, the moral co duct of their youth; and in this general depr vity of manners and laxity of principles, pure r ligion is no where more strongly inculcate The academies, as they are presumptuous styled, are too low to be mentioned: and forei seminaries are likely to prejudice the unwa mind with Calvinism. But English univer ties render their students virtuous, at least excluding all opportunities of vice; and, teaching them the principles of the chur of England, confirm them in those of tr Christianity.

No. 34.] Saturday, Dec. 9, 1758.

To illustrate one thing by its resemblance another, has been always the most popular a efficacious art of instruction. There is inde no other method of teaching that of which a one is ignorant, but by means of something ready known; and a mind so enlarged by co templation and inquiry, that it has alwa many objects within its view, will seldom long without some near and familiar ima through which an easy transition may be ma to truths more distant and obscure.

Of the parallels which have been drawn wit and curiosity, some are literal and re as between poetry and painting, two arts whi pursue the same end, by the operation of t same mental faculties, and which differ only the one represents things by marks permane and natural, the other by signs accidental a arbitrary. The one therefore is more easi and generally understood, since similitude form is immediately perceived; the other capable of conveying more ideas; for men ha thought and spoken of many things which th do not see.

Other parallels are fortuitous and fanciful yet these have sometimes been extended to mar particulars of resemblance by a lucky concu rence of diligence and chance. The anim body is composed of many members, united u der the direction of one mind; any numb of individuals, connected for some common pu pose, is therefore called a body. From th participation of the same appellation arose t comparison of the body natural and body p litic, of which, how far soever it has been d duced, no end has hitherto been found.

In these imaginary similitudes, the same wo is used at once in its primitive and metapho

l sense. Thus health, ascribed to the body natural, is opposed to sickness; but attributed to e body politic stands as contrary to adversity. hese parallels, therefore, have more of genius, ut less of truth; they often please, but they ever convince.

Of this kind is a curious speculation frequently indulged by a philosopher of my acquaintnce, who had discovered, that the qualities requisite to conversation are very exactly represented by a bowl of punch.

Punch, says this profound investigator, is a quor compounded of spirit and acid juices, ugar and water. The spirit, volatile and fiery, the proper emblem of vivacity and wit; the cidity of the lemon will very aptly figure puncncy of raillery, and acrimony of censure; ugar is the natural representative of luscious lulation and gentle complaisance; and water the proper hieroglyphic of easy prattle, innont and tasteless.

Spirit alone is too powerful for use. It will roduce madness rather than merriment; and stead of quenching thirst will inflame the ood. Thus wit, too copiously poured out, gitates the hearer with emotions rather violent an pleasing; every one shrinks from the force its oppression, the company sits entranced d overpowered; all are astonished, but nobody pleased.

The acid juices give this genial liquor all its ower of stimulating the palate. Conversation ould become dull and vapid, if negligence were ot sometimes roused, and sluggishness quicken- by due severity of reprehension. But acids nmixed will distort the face and torture the alate; and he that has no other qualities than enetration and asperity, he whose constant nployment is detection and censure, who looks nly to find faults, and speaks only to publish iem, will soon be dreaded, hated, and avoided.

The taste of sugar is generally pleasing, but cannot long be eaten by itself. Thus meekss and courtesy will always recommend the rst address, but soon pall and nauseate, unless ey are associated with more sprightly qualies. The chief use of sugar is to temper the ste of other substances; and softness of beaviour in the same manner mitigates the ughness of contradiction, and allays the bitterss of unwelcome truth.

Water is the universal vehicle by which are nveyed the particles necessary to sustenance nd growth, by which thirst is quenched, and l the wants of life and nature are supplied. hus all the business of the world is transacted y artless and easy talk, neither sublimed by ncy, nor discoloured by affectation, without ther the harshness of satire, or the lusciousss of flattery. By this limpid vein of lanuage, curiosity is gratified, and all the knowdge is conveyed which one man is required to impart for the safety or convenience of another. Water is the only ingredient in punch which can be used alone, and with which man is content till fancy has framed an artificial want. Thus while we only desire to have our ignorance informed, we are most delighted with the plainest diction; and it is only in the moments of idleness or pride, that we call for the gratifications of wit or flattery.

He only will please long, who by tempering the acidity of satire with the sugar of civility, and allaying the heat of wit with the frigidity of humble chat, can make the true punch of conversation; and as that punch can be drank in the greatest quantity which has the largest proportion of water, so that companion will be oftenest welcome, whose talk flows out with inoffensive copiousness, and unenvied insipidity.

No. 35.] Saturday, Dec. 16, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

Mr. Idler,

If it be difficult to persuade the idle to be busy, it is likewise, as experience has taught me, not easy to convince the busy that it is better to be idle. When you shall despair of stimulating sluggishness to motion, I hope you will turn your thoughts towards the means of stilling the bustle of pernicious activity.

I am the unfortunate husband of a *buyer of bargains*. My wife has somewhere heard that a good housewife *never* has any thing to *purchase when it is wanted*. This maxim is often in her mouth, and always in her head. She is not one of those philosophical talkers that speculate without practice, and learn sentences of wisdom only to repeat them; she is always making additions to her stores; she never looks into a broker's shop, but she spies something that may be wanted some time; and it is impossible to make her pass the door of a house where she hears *goods selling by auction*.

Whatever she thinks cheap, she holds it the duty of an economist to buy; in consequence of this maxim, we are encumbered on every side with useless lumber. The servants can scarcely creep to their beds through the chests and boxes that surround them. The carpenter is employed once a week in building closets, fixing cupboards, and fastening shelves; and my house has the appearance of a ship stored for a voyage to the colonies.

I had often observed that advertisements set her on fire; and therefore, pretending to emulate her laudable frugality, I forbade the newspaper to be taken any longer; but my precaution is vain; I know not by what fatality, or

by what confederacy, every catalogue of *genuine furniture* comes to her hand, every advertisement of a newspaper newly opened is in her pocket-book, and she knows before any of her neighbours when the stock of any man *leaving off trade* is to be *sold cheap for ready money.*

Such intelligence is to my dear-one the Siren's song. No engagement, no duty, no interest, can withhold her from a sale, from which she always returns congratulating herself upon her dexterity at a bargain; the porter lays down his burden in the hall; she displays her new acquisitions, and spends the rest of the day in contriving where they shall be put.

As she cannot bear to have any thing incomplete, one purchase necessitates another; she has twenty feather-beds more than she can use, and a late sale has supplied her with a proportionable number of Witney blankets, a large roll of linen for sheets, and five quilts for every bed, which she bought because the seller told her, that if she would clear his hands he would let her have a bargain.

Thus by hourly encroachments my habitation is made narrower and narrower; the dining-room is so crowded with tables, that dinner scarcely can be served; the parlour is decorated with so many piles of china, that I dare not step within the door; at every turn of the stairs I have a clock, and half the windows of the upper floors are darkened, that shelves may be set before them.

This, however, might be borne, if she would gratify her own inclinations without opposing mine. But I, who am idle, am luxurious, and she condemns me to live upon salt provision. She knows the loss of buying in small quantities, we have therefore whole hogs and quarters of oxen. Part of our meat is tainted before it is eaten, and part is thrown away because it is spoiled, but she persists in her system, and will never buy any thing by single pennyworths.

The common vice of those who are still grasping at more, is to neglect that which they already possess; but from this failing my charmer is free. It is the great care of her life that the pieces of beef should be boiled in the order in which they are bought; that the second bag of peas should not be opened till the first were eaten; that every feather-bed shall be lain on in its turn; that the carpets should be taken out of the chests once a month and brushed; and the rolls of linen opened now and then before the fire. She is daily inquiring after the best traps for mice, and keeps the rooms always scented by fumigations to destroy the moths. She employs a workman from time to time to adjust six clocks that never go, and clean five jacks that rust in the garret; and a woman in the next alley that lives by scouring the brass and pewter, which are only laid up to tarnish again.

She is always imagining some distant time which she shall use whatever she accumulat she has four looking-glasses which she can hang up in her house, but which will be ha some in more lofty rooms; and pays rent the place of a vast copper in some warehou because when we live in the country we sh brew our own beer.

Of this life I have long been weary, bu know not how to change it; all the marr men whom I consult advise me to have patien but some old bachelors are of opinion, that si she loves sales so well, she should have a of her own; and I have, I think, resolved open her hoards, and advertise an auction.

I am Sir,

Your very humble Serva

PETER PLEN

No. 36.] SATURDAY, DEC. 23, 1758.

The great differences that disturb the peace mankind are not about ends, but means. have all the same general desires, but how th desires shall be accomplished will for ever be puted. The ultimate purpose of governmen temporal, and that of religion is eternal happin Hitherto we agree; but here we must par try according to the endless varieties of pass and understanding combined with one anoth every possible form of government, and ev imaginable tenet of religion.

We are told by Cumberland that rectitu applied to action or contemplation, is met metaphorical; and that as a right line descr the shortest passage from point to point, s right action effects a good design by the fe w means; and so likewise a right opinion is which connects distant truths by the shor train of intermediate propositions.

To find the nearest way from truth to tr or from purpose to effect, not to use more struments where fewer will be sufficient, to move by wheels and levers what will way to the naked hand, is the great proof healthful and vigorous mind, neither fe with healthful ignorance, nor overburde with unwieldy knowledge.

But there are men who seem to think thing so much the characteristic of a genius to do common things in an uncommon manu like Hudibras, to tell the clock by algebra like the lady in Dr. Young's satires, to dr tea by stratagem; to quit the beaten track because it is known, and take a new path, h ever crooked or rough, because the straight found out before.

Every man speaks and writes with intent be understood; and it can seldom happen

ie that understands himself might convey his notions to another, if, content to be understood, he did not seek to be admired; but when once he begins to contrive how his sentiments may be received, not with most ease to his reader, but with most advantage to himself, he then transfers his consideration from words to sounds, from sentences to periods, and as he grows more elegant becomes less intelligible.

It is difficult to enumerate every species of authors whose labours counteract themselves; the man of exuberance and copiousness, who diffuses every thought through so many diversities of expression, that it is lost like water in a mist; the ponderous dictator of sentences, whose notions are delivered in the lump, and are, like uncoined bullion, of more weight than use; the liberal illustrator, who shows by examples and comparisons what was clearly seen when it was first proposed; and the stately son of demonstration, who proves with mathematical formality what no man has yet pretended to doubt.

There is a mode of style for which I know not that the masters of oratory have yet found a name; a style by which the most evident truths are so obscured, that they can no longer be perceived, and the most familiar propositions so disguised that they cannot be known. Every other kind of eloquence is the dress of sense; but this is the mask by which a true master of his art will so effectually conceal it, that a man will as easily mistake his own positions, if he meets them thus transformed, as he may pass in a masquerade his nearest acquaintance.

This style may be called the terrific, for its chief intention is, to terrify and amaze; it may be termed the repulsive, for its natural effect is to drive away the reader; or it may be distinguished, in plain English, by the denomination of the bugbear style, for it has more terror than danger, and will appear less formidable as it is more nearly approached.

A mother tells her infant that two and two make four; the child remembers the proposition, and is able to count four to all the purposes of life, till the course of his education brings him among philosophers who fright him from his former knowledge, by telling him, that four is a certain aggregate of units; that all numbers being only the repetition of an unit, which, though not a number itself, is the parent, root, or original of all number, four is the denomination assigned to a certain number of such repetitions. The only danger is, lest, when he first hears these dreadful sounds, the pupil should run away; if he has but the courage to stay till the conclusion, he will find that, when speculation has done its worst, two and two still make four.

An illustrious example of this species of eloquence may be found in Letters concerning Mind. The author begins by declaring, that "the sorts of things are things that now are, have been, and shall be, and the things that strictly are." In this position, except the last clause, in which he uses something of the scholastic language, there is nothing but what every man has heard and imagines himself to know. But who would not believe that some wonderful novelty is presented to his intellect when he is afterwards told, in the true bugbear style, that "the *ares*, in the former sense, are things that lie between the *have-beens* and the *shall-bes*. The *have-beens* are things that are past; the *shall-bes* are things that are to come; and the things that *are*, in the latter sense, are things that have not been, nor shall be, nor stand in the midst of such as are before them, or shall be after them. The things that have been, and shall be, have respect to present, past, and future. Those likewise that now *are* have moreover place; that, for instance, which is here, that which is to the east, that which is to the west."

All this, my dear reader, is very strange; but though it be strange, it is not new; survey these wonderful sentences again, and they will be found to contain nothing more, than very plain truths, which till this author arose had always been delivered in plain language.

No. 37.] Saturday, Dec. 30, 1758.

Those who are skilled in the extraction and preparation of metals, declare, that iron is every where to be found; and that not only its proper ore is copiously treasured in the caverns of the earth, but that its particles are dispersed throughout all other bodies.

If the extent of the human view could comprehend the whole frame of the universe, I believe it would be found invariably true, that Providence has given that in greatest plenty, which the condition of life makes of greatest use; and that nothing is penuriously imparted or placed far from the reach of man, of which a more liberal distribution, or more easy acquisition, would increase real and rational felicity.

Iron is common, and gold is rare. Iron contributes so much to supply the wants of nature, that its use constitutes much of the difference between savage and polished life, between the state of him that slumbers in European palaces, and him that shelters himself in the cavities of a rock from the chillness of the night, or the violence of the storm. Gold can never be hardened into saws or axes; it can neither furnish instruments of manufacture, utensils of agriculture, nor weapons of defence; its only quality is to shine, and the value of its lustre arises from its scarcity.

Throughout the whole circle, both of natural

and moral life, necessaries are as iron, and superfluities as gold. What we really need we may readily obtain; so readily, that far the greater part of mankind has, in the wantonness of abundance, confounded natural with artificial desires, and invented necessities for the sake of employment, because the mind is impatient of inaction, and life is sustained with so little labour, that the tediousness of idle time cannot otherwise be supported.

Thus plenty is the original cause of many of our needs; and even the poverty, which is so frequent and distressful in civilized nations, proceeds often from that change of manners which opulence has produced. Nature makes us poor only when we want necessaries; but custom gives the name of poverty to the want of superfluities.

When Socrates passed through shops of toys and ornaments, he cried out, *How many things are here which I do not need!* And the same exclamation may every man make who surveys the common accommodations of life.

Superfluity and difficulty begin together. To dress food for the stomach is easy, the art is to irritate the palate when the stomach is sufficed. A rude hand may build walls, form roofs, and lay floors, and provide all that warmth and security require; we only call the nicer artificers to carve the cornice, or to paint the ceilings. Such dress as may enable the body to endure the different seasons, the most unenlightened nations have been able to procure: but the work of science begins in the ambition of distinction, in variations of fashion, and emulation of elegance. Corn grows with easy culture; the gardener's experiments are only employed to exalt the flavours of fruits, and brighten the colours of flowers.

Even of knowledge, those parts are most easy which are generally necessary. The intercourse of society is maintained without the elegances of language. Figures, criticisms, and refinements, are the work of those whom idleness makes weary of themselves. The commerce of the world is carried on by easy methods of computation. Subtilty and study are required only when questions are invented merely to puzzle, and calculations are extended to show the skill of the calculator. The light of the sun is equally beneficial to him whose eyes tell him that it moves, and to him whose reason persuades him that it stands still; and plants grow with the same luxuriance, whether we suppose earth or water the parent of vegetation.

If we raise our thoughts to nobler inquiries, we shall still find facility concurring with usefulness. No man needs stay to be virtuous till the moralists have determined the essence of virtue; our duty is made apparent by its proximate consequences, though the general and ultimate reason should never be discovered. ligion may regulate the life of him to whom Scotists and Thomists are alike unknown; the assertors of fate and free-will, how different in their talk, agree to act in the s manner.

It is not my intention to depreciate politer arts or abstruser studies. That curio which always succeeds ease and plenty, was doubtedly given us as a proof of capacity w our present state is not able to fill, as a prep tive for some better mode of existence, w shall furnish employment for the whole soul, where pleasure shall be adequate to our pow of fruition. In the mean time let us gratef acknowledge that goodness which grants us at a cheap rate, which changes the sea where the nature of heat and cold has not b yet examined, and gives the vicissitudes of and night to those who never marked the pics, or numbered the constellations.

No. 38.] SATURDAY, JAN. 6, 1759.

SINCE the publication of the letter concern the condition of those who are confined in g by their creditors, an inquiry is said to h been made, by which it appears that more t twenty thousand* are at this time priso for debt.

We often look with indifference on the s cessive parts of that, which, if the whole w seen together, would shake us with emot A debtor is dragged to prison, pitied for a ment, and then forgotten; another follows h and is lost alike in the caverns of oblivion; when the whole mass of calamity rises u once, when twenty thousand reasonable be are heard all groaning in unnecessary mis not by the infirmity of nature, but the mis or negligence of policy, who can forbear to and lament, to wonder and abhor!

There is here no need of declamatory v mence: we live in an age of commerce and c putation; let us therefore coolly inquire wh the sum of evil which the imprisonmen debtors brings upon our country.

It seems to be the opinion of the later con tists, that the inhabitants of England do exceed six millions, of which twenty thou is the three hundredth part. What shall we of the humanity or the wisdom of a nation, voluntarily sacrifices one in every three hund to lingering destruction!

The misfortunes of an individual do not

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* This number was at that time confidently lished; but the author has since found reaso question the calculation.

tend their influence to many; yet if we consider the effects of consanguinity and friendship, and the general reciprocation of wants and benefits, which make one man dear or necessary to another, it may reasonably be supposed, that every man languishing in prison gives trouble of some kind to two others who love or need him. By this multiplication of misery we see distress extended to the hundredth part of the whole society.

If we estimate at a shilling a day what is lost by the inaction and consumed in the support of each man thus chained down to involuntary idleness, the public loss will rise in one year to three hundred thousand pounds; in ten years to more than a sixth part of our circulating coin.

I am afraid that those who are best acquainted with the state of our prisons will confess that my conjecture is too near the truth, when I suppose that the corrosion of resentment, the heaviness of sorrow, the corruption of confined air, the want of exercise, and sometimes of food, the contagion of diseases, from which there is no retreat, and the severity of tyrants, against whom there can be no resistance, and all the complicated horrors of a prison, put an end every year to the life of one in four of those that are shut up from the common comforts of human life.

Thus perish yearly five thousand men, overborne with sorrow, consumed by famine, or putrified by filth; many of them in the most vigorous and useful part of life; for the thoughtless and imprudent are commonly young, and the active and busy are seldom old.

According to the rule generally received, which supposes that one in thirty dies yearly, the race of man may be said to be renewed at the end of thirty years. Who would have believed till now, that of every English generation, a hundred and fifty thousand perish in our gaols! that in every century, a nation eminent for science, studious of commerce, ambitious of empire, should willingly lose, in noisome dungeons, five hundred thousand of its inhabitants; a number greater than has ever been destroyed in the same time by the pestilence and sword!

A very late occurrence may show us the value of the number which we thus condemn to be useless; in the re-establishment of the trained bands, thirty thousand are considered as a force sufficient against all exigencies. While, therefore, we detain twenty thousand in prison, we shut up in darkness and uselessness two thirds of an army which ourselves judge equal to the defence of our country.

The monastic institutions have been often blamed as tending to retard the increase of mankind. And perhaps retirement ought rarely to be permitted, except to those whose employment is consistent with abstraction, and who, though solitary, will not be idle: to those whom infirmity makes useless to the commonwealth, or to those who have paid their due proportion to society, and who, having lived for others, may be honourably dismissed to live for themselves. But whatever be the evil or the folly of these retreats, those have no right to censure them whose prisons contain greater numbers than the monasteries of other countries. It is, surely, less foolish and less criminal to permit inaction than compel it; to comply with doubtful opinions of happiness, than condemn to certain and apparent misery; to indulge the extravagances of erroneous piety, than to multiply and enforce temptations to wickedness.

The misery of gaols is not half their evil: they are filled with every corruption which poverty and wickedness can generate between them; with all the shameless and profligate enormities that can be produced by the impudence of ignominy, the rage of want, and the malignity of despair. In a prison, the awe of the public eye is lost, and the power of the law is spent; there are few fears, there are no blushes. The lewd inflame the lewd, the audacious harden the audacious. Every one fortifies himself as he can against his own sensibility, endeavours to practise on others the arts which are practised on himself; and gains the kindness of his associates by similitude of manners.

Thus some sink amidst their misery, and others survive only to propagate villany. It may be hoped, that our lawgivers will at length take away from us this power of starving and depraving one another; but, if there be any reason why this inveterate evil should not be removed in our age, which true policy has enlightened beyond any former time, let those, whose writings form the opinions and the practices of their contemporaries, endeavour to transfer the reproach of such imprisonment from the debtor to the creditor, till universal infamy shall pursue the wretch whose wantonness of power, or revenge of disappointment, condemns another to torture and to ruin; till he shall be hunted through the world as an enemy to man, and find in riches no shelter from contempt.

Surely, he whose debtor has perished in prison, although he may acquit himself of deliberate murder, must at least have his mind clouded with discontent, when he considers how much another has suffered from him; when he thinks on the wife bewailing her husband, or the children begging the bread which their father would have earned. If there are any made so obdurate by avarice or cruelty, as to revolve these consequences without dread or pity, I must leave them to be awakened by some other power, for I write only to human beings.

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No. 39.] Saturday, Jan. 13, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

As none look more diligently about them than those who have nothing to do, or who do nothing, I suppose it has not escaped your observation, that the bracelet, an ornament of great antiquity, has been for some years revived among the English ladies.

The genius of our nation is said, I know not for what reason, to appear rather in improvement than invention. The bracelet was known in the earliest ages; but it was formerly only a hoop of gold, or a cluster of jewels, and showed nothing but the wealth or vanity of the wearer; till our ladies, by carrying pictures on their wrists, made their ornaments works of fancy and exercises of judgment.

This addition of art to luxury is one of the innumerable proofs that might be given of the late increase of female erudition; and I have often congratulated myself that my life has happened at a time when those, on whom so much of human felicity depends, have learned to think as well as speak, and when respect takes possession of the ear, while love is entering at the eye.

I have observed, that even by the suffrages of their own sex, those ladies are accounted wisest who do not yet disdain to be taught; and therefore, I shall offer a few hints for the completion of the bracelet, without any dread of the fate of Orpheus.

To the ladies who wear the pictures of their husbands or children, or any other relations, I can offer nothing more decent or more proper. It is reasonable to believe that she intends at least to perform her duty, who carries a perpetual excitement to recollection and caution, whose own ornaments must upbraid her with every failure, and who, by an open violation of her engagements, must for ever forfeit her bracelet.

Yet I know not whether it is the interest of the husband to solicit very earnestly a place on the bracelet. If his image be not in the heart, it is of small avail to hang it on the hand. A husband encircled with diamonds and rubies may gain some esteem, but will never excite love. He that thinks himself most secure of his wife, should be fearful of persecuting her continually with his presence. The joy of life is variety; the tenderest love requires to be rekindled by intervals of absence; and fidelity herself will be wearied with transferring her eye only from the same man to the same picture.

In many countries the condition of every woman is known by her dress. Marriage is rewarded with some honourable distinction which celibacy is forbidden to usurp. Some such information a bracelet might afford. The ladies might enrol themselves in distinct classes, and carry in open view the emblems of their order. The bracelet of the authoress may exhibit the muses in a grove of laurel; the housewife may show Penelope with her web; the votaress of a single life may carry Ursula with her troop of virgins; the gamester may have Fortune with her wheel; and those women that have no character at all, may display a field of white enamel, as imploring help to fill up the vacuity.

There is a set of ladies who have outlived most animal pleasures, and having nothing rational to put in their place, solace with cards the loss of what time has taken away, and the want of what wisdom, having never been courted, has never given. For these, I know not how to provide a proper decoration. They cannot be numbered among the gamesters: for though they are always at play, they play for nothing, and never rise to the dignity of hazard or the reputation of skill. They neither love nor are loved, and cannot be supposed to contemplate any human image with delight. Yet though they despair to please, they always wish to be fine, and therefore cannot be without a bracelet. To this sisterhood I can recommend nothing more likely to please them than the king of clubs, a personage very comely and majestic, who will never meet their eyes without reviving the thought of some past or future party, and who may be displayed in the act of dealing with grace and propriety.

But the bracelet which might be most easily introduced into general use is a small convex mirror, in which the lady may see herself whenever she shall lift her hand. This will be a perpetual source of delight. Other ornaments are of use only in public, but this will furnish gratifications to solitude. This will show a face that must always please; she who is followed by admirers will carry about her a perpetual justification of the public voice; and she who passes without notice may appeal from prejudice to her own eyes.

But I know not why the privilege of the bracelet should be confined to women; it was in former ages worn by heroes in battle; and as modern soldiers are always distinguished by splendour of dress, I should rejoice to see the bracelet added to the cockade.

In hope of this ornamental innovation, I have spent some thoughts upon military bracelets. There is no passion more heroic than love; and therefore I should be glad to see the sons of England marching in the field, every man with the picture of a woman of honour bound upon his hand. But since in the army, as every where else, there will always be men who love nobody but themselves, or whom no woman of honour will

permit to love her, there is a necessity of some other distinctions and devices.

I have read of a prince who, having lost a town, ordered the name of it to be every morning shouted in his ear till it should be recovered. For the same purpose I think the prospect of Minorca might be properly worn on the hands of some of our generals: others might delight their countrymen, and dignify themselves with a view of Rochefort as it appeared to them at sea: and those that shall return from the conquest of America, may exhibit the warehouse of Frontenac, with an inscription denoting that it was taken in less than three years by less than twenty thousand men.

I am, Sir, &c.

Tom Toy.

No. 40.] Saturday, Jan. 20, 1759.

The practice of appending to the narratives of public transactions more minute and domestic intelligence, and filling the newspapers with advertisements, has grown up by slow degrees to its present state.

Genius is shown only by invention. The man who first took advantage of the general curiosity that was excited by a siege or battle, to betray the readers of news into the knowledge of the shop where the best puffs and powder were to be sold, was undoubtedly a man of great sagacity and profound skill in the nature of man. But when he had once shown the way, it was easy to follow him; and every man now knows a ready method of informing the public of all that he desires to buy or sell, whether his wares be material or intellectual; whether he makes clothes, or teaches the mathematics; whether he be a tutor that wants a pupil, or a pupil that wants a tutor.

Whatever is common is despised. Advertisements are now so numerous that they are very negligently perused, and it is therefore become necessary to gain attention by magnificence of promises, and by eloquence sometimes sublime and sometimes pathetic.

Promise, large promise, is the soul of an advertisement. I remember a wash-ball that had a quality truly wonderful—it gave an exquisite edge to the razor. And there are now to be sold, "for ready money only, some duvets for bed coverings, of down, beyond comparison, superior to what is called otter-down, and indeed such, that its many excellences cannot be here set forth." With one excellence we are made acquainted—"it is warmer than four or five blankets, and lighter than one."

There are some, however, that know the prejudice of mankind in favour of modest sincerity. The vender of the beautifying fluid sells a lotion that repels pimples, washes away freckles, smooths the skin, and plumps the flesh: and yet, with a generous abhorrence of ostentation, confesses, that it will not "restore the bloom of fifteen to a lady of fifty."

The true pathos of advertisements must have sunk deep into the heart of every man that remembers the zeal shown by the seller of the anodyne necklace, for the ease and safety of poor toothing infants, and the affection with which he warned every mother, that "she would never forgive herself" if her infant should perish without a necklace.

I cannot but remark to the celebrated author who gave, in his notifications of the camel and dromedary, so many specimens of the genuine sublime, that there is now arrived another subject yet more worthy of his pen. "A famous Mohawk Indian warrior, who took Dieskaw the French general prisoner, dressed in the same manner with the native Indians when they go to war, with his face and body painted, with his scalping-knife, tom-ax and all other implements of war! a sight worthy the curiosity of every true Briton!" This is a very powerful description: but a critic of great refinement would say, that it conveys rather horror than terror. An Indian, dressed as he goes to war, may bring company together; but if he carries the scalping knife, and tom-ax, there are many true Britons that will never be persuaded to see him but through a grate.

It has been remarked by the severer judges, that the salutary sorrow of tragic scenes is too soon effaced by the merriment of the epilogue; the same inconvenience arises from the improper disposition of advertisements. The noblest objects may be so associated as to be made ridiculous. The camel and dromedary themselves might have lost much of their dignity between "the true flower of mustard and the original Daffy's elixir;" and I could not but feel some indignation, when I found this illustrious Indian warrior immediately succeeded by "a fresh parcel of Dublin butter."

The trade of advertising is now so near to perfection, that it is not easy to propose any improvement. But as every art ought to be exercised in due subordination to the public good, I cannot but propose it as a moral question to these masters of the public ear, Whether they do not sometimes play too wantonly with our passions, as when the registrar of lottery tickets invites us to his shop by an account of the prizes which he sold last year; and whether the advertising controvertists do not indulge asperity of language without any adequate provocation; as in the dispute about straps for razors, now happily subsided, and in the altercation which at present subsists concerning *eau de luce?*

In an advertisement it is allowed to every

man to speak well of himself, but I know not why he should assume the privilege of censuring his neighbour. He may proclaim his own virtue or skill, but ought not to exclude others from the same pretensions.

Every man that advertises his own excellence should write with some consciousness of character which dares to call the attention of the public. He should remember that his name is to stand in the same paper with those of the king of Prussia and the emperor of Germany, and endeavour to make himself worthy of such association.

Some regard is likewise to be paid to posterity. There are men of diligence and curiosity who treasure up the papers of the day merely because others neglect them, and in time they will be scarce. When these collections shall be read in another century, how will numberless contradictions be reconciled; and how shall fame be possibly distributed among the tailors and boddice-makers of the present age?

Surely these things deserve consideration. It is enough for me to have hinted my desire that these abuses may be rectified; but such is the state of nature, that what all have the right of doing, many will attempt without sufficient care or due qualifications.

No. 41.] SATURDAY, JAN. 27, 1759.

THE following letter relates to an affliction perhaps not necessary to be imparted to the public; but I could not persuade myself to suppress it, because I think I know the sentiments to be sincere, and I feel no disposition to provide for this day any other entertainment.

At tu quisquis eris, miseri qui crude poetæ
Credidiris fletu funera digna tuo,
Hæc postrema tibi sit flendi causa, fluatque
Lentis inoffenso vitaque morsque gradu.

MR. IDLER,

NOTWITHSTANDING the warnings of philosophers, and the daily examples of losses and misfortunes which life forces upon our observation, such is the absorption of our thoughts in the business of the present day, such the resignation of our reason to empty hopes of future felicity, or such our unwillingness to foresee what we dread, that every calamity comes suddenly upon us, and not only presses us as a burden, but crushes as a blow.

There are evils which happen out of the common course of nature, against which it is no reproach not to be provided. A flash of lightning intercepts the traveller in his way. The concussion of an earthquake heaps the ruins of cities upon their inhabitants. But other miseries time brings, though silently, yet visibly forward by its even lapse, which yet approach us unseen, because we turn our eyes away, and seize us unresisted, because we could not arm ourselves against them but by setting them before us.

That it is vain to shrink from what cannot be avoided, and to hide that from ourselves which must sometime be found, is a truth which we all know, but which all neglect, and perhaps none more than the speculative reasoner, whose thoughts are always from home, whose eye wanders over life, whose fancy dances after meteors of happiness kindled by itself, and who examines every thing rather than his own state.

Nothing is more evident than that the decay of age must terminate in death; yet there is no man, says Tully, who does not believe that he may yet live another year; and there is none who does not, upon the same principle, hope another year for his parent or his friend; but the fallacy will be in time detected; the last year, the last day, must come. It has come, and is past. The life which made my own life pleasant is at an end, and the gates of death are shut upon my prospects.

The loss of a friend upon whom the heart was fixed, to whom every wish and endeavour tended, is a state of dreary desolation, in which the mind looks abroad impatient of itself, and finds nothing but emptiness and horror. The blameless life, the artless tenderness, the pious simplicity, the modest resignation, the patient sickness and the quiet death, are remembered only to add value to the loss, to aggravate regret for what cannot be amended, to deepen sorrow for what cannot be recalled.

These are the calamities by which providence gradually disengages us from the love of life. Other evils fortitude may repel, or hope may mitigate; but irreparable privation leaves no thing to exercise resolution or flatter expectation. The dead cannot return, and nothing is left us here but languishment and grief.

Yet such is the course of nature, that whoever lives long must outlive those whom he loves and honours. Such is the condition of our present existence, that life must one time lose its associations, and every inhabitant of the earth must walk downward to the grave alone and unregarded, without any partner of his joy or grief, without any interested witness of his misfortune or success.

Misfortune, indeed, he may yet feel; for where is the bottom of the misery of man? But what is success to him that has none to enjoy it? Happiness is not found in self-contemplation; it is perceived only when it is reflected from another.

We know little of the state of departed souls

because such knowledge is not necessary to a good life. Reason deserts us at the brink of the grave, and can give no farther intelligence. Revelation is not wholly silent. "There is joy in the angels of Heaven over one sinner that repenteth;" and surely this joy is not incommunicable to souls disentangled from the body, and made like angels.

Let hope therefore dictate, what revelation does not confute, that the union of souls may still remain; and that we who are struggling with sin, sorrow, and infirmities, may have our part in the attention and kindness of those who have finished their course, and are now receiving their reward.

These are the great occasions which force the mind to take refuge in religion; when we have no help in ourselves, what can remain but that we look up to a higher and a greater Power? and to what hope may we not raise our eyes and hearts when we consider that the greatest power is the best?

Surely there is no man who, thus afflicted, does not seek succour in the gospel, which has brought *life and immortality to light*. The precepts of Epicurus, who teaches us to endure what the laws of the universe make necessary, may silence, but not content us. The dictates of Zeno, who commands us to look with indifference on external things, may dispose us to conceal our sorrow, but cannot assuage it. Real alleviation of the loss of friends, and rational tranquillity in the prospect of our own dissolution, can be received only from the promises of Him in whose hands are life and death, and from the assurance of another and better state, in which all tears will be wiped from the eyes, and the whole soul shall be filled with joy. Philosophy may infuse stubbornness, but religion only can give patience.

I am, &c.

No. 42.] SATURDAY, FEB. 3, 1759.

The subject of the following letter is not wholly unmentioned by the Rambler. The Spectator has also a letter containing a case not much different. I hope my correspondent's performance is more an effort of genius, than effusion of the passions; and that she hath rather attempted to paint some possible distress than really feels the evils she has described.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

THERE is a cause of misery, which, though certainly known both to you and your predecessors, has been little taken notice of in your papers; I mean the snares that the bad behaviour of parents extends over the paths of life which their children are to tread after them; and as I make no doubt but the *Idler* holds the shield for virtue as well as the glass for folly, that he will employ his leisure hours as much to his own satisfaction, in warning his readers against a danger, as in laughing them out of a fashion: for this reason to ask admittance for my story in your paper, though it has nothing to recommend it but truth, and the honest wish of warning others to shun the track which I am afraid may lead me at last to ruin.

I am the child of a father, who, having always lived in one spot in the country where he was born, and having had no genteel education himself, thought no qualifications in the world desirable but as they led up to fortune, and no learning necessary to happiness but such as might most effectually teach me to make the best market of myself: I was unfortunately born a beauty, to a full sense of which my father took care to flatter me; and having, when very young, put me to school in the country, afterwards transplanted me to another in town, at the instigation of his friends, where his ill-judged fondness let me remain no longer than to learn just enough experience to convince me of the sordidness of his views, to give me an idea of perfections which my present situation will never suffer me to reach, and to teach me sufficient morals to dare to despise what is bad, though it be in a father.

Thus equipped (as he thought completely) for life, I was carried back into the country, and lived with him and my mother in a small village, within a few miles of the county-town; where I mixed, at first with reluctance, among company which, though I never despised, I could not approve, as they were brought up with other inclinations, and narrower views than my own. My father took great pains to show me every where, both at his own house, and at such public diversions as the country afforded: he frequently told the people all he had was for his daughter; took care to repeat the civilities I had received from all his friends in London; told how much I was admired, and all his little ambition could suggest to set me in a stronger light.

Thus have I continued tricked out for sale, as I may call it, and doomed, by parental authority, to a state little better than that of prostitution. I look on myself as growing cheaper every hour, and am losing all that honest pride, that modest confidence, in which the virgin dignity consists. Nor does my misfortune stop here: though many would be too generous to impute the follies of a father to a child whose heart has set her above them; yet I am afraid the most charitable of them will hardly think it possible for me to be a daily spectatress of his vices without tacitly allowing them, and at last consenting

to them, as the eye of the frighted infant is, by degrees reconciled to the darkness of which at first it was afraid. It is a common opinion, he himself must very well know, that vices, like diseases, are often hereditary; and that the property of the one is to infect the manners, as the other poisons the springs of life.

Yet this though bad, is not the worst; my father deceives himself the hopes of the very child he has brought into the world; he suffers his house to be the seat of drunkenness, riot, and irreligion: who seduces, almost in my sight, the menial servant, converses with the prostitute, and corrupts the wife! Thus I, who from my earliest dawn of reason was taught to think that at my approach every eye sparkled with pleasure, or was dejected as conscious of superior charms, am excluded from society, through fear lest I should partake, if not of my father's crimes, at least of his reproach. Is a parent, who is so little solicitous for the welfare of a child, better than a pirate who turns a wretch adrift in a boat at sea, without a star to steer by, or an anchor to hold it fast? Am I not to lay all my miseries at those doors which ought to have opened only for my protection? And if doomed to add at last one more to the number of those wretches whom neither the world nor its law befriends, may I not justly say that I have been awed by a parent into ruin? But though a parent's power is screened from insult and violation by the very words of Heaven, yet surely no laws, divine or human, forbid me to remove myself from the malignant shade of a plant that poisons all around it, blasts the bloom of youth, checks its improvements, and makes all its flowerets fade; but to whom can the wretched, can the dependent fly? For me to fly a father's house, is to be a beggar; I have only one comforter amidst my anxieties, a pious relation, who bids me appeal to Heaven for a witness to my just intentions, fly as a deserted wretch to its protection; and, being asked who my father is, point, like the ancient philosopher, with my finger to the heavens.

The hope in which I write this, is, that you will give it a place in your paper; and as your essays sometimes find their way into the country, that my father may read my story there; and, if not for his own sake yet for mine, spare to perpetuate that worst of calamities to me, the loss of character, from which all his dissimulation has not been able to rescue himself. Tell the world, 'Sir, that it is possible for virtue to keep its throne unshaken without any other guard than itself; that it is possible to maintain that purity of thought so necessary to the completion of human excellence even in the midst of temptations; when they have no friend within, nor are assisted by the voluntary indulgence of vicious thoughts.

If the insertion of a story like this does not break in on the plan of your paper, you have it in your power to be a better friend than her father to

PERDITA.

No. 43.] SATURDAY, FEB. 10, 1759.

THE natural advantages which arise from the position of the earth which we inhabit, with respect to the other planets, afford much employment to mathematical speculation, by which it has been discovered, that no other conformation of the system could have given such commodious distributions of light and heat, or imparted fertility and pleasure to so great a part of a revolving sphere.

It may be, perhaps, observed by the moralist, with equal reason, that our globe seems particularly fitted for the residence of a being, placed here only for a short time, whose task is, to advance himself to a higher and happier state of existence, by unremitted vigilance of caution, and activity of virtue.

The duties required of a man are such as human nature does not willingly perform, and such as those are inclined to delay who yet intend some time to fulfil them. It was therefore necessary that this universal reluctance should be counteracted, and the drowsiness of hesitation wakened into resolve; that the danger of procrastination should be always in view, and the fallacies of security be hourly detected.

To this end all the appearances of nature uniformly conspire. Whatever we see on every side reminds us of the lapse of time and the flux of life. The day and night succeed each other, the rotation of seasons diversifies the year, the sun rises, attains the meridian, declines and sets; and the moon every night changes its form.

The day has been considered as an image of the year, and the year as the representation of life. The morning answers to the spring, and the spring to childhood and youth; the noon corresponds to the summer, and the summer to the strength of manhood. The evening is an emblem of autumn, and autumn of declining life. The night with its silence and darkness shows the winter, in which all the powers of vegetation are benumbed; and the winter points out the time when life shall cease, with its hopes and pleasures.

He that is carried forward, however swiftly, by a motion equable and easy, perceives not the change of place but by the variation of objects. If the wheel of life, which rolls thus silently along, passed on through undistinguishable uniformity, we should never mark its approaches to the end of the course. If one hour were like another; if the passage of the sun did

not show that the day is wasting; if the change of seasons did not impress upon us the flight of the year; quantities of duration equal to days and years would glide unobserved. If the parts of time were not variously coloured, we should never discern their departure or succession, but should live thoughtless of the past, and careless of the future, without will, and perhaps without power, to compute the periods of life, or to compare the time which is already lost with that which may probably remain.

But the course of time is so visibly marked, that it is observed even by the birds of passage, and by nations who have raised their minds very little above animal instinct; there are human beings whose language does not supply them with words by which they can number five, but I have read of none that have not names for day and night, for summer and winter.

Yet it is certain that these admonitions of nature, however forcible, however importunate, are too often vain; and that many who mark with such accuracy the course of time, appear to have little sensibility of the decline of life. Every man has something to do which he neglects; every man has faults to conquer which he delays to combat.

So little do we accustom ourselves to consider the effects of time, that things necessary and certain often surprise us like unexpected contingencies. We leave the beauty in her bloom, and, after an absence of twenty years, wonder, at our return, to find her faded. We meet those whom we left children, and can scarcely persuade ourselves to treat them as men. The traveller visits in age those countries through which he rambled in his youth, and hopes for merriment at the old place. The man of business, wearied with unsatisfactory prosperity, retires to the town of his nativity, and expects to play away the last years with the companions of his childhood, and recover youth in the fields where he once was young.

From this inattention, so general and so mischievous, let it be every man's study to exempt himself. Let him that desires to see others happy, make haste to give while his gift can be enjoyed, and remember that every moment of delay takes away something from the value of his benefaction. And let him, who purposes his own happiness, reflect, that while he forms his purpose the day rolls on, and "the night cometh, when no man can work!"

No. 44.] Saturday, Feb. 17, 1759.

Memory is, among the faculties of the human mind, that of which we make the most frequent use, or rather that of which the agency is incessant or perpetual. Memory is the primary and fundamental power, without which there could be no other intellectual operation. Judgment and ratiocination suppose something already known, and draw their decisions only from experience. Imagination selects ideas from the treasures of remembrance, and produces novelty only by varied combinations. We do not even form conjectures of distant, or anticipations, of future events, but by concluding what is possible from what is past.

The two offices of memory are collection and distribution; by one images are accumulated, and by the other produced for use. Collection is always the employment of our first years; and distribution commonly that of our advanced age.

To collect and reposit the various forms of things, is far the most pleasing part of mental occupation. We are naturally delighted with novelty, and there is a time when all that we see is new. When first we enter into the world, whithersoever we turn our eyes, they meet Knowledge with Pleasure at her side; every diversity of nature pours ideas in upon the soul; neither search nor labour are necessary; we have nothing more to do than to open our eyes, and curiosity is gratified.

Much of the pleasure which the first survey of the world affords, is exhausted before we are conscious of our own felicity, or able to compare our condition with some other possible state. We have therefore few traces of the joy of our earliest discoveries; yet we all remember a time when nature had so many untasted gratifications, that every excursion gave delight which can now be found no longer, when the noise of a torrent, the rustle of a wood, the song of birds, or the play of lambs, had power to fill the attention, and suspend all perception of the course of time.

But these easy pleasures are soon at end; we have seen in a very little time so much, that we call out for new objects of observation, and endeavour to find variety in books and life. But study is laborious, and not always satisfactory; and conversation has its pains as well as pleasures; we are willing to learn, but not willing to be taught; we are pained by ignorance, but pained yet more by another's knowledge.

From the vexation of pupilage men commonly set themselves free about the middle of life, by shutting up the avenues of intelligence, and resolving to rest in their present state; and they, whose ardour of inquiry continues longer, find themselves insensibly forsaken by their instructors. As every man advances in life, the proportion between those that are younger and that are older than himself, is continually changing; and he that has lived half a century finds few that do not require from him that in-

formation which he once expected from those that went before him.

Then it is that the magazines of memory are opened, and the stores of accumulated knowledge are displayed by vanity or benevolence, or in honest commerce of mutual interest. Every man wants others, and is therefore glad when he is wanted by them. And as few men will endure the labour of intense meditation without necessity, he that has learned enough for his profit or his honour, seldom endeavours after further acquisitions.

The pleasure of recollecting speculative notions would not be much less than that of gaining them, if they could be kept pure and unmingled with the passages of life; but such is the necessary concatenation of our thoughts, that good and evil are linked together, and no pleasure recurs but associated with pain. Every revived idea reminds us of a time, when something was enjoyed that is now lost, when some hope was yet not blasted, when some purpose had yet not languished into sluggishness or indifference.

Whether it be that life has more vexations than comforts, or, what is in the event just the same, that evil makes deeper impression than good, it is certain that no man can review the time past without heaviness of heart. He remembers many calamities incurred by folly, many opportunities lost by negligence. The shades of the dead rise up before him; and he laments the companions of his youth, the partners of his amusements, the assistants of his labours, whom the hand of death has snatched away.

When an offer was made to Themistocles of teaching him the art of memory, he answered, that he would rather wish for the art of forgetfulness. He felt his imagination haunted by phantoms of misery which he was unable to suppress, and would gladly have calmed his thoughts with some oblivious antidote. In this we all resemble one another: the hero and the sage are like vulgar mortals, overburdened by the weight of life; all shrink from recollection, and all wish for an art of forgetfulness.

No 45.] Saturday, Feb. 24, 1759.

There is in many minds a kind of vanity exerted to the disadvantage of themselves; a desire to be praised for superior acuteness discovered only in the degradation of their species, or censure of their country.

Defamation is sufficiently copious. The general lampooner of mankind may find long exercise for his zeal or wit, in the defects of nature, the vexations of life, the follies of opinion, and the corruptions of practice. But fiction is easier than discernment; and most of these writers spare themselves the labour of inquiry, and exhaust their virulence upon imaginary crimes which, as they never existed, can never be mended.

That the painters find no encouragement among the English for many other works than portraits, has been imputed to national selfishness. 'Tis vain, says the satirist, to set before any Englishman the scenes of landscapes, or the heroes of history; nature and antiquity are nothing in his eye; he has no value but for himself, nor desires any copy but of his own form.

Whoever is delighted with his own picture must derive his pleasure from the pleasure of another. Every man is always present to himself, and has, therefore, little need of his own resemblance, nor can desire it, but for the sake of those whom he loves, and by whom he hopes to be remembered. This use of the art is a natural and reasonable consequence of affection; and though, like other human actions, it is often complicated with pride, yet even such pride is more laudable than that, by which palaces are covered with pictures, that, however excellent, neither imply the owner's virtue nor excite it.

Genius is chiefly exerted in historical pictures; and the art of the painter of portraits is often lost in the obscurity of his subject. But it is in painting as in life, what is greatest is not always best. I should grieve to see Reynolds transfer to heroes and to goddesses, to empty splendour and to airy fiction, that art which is now employed in diffusing friendship, in reviving tenderness, in quickening the affections of the absent, and continuing the presence of the dead.

Yet in a nation great and opulent there is room, and ought to be patronage, for an art like that of painting through all its diversities; and it is to be wished, that the reward now offered for an historical picture may excite an honest emulation, and give beginning to an English school.

It is not very easy to find an action or event that can be efficaciously represented by a painter.

He must have an action not successive, but instantaneous; for the time of a picture is a single moment. For this reason the death of Hercules cannot well be painted, though at the first view it flatters the imagination with very glittering ideas; the gloomy mountain overhanging the sea, and covered with trees, some bending to the wind, and some torn from the root by the raging hero; the violence with which he sends from his shoulders the envenomed garment; the propriety with which his muscular nakedness may be displayed: the death of Lycas whirled from the promontory; the gigantic presence of Philoctetes; the blaze of the fatal pile, which the deities behold with grief and terror from the sky.

All these images fill the mind, but will not compose a picture, because they cannot be united in a single moment. Hercules must have rent his flesh at one time, and tossed Lycas into the air at another; he must first tear up the trees, and then lie down upon the pile.

The action must be circumstantial and distinct. There is a passage in the Iliad which cannot be read without strong emotions. A Trojan prince, seized by Achilles in the battle, falls at his feet, and in moving terms supplicates for life. "How can a wretch like thee," says the haughty Greek, "intreat to live, when thou knowest that the time must come when Achilles is to die?" This cannot be painted, because no peculiarity of attitude or disposition can so supply the place of language as to impress the sentiment.

The event painted must be such as excites passion, and different passions in the several actors, or a tumult of contending passion in the chief.

Perhaps the discovery of Ulysses by his nurse is of this kind. The surprise of the nurse mingled with joy; that of Ulysses checked by prudence, and clouded by solicitude; and the distinctness of the action by which the scar is found; all concur to complete the subject. But the picture, having only two figures, will want variety.

A much nobler assemblage may be furnished by the death of Epaminondas. The mixture of gladness and grief in the face of the messenger who brings his dying general an account of the victory; the various passions of the attendants; the sublimity of composure in the hero, while the dart is by his own command drawn from his side, and the faint gleam of satisfaction that diffuses itself over the languor of death, are worthy of that pencil which yet I do not wish to see employed upon them.

If the design were not too multifarious and extensive, I should wish that our painters would attempt the dissolution of the parliament by Cromwell. The point of time may be chosen when Cromwell looked round the Pandæmonium with contempt, ordered the bauble to be taken away; and Harrison laid hands on the Speaker to drag him from the chair.

The various appearances which rage, and terror, and astonishment, and guilt, might exhibit in the faces of that hateful assembly, of whom the principal persons may be faithfully drawn from portraits or prints; the irresolute repugnance of some, the hypocritical submission of others, the ferocious insolence of Cromwell, the rugged brutality of Harrison, and the general trepidation of fear and wickedness, would, if some proper disposition could be contrived, make a picture of unexampled variety, and irresistible instruction.

No. 46.] SATURDAY, MARCH 3, 1759.

MR. IDLER,

I AM encouraged, by the notice you have taken of Betty Broom, to represent the miseries which I suffer from a species of tyranny which, I believe, is not very uncommon, though perhaps it may have escaped the observation of those who converse little with fine ladies, or see them only in their public characters.

To this method of venting my vexation I am the more inclined, because if I do not complain to you, I must burst in silence; for my mistress has teased me, and teased me till I can hold no longer, and yet I must not tell her of her tricks. The girls that live in common services can quarrel, and give warning, and find other places; but we that live with great ladies, if we once offend them, have nothing left but to return into the country.

I am waiting-maid to a lady who keeps the best company, and is seen at every place of fashionable resort. I am envied by all the maids in the square, for few countesses leave off so many clothes as my mistress, and nobody shares with me: so that I supply two families in the country with finery for the assizes and horse-races, besides what I wear myself. The steward and house-keeper have joined against me to procure my removal, that they may advance a relation of their own; but their designs are found out by my lady, who says I need not fear them, for she will never have dowdies about her.

You would think, Mr. Idler, like others, that I am very happy, and may well be contented with my lot. But I will tell you. My lady has an odd humour. She never orders any thing in direct words, for she loves a sharp girl that can take a hint.

I would not have you suspect that she has any thing to hint which she is ashamed to speak at length; for none can have greater purity of sentiment, or rectitude of intention. She has nothing to hide, yet nothing will she tell. She always gives her directions oblique and allusively, by the mention of something relative or consequential, without any other purpose than to exercise my acuteness and her own.

It is impossible to give a notion of this style otherwise than by examples. One night, when she had sat writing letters till it was time to be dressed, "Molly," said she, "the ladies are all to be at court to-night in white aprons." When she means that I should send to order the chair, she says, "I think the streets are clean, I may venture to walk." When she would have something put into its place, she bids me "lay it on the floor." If she would have me snuff the candles, she asks, "whether I think her eyes

are like a cat's?" If she thinks her chocolate delayed, she talks of the benefit of abstinence. If any needle-work is forgotten, she supposes that I have heard of the lady who died by pricking her finger.

She always imagines that I can recall every thing past from a single word. If she wants her head from the milliner, she only says, "Molly, you know Mrs. Tape." If she would have the mantua-maker sent for, she remarks that "Mr. Taffety, the mercer, was here last week." She ordered, a fortnight ago, that the first time she was abroad all day I should choose her a new set of coffee-cups at the china-shop: of this she reminded me yesterday, as she was going down stairs, by saying, "You can't find your way now to Pall-Mall."

All this would not vex me, if, by increasing my trouble, she spared her own; but, dear Mr. Idler, is it not as easy to say coffee-cups, as Pall-Mall? and to tell me in plain words what I am to do, and when it is to be done, as to torment her own head with the labour of finding hints, and mine with that of understanding them?

When first I came to this lady, I had nothing like the learning that I have now; for she has many books, and I have much time to read; so that of late I have seldom missed her meaning: but when she first took me I was an ignorant girl; and she, who, as is very common, confounded want of knowledge with want of understanding, began once to despair of bringing me to any thing, because, when I came into her chamber at the call of her bell, she asked me, "Whether we lived in Zembla;" and I did not guess the meaning of inquiry, but modestly answered that I could not tell. She had happened to ring once when I did not hear her, and meant to put me in mind of that country where sounds are said to be congealed by the frost.

Another time, as I was dressing her head, she began to talk on a sudden of Medusa, and snakes, and "men turned into stone, and maids that, if they were not watched, would let their mistresses be Gorgons." I looked round me half frightened, and quite bewildered; till at last, finding that her literature was thrown away upon me, she bid me, with great vehemence, reach the curling-irons.

It is not without some indignation, Mr. Idler, that I discover, in these artifices of vexation, something worse than foppery or caprice; a mean delight in superiority, which knows itself in no danger of reproof or opposition; a cruel pleasure in seeing the perplexity of a mind obliged to find what is studiously concealed, and a mean indulgence of petty malevolence, in the sharp censure of involuntary, and very often of inevitable failings. When, beyond her expectation, I hit upon her meaning, I can perceive a sudden cloud of disappointment spread over her face; and have sometimes been afraid lest I should lose her favour by understanding her when she means to puzzle me.

This day, however, she has conquered my sagacity. When she went out of her dressing-room she said nothing but "Molly, you know," and hastened to her chariot. What I am to know is yet a secret; but if I do not know before she comes back, what I have yet no means of discovering, she will make my dulness a pretence for a fortnight's ill humour, treat me as a creature devoid of the faculties necessary to the common duties of life, and perhaps give the next gown to the housekeeper.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

MOLLY QUICK.

No. 47.] SATURDAY, MARCH 10, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

MR. IDLER,

I AM the unfortunate wife of a city wit, and cannot but think that my case may deserve equal compassion with any of those which have been represented in your paper.

I married my husband within three months after the expiration of his apprenticeship; we put our money together, and furnished a large and splendid shop, in which he was for five years and a half diligent and civil. The notice which curiosity or kindness commonly bestows on beginners, was continued by confidence and esteem; one customer, pleased with his treatment and his bargain, recommended another; and we were busy behind the counter from morning to night.

Thus every day increased our wealth and our reputation. My husband was often invited to dinner openly on the Exchange by hundred-thousand-pounds men; and whenever I went to any of the halls, the wives of the aldermen made me low courtesies. We always took up our notes before the day, and made all considerable payments by drafts upon our banker.

You will easily believe that I was well enough pleased with my condition; for what happiness can be greater than that of growing every day richer and richer? I will not deny that, imagining myself likely to be in a short time the sheriff's lady, I broke off my acquaintance with some of my neighbours; and advised my husband to keep good company, and not to be seen with men that were worth nothing.

In time he found that ale disagreed with his constitution, and went every night to drink his pint at a tavern, where he met with a set of critics, who disputed upon the merits of the different theatrical performers. By these idle

fellows he was taken to the play, which at first he did not seem much to heed; for he owned, that he very seldom knew what they were doing, and that, while his companions would let him alone, he was commonly thinking on his last bargain.

Having once gone, however, he went again and again, though I often told him that three shillings were thrown away; at last he grew uneasy if he missed a night, and importuned me to go with him. I went to a tragedy which they called Macbeth; and, when I came home, told him, that I could not bear to see men and women make themselves such fools, by pretending to be witches and ghosts, generals and kings, and to walk in their sleep when they were as much awake as those that looked at them. He told me, that I must get higher notions, and that a play was the most rational of all entertainments, and most proper to relax the mind after the business of the day.

By degrees he gained knowledge of some of the players; and when the play was over, very frequently treated them with suppers; for which he was admitted to stand behind the scenes.

He soon began to lose some of his morning hours in the same folly, and was for one winter very diligent in his attendance on the rehearsals; but of this species of idleness he grew weary, and said, that the play was nothing without the company.

His ardour for the diversion of the evening increased; he bought a sword, and paid five shillings a night to sit in the boxes; he went sometimes into a place which he calls the green-room, where all the wits of the age assembled; and, when he had been there, could do nothing for two or three days but repeat their jests, or tell their disputes.

He has now lost his regard for every thing but the play-house: he invites, three times a week, one or other to drink claret, and talk of the drama. His first care in the morning is to read the play-bills; and, if he remembers any lines of the tragedy which is to be represented, walks about the shop, repeating them so loud, and with such strange gestures, that the passengers gather round the door.

His greatest pleasure when I married him was to hear the situation of his shop commended, and to be told how many estates have been got in it by the same trade; but of late he grows peevish at any mention of business, and delights in nothing so much as to be told that he speaks like Mossop.

Among his new associates he has learned another language, and speaks in such a strain that his neighbours cannot understand him. If a customer talks longer than he is willing to hear, he will complain that he has been excruciated with unmeaning verbosity; he laughs at the letters of his friends for their tameness of expression, and often declares himself weary of attending to the *minutiæ* of a shop.

It is well for me that I know how to keep a book, for of late he is scarcely ever in the way. Since one of his friends told him that he had a genius for tragic poetry, he has locked himself in an upper room six or seven hours a day; and, when I carry him any paper to be read or signed, I hear him talking vehemently to himself, sometimes of love and beauty, sometimes of friendship and virtue, but more frequently of liberty and his country.

I would gladly, Mr. Idler, be informed what to think of a shopkeeper who is incessantly talking about liberty; a word which, since his acquaintance with polite life, my husband has always in his mouth; he is, on all occasions, afraid of our liberty, and declares his resolution to hazard all for liberty. What can the man mean? I am sure he has liberty enough—it were better for him and me if his liberty was lessened.

He has a friend whom he calls a critic, that comes twice a week to read what he is writing. This critic tells him that his piece is a little irregular, but that some detached scenes will shine prodigiously, and that in the character of Bombulus he is wonderfully great. My scribbler then squeezes his hand, calls him the best of friends, thanks him for his sincerity, and tells him that he hates to be flattered. I have reason to believe that he seldom parts with his dear friend without lending him two guineas, and am afraid that he gave bail for him three days ago.

By this course of life our credit as traders is lessened, and I cannot forbear to suspect, that my husband's honour as a wit is not much advanced, for he seems to be always the lowest of the company, and is afraid to tell his opinion till the rest have spoken. When he was behind his counter, he used to be brisk, active, and jocular, like a man that knew what he was doing, and did not fear to look another in the face; but among wits and critics he is timorous and awkward, and hangs down his head at his own table. Dear Mr. Idler, persuade him, if you can, to return once more to his native element. Tell him, that his wit will never make him rich, but that there are places where riches will always make a wit.

I am, Sir, &c.

DEBORAH GINGER.

No. 48.] SATURDAY, MARCH 17, 1759.

THERE is no kind of idleness, by which we are so easily seduc- as that which dignifies itself

by the appearance of business, and by making the loiterer imagine that he has something to do which must not be neglected, keeps him in perpetual agitation, and hurries him rapidly from place to place.

He that sits still, or reposes himself upon a couch, no more deceives himself than he deceives others; he knows that he is doing nothing, and has no other solace of his insignificance than the resolution, which the lazy hourly make, of changing his mode of life.

To do nothing every man is ashamed; and to do much almost every man is unwilling or afraid. Innumerable expedients have therefore been invented to produce motion without labour, and employment without solicitude. The greater part of those whom the kindness of fortune has left to their own direction, and whom want does not keep chained to the counter or the plough, play throughout life with the shadows of business, and know not at last what they have been doing.

These imitators of action are of all denominations. Some are seen at every auction without intention to purchase; others appear punctually at the Exchange, though they are known there only by their faces. Some are always making parties to visit collections for which they have no taste; and some neglect every pleasure and every duty to hear questions, in which they have no interest, debated in parliament.

These men never appear more ridiculous than in the distress which they imagine themselves to feel, from some accidental interruption of those empty pursuits. A tiger newly imprisoned is indeed more formidable, but not more angry, than Jack Tulip withheld from a florist's feast, or Tom Distich hindered from seeing the first representation of a play.

As political affairs are the highest and most extensive of temporal concerns; the mimic of a politician is more busy and important than any other trifler. Monsieur le Noir, a man who, without property or importance in any corner of the earth, has, in the present confusion of the world, declared himself a steady adherent to the French, is made miserable by a wind that keeps back the packet boat, and still more miserable by every account of a Malouin privateer caught in his cruise; he knows well that nothing can be done or said by him which can produce any effect but that of laughter, that he can neither hasten nor retard good or evil, that his joys and sorrows have scarcely any partakers; yet such is his zeal, and such his curiosity, that he would run barefooted to Gravesend, for the sake of knowing first that the English had lost a tender, and would ride out to meet every mail from the continent if he might be permitted to open it.

Learning is generally confessed to be desirable, and there are some who fancy themselves always busy in acquiring it. Of these ambulatory students, one of the most busy is my friend Tom Restless.

Tom has long had a mind to be a man of knowledge, but he does not care to spend much time among authors; for he is of opinion that few books deserve the labour of perusal, that they give the mind an unfashionable cast, and destroy that freedom of thought and easiness of manners indispensably requisite to acceptance in the world. Tom has therefore found another way to wisdom. When he rises he goes into the coffee-house, where he creeps so near to men whom he takes to be reasoners as to hear their discourse, and endeavours to remember something which, when it has been strained through Tom's head, is so near nothing, that what it once was, cannot be discovered. This he carries round from friend to friend through a circle of visits, till, hearing what each says upon the question, he becomes able at dinner to say a little himself; and, as every great genius relaxes himself among his inferiors, meets with some who wonder how so young a man can talk so wisely.

At night he has a new feast prepared for his intellects; he always runs to a disputing society, or a speaking club, where he half hears what, if he had heard the whole, he would but half understand; goes home pleased with the consciousness of a day well spent, lies down full of ideas, and rises in the morning empty as before.

No. 49.] Saturday, March 24, 1759.

I supped three nights ago with my friend Will Marvel. His affairs obliged him lately to take a journey into Devonshire, from which he has just returned. He knows me to be a very patient hearer, and was glad of my company, as it gave him an opportunity of disburdening himself by a minute relation of the casualties of his expedition.

Will is not one of those who go out and return with nothing to tell. He has a story of his travels, which will strike a home-bred citizen with horror, and has in ten days suffered so often the extremes of terror and joy, that he is in doubt whether he shall ever again expose either his body or mind to such danger and fatigue.

When he left London the morning was bright and a fair day was promised. But Will is born to struggle with difficulties. That happened to him, which has sometimes, perhaps, happened to others. Before he had gone more than ten miles it began to rain. What course was to be taken? His soul disdained to turn back. He did what the king of Prussia might have done;

he flapped his hat, buttoned up his cape, and went forwards, fortifying his mind by the stoical consolation, that whatever is violent will be short.

His constancy was not long tried; at the distance of about half a mile he saw an inn, which he entered wet and weary, and found civil treatment and proper refreshment. After a respite of about two hours, he looked abroad, and seeing the sky clear, called for his horse, and passed the first stage without any other memorable accident.

Will considered, that labour must be relieved by pleasure, and that the strength which great undertakings require must be maintained by copious nutriment; he therefore ordered himself an elegant supper, drank two bottles of claret, and passed the beginning of the night in sound sleep; but, waking before light, was forewarned of the troubles of the next day, by a shower beating against his windows with such violence as to threaten the dissolution of nature. When he arose, he found what he expected, that the country was under water. He joined himself, however, to a company that was travelling the same way, and came safely to the place of dinner, though every step of his horse dashed the mud into the air.

In the afternoon, having parted from his company, he set forward alone, and passed many collections of water, of which it was impossible to guess the depth, and which he now cannot review without some censure of his own rashness; but what a man undertakes he must perform, and Marvel hates a coward at his heart.

Few that lie warm in their beds think what others undergo, who have perhaps been as tenderly educated, and have as acute sensations as themselves. My friend was now to lodge the second night almost fifty miles from home, in a house which he never had seen before, among people to whom he was totally a stranger, not knowing whether the next man he should meet would prove good or bad; but seeing an inn of a good appearance, he rode resolutely into the yard; and knowing that respect is often paid in proportion as it is claimed, delivered his injunctions to the hostler with spirit, and entering the house called vigorously about him.

On the third day up rose the sun and Mr. Marvel. His troubles and his dangers were now such as he wishes no other man ever to encounter. The ways were less frequented, and the country more thinly inhabited. He rode many a lonely hour through mire and water, and met not a single soul for two miles together with whom he could exchange a word. He cannot deny that, looking round upon the dreary region, and seeing nothing but bleak fields and naked trees, hills obscured by fogs, and flats covered with inundations, he did for some time suffer melancholy to prevail upon him, and wished himself again safe at home. One comfort he had, which was to consider that none of his friends were in the same distress, for whom, if they had been with him, he should have suffered more than for himself; he could not forbear sometimes to consider how happy the *Idler* is, settled in an easier condition, who, surrounded like him with terrors, could have done nothing but lie down and die.

Amidst these reflections he came to a town, and found a dinner which disposed him to more cheerful sentiments: but the joys of life are short, and its miseries are long; he mounted and travelled fifteen miles more through dirt and desolation.

At last the sun set, and all the horrors of darkness came upon him. He then repented the weak indulgence in which he had gratified himself at noon with too long an interval of rest: yet he went forward along a path which he could no longer see, sometimes rushing suddenly into water, and sometimes incumbered with stiff clay, ignorant whither he was going, and uncertain whether his next step might not be the last.

In this dismal gloom of nocturnal peregrination his horse unexpectedly stood still. Marvel had heard many relations of the instinct of horses, and was in doubt what danger might be at hand. Sometimes he fancied that he was on the bank of a river still and deep, and sometimes that a dead body lay across the track. He sat still awhile to recollect his thoughts; and as he was about to alight and explore the darkness, out stepped a man with a lantern, and opened the turnpike. He hired a guide to the town, arrived in safety, and slept in quiet.

The rest of his journey was nothing but danger. He climbed and descended precipices on which vulgar mortals tremble to look; he passed marshes like the "Serbonian bog, where armies whole have sunk;" he forded rivers where the current roared like the Egre or the Severn; or ventured himself on bridges that trembled under him, from which he looked down on foaming whirlpools, or dreadful abysses: he wandered over houseless heaths, amidst all the rage of the elements, with the snow driving in his face, and the tempest howling in his ears.

Such are the colours in which Marvel paints his adventures. He has accustomed himself to sounding words and hyperbolical images, till he has lost the power of true description. In a road through which the heaviest carriages pass without difficulty, and the post-boy every day and night goes and returns, he meets with hardships like those which are endured in Siberian deserts, and misses nothing of romantic danger but a giant and a dragon. When his dreadful story is told in proper terms, it is only that the way was dirty in winter, and that he experienced the common vicissitudes of rain and sun-shine.

No. 50.] Saturday, March 31, 1759.

The character of Mr. Marvel has raised the merriment of some and the contempt of others, who do not sufficiently consider how often they hear and practise the same arts of exaggerated narration.

There is not, perhaps, among the multitudes of all conditions that swarm upon the earth, a single man who does not believe that he has something extraordinary to relate of himself; and who does not, at one time or other, summon the attention of his friends to the casualties of his adventures, and the vicissitudes of his fortune; casualties and vicissitudes that happen alike in lives uniform and diversified; to the commander of armies, and the writer at a desk, to the sailor who resigns himself to the wind and water, and the farmer whose longest journey is to the market.

In the present state of the world men may pass through Shakspeare's seven stages of life, and meet nothing singular and wonderful. But such is every man's attention to himself, that what is common and unheeded when it is only seen, becomes remarkable and peculiar when we happen to feel it.

It is well enough known to be according to the usual process of nature that men should sicken and recover, that some designs should succeed and others miscarry, that friends should be separated and meet again, that some should be made angry by endeavours to please them, and some be pleased when no care has been used to gain their approbation; that men and women should at first come together by chance, like each other so well as to commence acquaintance, improve acquaintance into fondness, increase or extinguish fondness by marriage, and have children of different degrees of intellects and virtue, some of whom die before their parents, and others survive them.

Yet let any tell his own story, and nothing of all this has ever befallen him according to the common order of things; something has always discriminated his case; some unusual concurrence of events has appeared which made him more happy or more miserable than other mortals; for in pleasures or calamities, however common, every one has comforts and afflictions of his own.

It is certain that without some artificial augmentations, many of the pleasures of life, and almost all its embellishments, would fall to the ground. If no man was to express more delight than he felt, those who felt most would raise little envy. If travellers were to describe the most laboured performances of art with the same coldness as they survey them, all expectations of happiness from change of place would cease. The pictures of Raphael would hang without spectators, and the gardens of Versailles might be habited by hermits. All the pleasure that received ends in an opportunity of splen falsehood, in the power of gaining notice by display of beauties which the eye was weary beholding, and a history of happy moments, which in reality the most happy was the last.

The ambition of superior sensibility and perior eloquence disposes the lovers of arts receive rapture at one time, and communicat at another; and each labours first to imp upon himself, and then to propagate the imp ture.

Pain is less subject than pleasure to capri of expression. The torments of disease, and grief for irremediable misfortunes, sometim are such as no words can declare, and can o be signified by groans, or sobs, or inarticul ejaculations. Man has from nature a mode utterance peculiar to pain, but he has none culiar to pleasure, because he never has pleas but in such degrees as the ordinary use of l guage may equal or surpass.

It is nevertheless certain, that many pe as well as pleasures are heightened by rhetor affectation, and that the picture is, for the m part, bigger than the life.

When we describe our sensations of anoth sorrow either in friendly or ceremonious c dolence, the customs of the world scare admit of rigid veracity. Perhaps the fond friendship would enrage oftener than comfo were the tongue on such occasions faithfu to represent the sentiments of the heart; I think the strictest moralists allow forms address to be used without much regard their literal acceptation, when either resp or tenderness requires them, because they universally known to denote not the degree the species of our sentiments.

But the same indulgence cannot be allowed him who aggravates dangers incurred or sorr endured by himself, because he darkens the p spect of futurity, and multiplies the pains of condition by useless terror. Those who m nify their delights are less criminal deceiv yet they raise hopes which are sure to be dis pointed. It would be undoubtedly best, if could see and hear every thing as it is, t nothing might be too anxiously dreaded, or ardently pursued.

No. 51.] Saturday, April 7, 1759.

It has been commonly remarked, that emin men are least eminent at home, that bri characters lose much of their splendour a nearer view, and many who fill the world w their fame, excite very little reverence am

hose that surround them in their domestic rivacies.

To blame or to suspect is easy and natural. When the fact is evident, and the cause doubtful, some accusation is always engendered between idleness and malignity. This disparity f general and familiar esteem is therefore imuted to hidden vices, and to practices indulged in secret, but carefully covered from the ublic eye.

Vice will indeed always produce contempt. The dignity of Alexander, though nations fell rostrate before him, was certainly held in little veneration by the partakers of his midnight evels, who had seen him, in the madness of vine, murder his friend, or set fire to the Perian palace at the instigation of a harlot; and it s well remembered among us, that the avarice f Marlborough kept him in subjection to his vife while he was dreaded by France as her conqueror, and honoured by the emperor as his deliverer.

But though, where there is vice there must e want of reverence, it is not reciprocally true hat when there is want of reverence there is always vice. That awe which great actions or bilities impress will be inevitably diminished y acquaintance, though nothing either mean or riminal should be found.

Of men, as of every thing else, we must judge according to our knowledge. When we see of a iero only his battles, or of a writer only his ooks, we have nothing to allay our ideas of their greatness. We consider the one only as the guardian of his country, and the other only as he instructor of mankind. We have neither pportunity nor motive to examine the minuter arts of their lives, or the less apparent peculirities of their characters; we name them with abitual respect, and forget, what we still continue to know, that they are men like other nortals.

But such is the constitution of the world, that nuch of life must be spent in the same manner y the wise and the ignorant, the exalted and he low. Men, however distinguished by external accidents or intrinsic qualities, have all he same wants, the same pains, and, as far as he senses are consulted, the same pleasure. The petty cares and petty duties are the same in very station to every understanding, and every nour brings some occasion on which we all ink to the common level. We are all naked ill we are dressed, and hungry till we are fed; nd the general's triumph, and sage's disputaion, end, like the humble labours of the smith r ploughman, in a dinner or in sleep.

Those notions which are to be collected by eason, in opposition to the senses, will seldom tand forward in the mind, but lie treasured in he remoter repositories of memory, to be found nly when they are sought. Whatever any man may have written or done, his precepts or his valour will scarcely overbalance the unimportant uniformity which runs through his time. We do not easily consider him as great, whom our own eyes show us to be little; nor labour to keep present to our thoughts the latent excellencies of him who shares with us all our weaknesses and many of our follies; who like us is delighted with slight amusements, busied with trifling employments, and disturbed by little vexations.

Great powers cannot be exerted, but when great exigencies make them necessary. Great exigencies can happen but seldom, and therefore those qualities which have a claim to the veneration of mankind lie hid, for the most part, like subterranean treasures, over which the foot passes as on common ground, till necessity breaks open the golden cavern.

In the ancient celebration of victory, a slave was placed on a triumphal car, by the side of the general, who reminded him by a short sentence, that he was a man. Whatever danger there might be lest a leader, in his passage to the capitol, should forget the frailties of his nature, there was surely no need of such an admonition; the intoxication could not have continued long; he would have been at home but a few hours before some of his dependents would have forgot his greatness, and shown him, that notwithstanding his laurels, he was yet a man.

There are some who try to escape this domestic degradation, by labouring to appear always wise or always great; but he that strives against nature, will for ever strive in vain. To be grave of mien and slow of utterance; to look with solicitude and speak with hesitation, is attainable at will; but the show of wisdom is ridiculous when there is nothing to cause doubt, as that of valour where there is nothing to be feared.

A man who has duly considered the condition of his being, will contentedly yield to the course of things; he will not pant for distinction where distinction would imply no merit; but though on great occasions he may wish to be greater than others, he will be satisfied in common occurrences not to be less.

No. 52.] Saturday, April 14, 1759.

Responsare cupidinibus. HOR.

The practice of self-denial, or the forbearance of lawful pleasures, has been considered by almost every nation, from the remotest ages, as the highest exaltation of human virtue; and all have agreed to pay respect and veneration to those who abstained from the delights of life,

even when they did not censure those who enjoy them.

The general voice of mankind, civil and barbarous, confesses that the mind and body are at variance, and that neither can be made happy by its proper gratifications but at the expense of the other; that a pampered body will darken the mind, and an enlightened mind will macerate the body. And none have failed to confer their esteem on those who prefer intellect to sense, who control their lower by their higher faculties, and forget the wants and desires of animal life for rational disquisitions or pious contemplations.

The earth has scarcely a country so far advanced towards political regularity as to divide the inhabitants into classes, where some orders of men or women are not distinguished by voluntary severities, and where the reputation of their sanctity is not increased in proportion to the rigour of their rules, and the exactness of their performance.

When an opinion to which there is no temptation of interest spreads wide and continues long, it may reasonably be presumed to have been issued by nature or dictated by reason. It has been often observed that the fictions of imposture, and illusions of fancy, soon give way to time and experience; and that nothing keeps its ground but truth, which gains every day new influence by new confirmation.

But truth, when it is reduced to practice, easily becomes subject to caprice and imagination; and many particular acts will be wrong, though their general principle be right. It cannot be denied that a just conviction of the restraint necessary to be laid upon the appetites has produced extravagant and unnatural modes of mortification, and institutions, which, however favourably considered, will be found to violate nature without promoting piety.

But the doctrine of self-denial is not weakened in itself by the errors of those who misinterpret or misapply it; the encroachment of the appetites upon the understanding is hourly perceived; and the state of those, whom sensuality has enslaved, is known to be in the highest degree despicable and wretched.

The dread of such shameful captivity may justly raise alarms, and wisdom will endeavour to keep danger at a distance. By timely caution and suspicious vigilance those desires may be repressed, to which indulgence would soon give absolute dominion; those enemies may be overcome, which, when they have been a while accustomed to victory, can no longer be resisted.

Nothing is more fatal to happiness or virtue, than that confidence which flatters us with an opinion of our own strength, and by assuring us of the power of retreat, precipitates us it to hazard. Some may safely venture farther than others into the regions of delight, lay themselves more open to the golden shafts of pleasure, advance nearer to the residence of the Sir but he that is best armed with constancy reason is yet vulnerable in one part or other; to every man there is a point fixed, be which, if he passes, he will not easily ret It is certainly most wise, as it is most saf stop before he touches the utmost limit, every step of advance will more and more e him to go forward, till he shall at last enter the recesses of voluptuousness, and sloth despondency close the passage behind them.

To deny early and inflexibly, is the only of checking the importunity of desire, an preserving quiet and innocence. Innocent g fications must be sometimes withheld; he complies with all lawful desires will certa lose his empire over himself, and in time el submit his reason to his wishes, and think his desires lawful, or dismiss his reason troublesome and intrusive, and resolve to an what he may happen to wish, without inqui about right and wrong.

No man, whose appetites are his masters, perform the duties of his nature with strict and regularity; he that would be superio external influences must first become superi his own passions.

When the Roman general, sitting at su with a plate of turnips before him, was solic by large presents to betray his trust, he a the messengers whether he that could sup turnips was a man likely to sell his own co try. Upon him who has reduced his sense obedience, temptation has lost its power; h able to attend impartially to virtue, and exe her commands without hesitation.

To set the mind above the appetites is the of abstinence, which one of the fathers obse to be not a virtue, but the ground-work of tue. By forbearing to do what may innoce be done, we may add hourly new vigour or solution, and secure the power of resist when pleasure or interest shall lend their cha to guilt.

No. 53.] Saturday, April 21, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

I have a wife that keeps good company. know that the word good varies its meaning cording to the value set upon different quali in different places. To be a good man in a lege, is to be learned; in a camp, to be bra and in the city, to be rich. By good comp in the place which I have the misfortune to habit, we understand not always those fr

whom any good can be learned, whether wisdom or virtue; or by whom any good can be conferred, whether profit or reputation. Good company is the company of those whose birth is high, and whose riches are great; or of those whom the rich and noble admit to familiarity.

I am a gentleman of fortune by no means exuberant, but more than equal to the wants of my family, and for some years equal to our desires. My wife, who had never been accustomed to splendour, joined her endeavours to mine in the superintendence of our economy; we lived in decent plenty, and were not excluded from moderate pleasures.

But slight causes produce great effects. All my happiness has been destroyed by change of place; virtue is too often merely local: in some situations the air diseases the body, and in others poisons the mind. Being obliged to remove my habitation, I was led by my evil genius to a convenient house in a street where many of the nobility reside. We had scarcely ranged our furniture, and aired our rooms, when my wife began to grow discontented, and to wonder what the neighbours would think when they saw so few chairs and chariots at her door.

Her acquaintance, who came to see her from the quarter that we had left, mortified her without design, by continual inquiries about the ladies whose houses they viewed from our windows. She was ashamed to confess that she had no intercourse with them, and sheltered her distress under general answers, which always tended to raise suspicion that she knew more than she would tell; but she was often reduced to difficulties, when the course of talk introduced questions about the furniture or ornaments of their houses, which, when she could get no intelligence, she was forced to pass slightly over, as things which she saw so often that she never minded them.

To all these vexations she was resolved to put an end, and redoubled her visits to those few of her friends who visited those who kept good company; and, if ever she met a lady of quality, forced herself into notice by respect and assiduity. Her advances were generally rejected; and she heard them, as they went down stairs talk how some creatures put themselves forward.

She was not discouraged, but crept forward from one to another; and as perseverance will do great things, sapped her way unperceived, till, unexpectedly, she appeared at the card table of lady Biddy Porpoise, a lethargic virgin, of seventy six, whom all the families in the next square visited very punctually when she was not at home.

This was the first step of that elevation to which my wife has since ascended. For five months she had no name in her mouth but that of lady Biddy, who, let the world say what it would, had a fine understanding, and such a command of her temper, that whether she won or lost, she slept over her cards.

At lady Biddy's she met with lady Tawdry, whose favour she gained by estimating her earrings, which were counterfeit, at twice the value of real diamonds. When she once entered two houses of distinction, she was easily admitted into more, and in ten weeks had all her time anticipated by parties and engagements. Every morning she is bespoke, in the summer, for the gardens; in the winter, for a sale; every afternoon she has visits to pay, and every night brings an inviolable appointment, or an assembly in which the best company in the town were to appear.

You will easily imagine that much of my domestic comfort is withdrawn. I never see my wife but in the hurry of preparation, or the languor of weariness. To dress and to undress is almost her whole business in private, and the servants take advantage of her negligence to increase expense. But I can supply her omission by my own diligence, and should not much regret this new course of life, if it did nothing more than transfer me to the care of our accounts. The changes which it has made are more vexatious. My wife has no longer the use of her understanding. She has no rule of action but the fashion. She has no opinion but that of the people of quality. She has no language but the dialect of her own set of company. She hates and admires in humble imitation; and echoes the words charming and detestable without consulting her own perceptions.

If for a few minutes we sit down together, she entertains me with the repartees of lady Cackle, or the conversation of lord Whiffler, and Miss Quick, and wonders to find me receiving with indifference sayings which put all the company into laughter.

By her old friends she is no longer very willing to be seen, but she must not rid herself of them all at once: and is sometimes surprised by her best visitants in company which she would not show and cannot hide; but from the moment that a countess enters, she takes care neither to hear nor see them; they soon find themselves neglected, and retire; and she tells her ladyship that they are somehow related at a great distance, and that as they are good sort of people she cannot be rude to them.

As by this ambitious union with those tha are above her, she is always forced upon disadvantageous comparisons of her condition with theirs, she has a constant source of misery within; and never returns from glittering assemblies and magnificent apartments but she growls out her discontent, and wonders why she was doomed to so indigent a state. When she attends the dutchess to a sale, she always sees something she cannot buy; and, that she

may not seem wholly insignificant, she will sometimes venture to bid, and often make acquisitions which she did not want, at prices which she cannot afford.

What adds to all this uneasiness is, that this expense is without use, and this vanity without honour; she forsakes houses where she might be courted, for those where she is only suffered; her equals are daily made her enemies, and her superiors will never be her friends.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

No. 54.] Saturday, April 28, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

You have lately entertained your admirers with the case of an unfortunate husband, and thereby given a demonstrative proof you are not averse even to hear appeals and terminate differences between man and wife; I therefore take the liberty to present you with the case of an injured lady, which, as it chiefly relates to what I think the lawyers call a point of law, I shall do in as juridical a manner as I am capable, and submit it to the consideration of the learned gentlemen of that profession.

Imprimis. In the style of my marriage articles, a marriage was "had and solemnized," about six months ago, between me and Mr. Savecharges, a gentleman possessed of a plentiful fortune of his own, and one who, I was persuaded, would improve, and not spend, mine.

Before our marriage, Mr. Savecharges had all along preferred the salutary exercise of walking on foot to the distempered ease, as he terms it, of lolling in a chariot; but, notwithstanding his fine panegyrics on walking, the great advantages the infantry were in the sole possession of, and the many dreadful dangers they escaped, he found I had very different notions of an equipage, and was not easily to be converted, or gained over to his party.

An equipage I was determined to have, whenever I married. I too well knew the disposition of my intended consort to leave the providing one entirely to his honour, and flatter myself Mr. Savecharges has, in the articles made previous to our marriage, agreed to keep me a coach; but lest I should be mistaken, or the attorney should not have done me justice in methodising or legalising these half dozen words, I will set about and transcribe that part of the agreement, which will explain the matter to you much better than can be done by one who is so deeply interested in the event; and show on what foundation I build my hopes of being soon under the transporting, deligh denomination of a fashionable lady, who enj the exalted and much-envied felicity of bowl about in her own coach.

"And further the said Solomon Savechar for divers good causes and considerations hereunto moving, hath agreed, and doth her agree, that the said Solomon Savecharges sh and will, so soon as conveniently may be a the solemnization of the said intended marria at his own proper cost and charges, find provide a certain vehicle or four-wheel carria commonly called or known by the name o coach; which said vehicle or wheel carriage called or known by the name of a coach, sh be used and enjoyed by the said Sukey Mod his intended wife," (pray mind that, I Idler,) "at such times and in such manner she the said Sukey Modish shall think fit convenient."

Such, Mr. Idler, is the agreement my p sionate admirer entered into; and what dear frugal husband calls a performance it remains to be described. Soon after ceremony of signing and sealing was over, wedding-clothes being sent home, and, in sh every thing in readiness except the coach, own shadow was scarcely more constant t my passionate lover in his attendance on m wearied by his perpetual importunities for w he called a completion of his bliss, I consen to make him happy; in a few days I gave h my hand, and, attended by Hymen in his fron robes, retired to a country-seat of my h band's, where the honey-moon flew over heads ere we had time to recollect ourselves, think of our engagements in town. Well town we came, and you may be sure, Sir, I pected to step into my coach on my arrival h but what was my surprise and disappointm when, instead of this, he began to sound in ears, "That the interest of money was l very low; and what a terrible thing it wa be incumbered with a little regiment of serv in these hard times!" I could easily perc what all this tended to, but would not seem understand him; which made it highly ne sary for Mr. Savecharges to explain him more intelligibly; to harp upon and protest dreaded the expense of keeping a coach. truly, for his part, he could not conceive the pleasure resulting from such a conveni could be any way adequate to the heavy exp attending it. I now thought it high tim speak with equal plainness, and told him the fortune I brought fairly entitled me to in my own coach, and as I was sensible his cumstances would very well afford it, he m pardon me if I insisted on a performanc his agreement.

I appeal to you, Mr. Idler, whether thing could be more civil, more complai

than this? And, would you believe it, the creature in return, a few days after, accosted me, in an offended tone, with, "Madam, I can now tell you your coach is ready; and since you are so passionately fond of one, I intend you the honour of keeping a pair of horses.—You insisted upon having an article of pin-money, and horses are no part of my agreement." Base, designing wretch!—I beg your pardon, Mr. Idler, the very recital of such mean, ungentleman-like behaviour fires my blood, and lights up a flame within me. But hence, thou worst of monsters, ill-timed Rage, and let me not spoil my cause for want of temper.

Now, though I am convinced I might make a worse use of part of my pin-money, than by expending my bounty towards the support of so useful a part of the brute creation; yet, like a true-born Englishwoman, I am so tenacious of my rights and privileges, and moreover so good a friend to the gentlemen of the law, that I protest, Mr. Idler, sooner than tamely give up the point, and be quibbled out of my right, I will receive my pin-money, as it were, with one hand, and pay it to them with the other; provided they will give me, or, which is the same thing, my trustees, encouragement to commence a suit against this dear, frugal husband of mine.

And of this I can't have the least shadow of doubt, inasmuch as I have been told by very good authority, it is some way or other laid down as a rule, "That whenever the law doth give any thing to one, it giveth impliedly whatever is necessary for the taking and enjoying the same."* Now, I would gladly know what enjoyment I, or any lady in the kingdom, can have of a coach without horses? The answer is obvious—None at all! For as Serjeant Catlyne very wisely observes, "Though a coach has wheels, to the end it may thereby and by virtue thereof be enabled to move; yet in point of utility it may as well have none, if they are not put in motion by means of its vital parts, that is, the horses."

And therefore, Sir, I humbly hope you and the learned in the law will be of opinion, that two certain animals, or quadruped creatures, commonly called or known by the name of horses, ought to be annexed to, and go along with the coach.

SUKEY SAVECHARGES.

No. 55.] SATURDAY, MAY 5, 1759.

MR. IDLER,

I HAVE taken the liberty of laying before you my complaint, and of desiring advice or consolation with the greater confidence, because I believe many other writers have suffered the same indignities with myself, and hope my quarrel will be regarded by you and your readers as the common cause of literature.

Having been long a student, I thought myself qualified in time to become an author. My inquiries have been much diversified and far extended, and not finding my genius directing me by irresistible impulse to any particular subject, I deliberated three years which part of knowledge to illustrate by my labours. Choice is more often determined by accident than by reason: I walked abroad one morning with a curious lady, and by her inquiries and observations was incited to write the natural history of the country in which I reside.

Natural history is no work for one that loves his chair or his bed. Speculation may be pursued on a soft couch, but nature must be observed in the open air. I have collected materials with indefatigable pertinacity. I have gathered glow-worms in the evening, and snails in the morning; I have seen the daisy close and open; I have heard the owl shriek at midnight, and hunted insects in the heat of noon.

Seven years I was employed in collecting animals and vegetables, and then found that my design was yet imperfect. The subterranean treasures of the place had been passed unobserved, and another year was to be spent in mines and coal-pits. What I had already done supplied a sufficient motive to do more. I acquainted myself with the black inhabitants of metallic caverns, and, in defiance of damps and floods, wandered through the gloomy labyrinths, and gathered fossils from every fissure.

At last I began to write, and as I finished any section of my book, read it to such of my friends as were most skilful in the matter which it treated. None of them were satisfied; one disliked the disposition of the parts, another the colours of the style; one advised me to enlarge, another to abridge. I resolved to read no more, but to take my own way and write on, for by consultation I only perplexed my thoughts and retarded my work.

The book was at last finished, and I did not doubt but my labour would be repaid by profit, and my ambition satisfied with honours. I considered that natural history is neither temporary nor local, and that though I limited my inquiries to my own country, yet every part of the earth has productions common to all the rest. Civil history may be partially studied, the revolutions of one nation may be neglected by another; but after that in which all have an interest, all must be inquisitive. No man can have sunk so far into stupidity as not to consider the properties of the ground on which he walks, of the plants on which he feeds, or the

* Coke on Lyttelton.

animals that delight his ear, or amuse his eye; and therefore I computed that universal curiosity would call for many editions of my book, and that in five years I should gain fifteen thousand pounds by the sale of thirty thousand copies.

When I began to write, I insured the house; and suffered the utmost solicitude when I entrusted my book to the carrier, though I had secured it against mischances by lodging two transcripts in different places. At my arrival, I expected that the patrons of learning would contend for the honour of a dedication, and resolved to maintain the dignity of letters by a haughty contempt of pecuniary solicitations.

I took lodgings near the house of the Royal Society, and expected every morning a visit from the president. I walked in the Park, and wondered that I overheard no mention of the great naturalist. At last I visited a noble earl, and told him of my work: he answered, that he was under an engagement never to subscribe. I was angry to have that refused which I did not mean to ask, and concealed my design of making him immortal. I went next day to another, and, in resentment of my late affront, offered to prefix his name to my new book. He said, coldly, that "he did not understand those things;" another thought "there were too many books;" and another would "talk with me when the races were over."

Being amazed to find a man of learning so indecently slighted, I resolved to indulge the philosophical pride of retirement and independence. I then sent to some of the principal booksellers the plan of my book, and bespoke a large room in the next tavern, that I might more commodiously see them together, and enjoy the contest, while they were outbidding one another. I drank my coffee, and yet nobody was come; at last I received a note from one, to tell me that he was going out of town; and from another, that natural history was out of his way. At last there came a grave man, who desired to see the work, and, without opening it, told me, that a book of that size "would never do."

I then condescended to step into shops, and mentioned my work to the masters. Some never dealt with authors; others had their hands full; some never had known such a dead time; others had lost by all that they had published for the last twelvemonth. One offered to print my work, if I could procure subscriptions for five hundred, and would allow me two hundred copies for my property. I lost my patience, and gave him a kick; for which he has indicted me.

I can easily perceive that there is a combination among them to defeat my expectations; and I find it so general, that I am sure it must have been long concerted. I suppose some of my friends, to whom I read the first part, gave notice of my design, and, perhaps, sold the treacherous intelligence at a higher price than the fraudulence of trade will now allow me for my book.

Inform me, Mr. Idler, what I must do; where must knowledge and industry find their recompense, thus neglected by the high, and cheated by the low? I sometimes resolve to print my book at my own expense, and, like the Sibyl, double the price; and sometimes am tempted, in emulation of Raleigh, to throw it into the fire, and leave this sordid generation to the curses of posterity. Tell me, dear Idler, what I shall do.

I am Sir, &c.

No. 56.] SATURDAY, MAY 12, 1759.

THERE is such difference between the pursuits of men, that one part of the inhabitants of a great city lives to little other purpose than to wonder at the rest. Some have hopes and fears, wishes and aversions, which never enter into the thoughts of others, and inquiry is laboriously exerted to gain that which those who possess it are ready to throw away.

To those who are accustomed to value every thing by its use, and have no such superfluity of time or money as may prompt them to unnatural wants or capricious emulations, nothing appears more improbable or extravagant than the love of curiosities, or that desire of accumulating trifles, which distinguishes many by whom no other distinction could have ever been obtained.

He that has lived without knowing to what height desire may be raised by vanity, with what rapture baubles are snatched out of the hands of rival collectors, how the eagerness of one raises eagerness in another, and one worthless purchase makes a second necessary, may, by passing a few hours at an auction, learn more than can be shown by many volumes of maxims or essays.

The advertisement of a sale is a signal which at once puts a thousand hearts in motion, and brings contenders from every part to the scene of distribution. He that had resolved to buy no more, feels his constancy subdued; there is now something in the catalogue which completes his cabinet, and which he was never before able to find. He whose sober reflections inform him, that of adding collection to collection there is no end, and that it is wise to leave early that which must be left imperfect at last, yet cannot withhold himself from coming to see what it is that brings so many together, and when he comes is soon overpowered by his habitual passion; he is

ttracted by rarity, seduced by example, and nflamed by competition.

While the stores of pride and happiness are sur-eyed, one looks with longing eyes and gloomy ountenance on that which he despairs to gain rom a rich bidder; another keeps his eye with re from settling too long on that which he ost earnestly desires; and another, with ore art than virtue, depreciates that which e values most, in hope to have it at an easy ate.

The novice is often surprised to see what mi-ute and unimportant discriminations increase r diminish value. An irregular contortion of turbinated shell, which common eyes pass un-garded, will ten times treble its price in the nagination of philosophers. Beauty is far from perating upon collectors as upon low and vul-ar minds, even where beauty might be thought ie only quality that could deserve notice. Among the shells that please by their variety of lours, if one can be found accidentally de-rmed by a cloudy spot, it is boasted as the pride f the collection. China is sometimes purchas-d for little less than its weight in gold, only ecause it is old, though neither less brittle nor etter painted than the modern; and brown hina is caught up with ecstasy, though no reason an be imagined for which it should be preferred common vessels of common clay.

The fate of prints and coins is equally inex-icable. Some prints are treasured up as in-stimably valuable, because the impression was ade before the plate was finished. Of coins, ie price rises not from the purity of the metal, ie excellence of the workmanship, the elegance f the legend, or the chronological use. A piece, f which neither the inscription can be read, or the face distinguished, if there remain of it ut enough to show that it is rare, will be sought y contending nations, and dignify the treasury which it shall be shown.

Whether this curiosity, so barren of immediate dvantage, and so liable to depravation, does ore harm or good, is not easily decided. s harm is apparent at the first view. It fills ie mind with trifling ambition; fixes the at-ntion upon things which have seldom any ndency towards virtue or wisdom; employs in le inquiries the time that is given for better urposes; and often ends in mean and dis-onest practices, when desire increases by dulgence beyond the power of honest gratifi-tion.

These are the effects of curiosity in excess; it what passion in excess will not become vi-ous? All indifferent qualities and practices are ad if they are compared with those which are od, and good if they are opposed to those that re bad. The pride or the pleasure of making llections, if it be restrained by prudence and orality, produces a pleasing remission after more laborious studies; furnishes an amusement not wholly unprofitable for that part of life, the greater part of many lives, which would other-wise be lost in idleness or vice; it produces a useful traffic between the industry of indigence and the curiosity of wealth; it brings many things to notice that would be neglected, and, by fixing the thoughts upon intellectual pleasures, resists the natural encroachments of sensuality, and maintains the mind in her lawful superiority.

No. 57.] SATURDAY, MAY 19, 1759.

PRUDENCE is of more frequent use than any other intellectual quality; it is exerted on slight occasions, and called into act by the cursory business of common life.

Whatever is universally necessary, has been granted to mankind on easy terms. Prudence, as it is always wanted, is without great difficulty obtained. It requires neither extensive view nor profound search, but forces itself by spontaneous impulse upon a mind neither great nor busy, neither engrossed by vast designs, nor distracted by multiplicity of attention.

Prudence operates on life in the same manner as rules on composition: it produces vigilance rather than elevation; rather prevents loss than procures advantage; and often escapes miscarriages, but seldom reaches either power or honour. It quenches that ardour of enterprise by which every thing is done that can claim praise or admiration; and represses that generous temerity which often fails and often succeeds. Rules may obviate faults, but can never confer beauties; and prudence keeps life safe, but does not often make it happy. The world is not amazed with prodigies of excellence, but when wit tramples upon rules, and magnanimity breaks the chains of prudence.

One of the most prudent of all that have fallen within my observation, is my old companion Sophron, who has passed through the world in quiet, by perpetual adherence to a few plain maxims, and wonders how contention and distress can so often happen.

The first principle of Sophron is to run no hazards. Though he loves money, he is of opinion that frugality is a more certain source of riches than industry. It is to no purpose that any prospect of large profit is set before him; he believes little about futurity, and does not love to trust his money out of his sight, for nobody knows what may happen. He has a small estate, which he lets at the old rent, because "it is better to have a little than nothing;" but he rigorously demands payment on the stated day, for "he that cannot pay one quarter, cannot pay two." If he is told of any improvements in agriculture, he likes the old way, has observed

that changes very seldom answer expectation; is of opinion that our forefathers knew how to till the ground as well as we; and concludes with an argument that nothing can overpower, that the expense of planting and fencing is immediate, and the advantage distant, and that "he is no wise man who will quit a certainty for an uncertainty."

Another of Sophron's rules is "to mind no business but his own." In the state he is of no party; but hears and speaks of public affairs with the same coldness as of the administration of some ancient republic. If any flagrant act of fraud or oppression is mentioned, he hopes that "all is not true that is told:" if misconduct or corruption puts the nation in a flame, he hopes that "every man means well." At elections he leaves his dependents to their own choice, and declines to vote himself, for every candidate is a good man, whom he is unwilling to oppose or offend.

If disputes happen among his neighbours he observes an invariable and cold neutrality. His punctuality has gained him the reputation of honesty, and his caution that of wisdom; and few would refuse to refer their claims to his award. He might have prevented many expensive law-suits, and quenched many a feud in its first smoke; but always refuses the office of arbitration, because he must decide against one or the other.

With the affairs of other families he is always unacquainted. He sees estates bought and sold, squandered and increased, without praising the economist, or censuring the spendthrift. He never courts the rising lest they should fall; nor insults the fallen lest they should rise again. His caution has the appearance of virtue, and all who do not want his help praise his benevolence; but, if any man solicits his assistance, he has just sent away all his money; and, when the petitioner is gone, declares to his family that he is sorry for his misfortunes, has always looked upon him with particular kindness, and therefore could not lend him money, lest he should destroy their friendship by the necessity of enforcing payment.

Of domestic misfortunes he has never heard. When he is told the hundredth time of a gentleman's daughter who has married the coachman, he lifts up his hands with astonishment, for he always thought her a very sober girl. When nuptial quarrels, after having filled the country with talk and laughter, at last end in separation, he never can conceive how it happened, for he looked upon them as a happy couple.

If his advice is asked, he never gives any particular direction, because events are uncertain, and he will bring no blame upon himself; but he takes the consulter tenderly by the hand, tells him he makes his case his own, and advises him not to act rashly, but to weigh reasons on both sides; observes, that a may be as easily too hasty as too slow, and as many fail by doing too much as too lit that "a wise man has two ears and tongue;" and "that little said is soon me ed;" that he could tell him this and that, that after all every man is the best judge of own affairs.

With this some are satisfied, and go h with great reverence of Sophron's wisdom; none are offended, because every one is lef full possession of his own opinion.

Sophron gives no characters. It is equ vain to tell him of vice and virtue; for he remarked, that no man likes to be censu and that very few are delighted with the pra of another. He has a few terms which he to all alike. With respect to fortune, he lieves every family to be in good circumstan he never exalts any understanding by lav praise, yet he meets with none but very sens people. Every man is honest and hearty; every woman is a good creature.

Thus Sophron creeps along, neither loved hated, neither favoured nor opposed: he never attempted to grow rich, for fear of gr ing poor; and has raised no friends, for fea making enemies.

No. 58.] Saturday, May 26, 1759.

Pleasure is very seldom found where it sought. Our bright blazes of gladness are c monly kindled by unexpected sparks. flowers which scatter their odours from tim time in the paths of life, grow up without ture from seeds scattered by chance.

Nothing is more hopeless than a scheme merriment. Wits and humourists are brou together from distant quarters by preconce invitations; they come attended by their mirers, prepared to laugh and to applaud; t gaze a while on each other, ashamed to be sil and afraid to speak; every man is disconten with himself, grows angry with those that him pain, and resolves that he will contrib nothing to the merriment of such worth company. Wine inflames the general malign and changes sullenness to petulance, till at none can bear any longer the presence of rest. They retire to vent their indignation safer places, where they are heard with att tion; their importance is restored, they reco their good humour, and gladden the night w wit and jocularity.

Merriment is always the effect of a sud impression. The jest which is expected is

eady destroyed. The most active imagination ⁄ill be sometimes torpid under the frigid influnce of melancholy, and sometimes occasions ⁄ill be wanting to tempt the mind, however vatile, to sallies and excursions. Nothing was ver said with uncommon felicity, but by the o-operation of chance, and therefore, wit as well s valour must be content to share its honours ⁄ith fortune.

All other pleasures are equally uncertain; the eneral remedy of uneasiness is change of place; lmost every one has some journey of pleasure ı his mind, with which he flatters his expectaon. He that travels in theory has no inconveience; he has shade and sunshine at his disosal, and wherever he alights finds tables of lenty and looks of gayety. These ideas are inulged till the day of departure arrives, the ıaise is called, and the progress of happiness ₹gins.

A few miles teach him the fallacies of imagiation. The road is dusty, the air is sultry, the orses are sluggish, and the postillion brutal. Ie longs for the time of dinner, that he may ıt and rest. The inn is crowded, his orders ₹e neglected, and nothing remains but that he ₹vour in haste what the cook has spoiled, and rive on in quest of better entertainment. He nds at night a more commodious house, but ıe best is always worse than he expected.

He at last enters his native province, and re-lves to feast his mind with the conversation of is old friends and the recollection of juvenile olics. He stops at the house of his friend, hom he designs to overpower with pleasure ⁄ the unexpected interview. He is not known ll he tells his name, and revives the memory ⁄ himself by a gradual explanation. He is ıen coldly received and ceremoniously feast-l. He hastes away to another, whom his afrs have called to a distant place, and having ₹en the empty house, goes away disgusted, by disappointment which could not be intended ₹cause it could not be foreseen. At the next ouse he finds every face clouded with misfor-ıne, and is regarded with malevolence as an ıreasonable intruder, who comes not to visit ıt to insult them.

It is seldom that we find either men or places ich as we expect them. He that has pictured prospect upon his fancy, will receive little easure from his eyes; he that has anticipated e conversation of a wit, will wonder to what ejudice he owes his reputation. Yet it is nessary to hope, though hope should always be luded; for hope itself is happiness, and its ustrations, however frequent, are yet less eadful than its extinction.

No. 59.] SATURDAY, JUNE 2, 1759.

IN the common enjoyments of life, we cannot very liberally indulge the present hour, but by anticipating part of the pleasure which might have relieved the tediousness of another day; and any uncommon exertion of strength, or perseverance in labour, is succeeded by a long interval of languor and weariness. Whatever advantage we snatch beyond the certain portion allotted us by nature, is like money spent before it is due, which at the time of regular payment will be missed and regretted.

Fame, like all other things which are supposed to give or to increase happiness, is dispensed with the same equality of distribution. He that is loudly praised will be clamorously censured; he that rises hastily into fame will be in danger of sinking suddenly into oblivion.

Of many writers who filled their age with wonder, and whose names we find celebrated in the books of their contemporaries, the works are now no longer to be seen, or are seen only amidst the lumber of libraries which are seldom visited, where they lie only to show the deceitfulness of hope, and the uncertainty of honour.

Of the decline of reputation many causes may be assigned. It is commonly lost because it never was deserved; and was conferred at first, not by the suffrage of criticism, but by the fondness of friendship, or servility of flattery. The great and popular are very freely applauded; but all soon grow weary of echoing to each other a name which has no other claim to notice, but that many mouths are pronouncing it at once.

But many have lost the final reward of their labours because they were too hasty to enjoy it. They have laid hold on recent occurrences, and eminent names, and delighted their readers with allusions and remarks, in which all were interested, and to which all therefore were attentive. But the effect ceased with its cause; the time quickly came when new events drove the former from memory, when the vicissitudes of the world brought new hopes and fears, transferred the love and hatred of the public to other agents, and the writer, whose works were no longer assisted by gratitude, or resentment, was left to the cold regard of idle curiosity.

He that writes upon general principles, or delivers universal truths, may hope to be often read, because his work will be equally useful at all times, and in every country; but he cannot expect it to be received with eagerness, or to spread with rapidity, because desire can have no particular stimulation; that which is to be loved long must be loved with reason rather than with passion. He that lays out his labours upon temporary subjects, easily finds readers, and quickly loses them; for, what should make the book valued when its subject is no more?

These observations will show the reason why the poem of Hudibras is almost forgotten, however embellished with sentiments and diversified with allusions, however bright with wit, and however solid with truth. The hypocrisy which it detected, and the folly which it ridiculed, have long vanished from public notice. Those who had felt the mischief of discord, and the tyranny of usurpation, read it with rapture, for every line brought back to memory something known, and gratified resentment by the just censure of something hated. But the book which was once quoted by princes, and which supplied conversation to all the assemblies of the gay and the witty, is now seldom mentioned, and even by those that affect to mention it, is seldom read. So vainly is wit lavished upon fugitive topics, so little can architecture secure duration when the ground is false.

No. 60.] Saturday, June 9, 1759.

Criticism is a study by which men grow important and formidable at a very small expense. The power of invention has been conferred by nature upon few, and the labour of learning those sciences which may by mere labour be obtained is too great to be willingly endured; but every man can exert such judgment as he has upon the works of others; and he whom nature has made weak, and idleness keeps ignorant, may yet support his vanity by the name of a Critic.

I hope it will give comfort to great numbers who are passing through the world in obscurity, when I inform them how easily distinction may be obtained. All the other powers of literature are coy and haughty, they must be long courted, and at last are not always gained; but Criticism is a goddess easy of access and forward of advance; who will meet the slow, and encourage the timorous; the want of meaning she supplies with words, and the want of spirit she recompenses with malignity.

This profession has one recommendation peculiar to itself, that it gives vent to malignity without real mischief. No genius was ever blasted by the breath of critics. The poison which, if confined, would have burst the heart, fumes away in empty hisses, and malice is set at ease with very little danger to merit. The critic is the only man whose triumph is without another's pain, and whose greatness does not rise upon another's ruin.

To a study at once so easy and so reputable, so malicious and so harmless, it cannot be necessary to invite my readers by a long or laboured exhortation; it is sufficient, since all would be critics if they could, to show by one eminent example that all can be critics if th will.

Dick Minim, after the common course puerile studies, in which he was no great pr ficient, was put an apprentice to a brewer, wi whom he had lived two years, when his unc died in the city, and left him a large fortune the stocks. Dick had for six months befo used the company of the lower players, of who he had learned to scorn a trade, and, being no at liberty to follow his genius, he resolved to a man of wit and humour. That he might properly initiated in his new character, he fr quented the coffee-houses near the theatre where he listened very diligently, day aft day, to those who talked of language and sen ments, and unities and catastrophes, till by slo degrees he began to think that he understo something of the stage, and hoped in time talk himself.

But he did not trust so much to natural sag city as wholly to neglect the help of book When the theatres were shut, he retired Richmond with a few select writers, who opinions he impressed upon his memory by u wearied diligence; and, when he returned wi other wits to the town, was able to tell, in ve proper phrases, that the chief business of art is follow nature; that a perfect writer is not to expected, because genius decays as judgment i creases; that the great art is the art of blottin and that, according to the rule of Horace, eve piece should be kept nine years.

Of the great authors he now began to displ the characters, laying down as a universal poe tion, that all had beauties and defects. H opinion was, that Shakspeare, committing hin self wholly to the impulse of nature, want that correctness which learning would ha given him; and that Jonson, trusting to lear ing, did not sufficiently cast his eye on natur He blamed the stanza of Spenser, and could n bear the hexameters of Sidney. Denham a Waller he held the first reformers of Engli numbers; and thought that if Waller could ha obtained the strength of Denham, or Denha the sweetness of Waller, there had been nothi wanting to complete a poet. He often express his commiseration of Dryden's poverty, and h indignation at the age which suffered him write for bread; he repeated with rapture t first lines of *All for Love*, but wondered at t corruption of taste which could bear any thi so unnatural as rhyming tragedies. In Otw he found uncommon powers of moving the pa sions, but was disgusted by his general neg gence, and blamed him for making a conspirat his hero; and never concluded his disquisiti without remarking how happily the sound the clock is made to alarm the audience. Sout ern would have been his favourite, but that mixes comic with tragic scenes, intercepts t

natural course of the passions, and fills the mind with a wild confusion of mirth and melancholy. The versification of Rowe he thought too melodious for the stage, and too little varied in different passions. He made it the great fault of Congreve, that all his persons were wits, and that he always wrote with more art than nature. He considered Cato rather as a poem than a play, and allowed Addison to be the complete master of allegory and grave humour, but paid no great deference to him as a critic. He thought the chief merit of Prior was in his easy tales and lighter poems, though he allowed that his Solomon had many noble sentiments elegantly expressed. In Swift he discovered an inimitable vein of irony, and an easiness which all would hope and few would attain. Pope he was inclined to degrade from a poet to a versifier, and thought his numbers rather luscious than sweet. He often lamented the neglect of Phædra and Hippolitus, and wished to see the stage under better regulation.

These assertions passed commonly uncontradicted; and if now and then an opponent started up, he was quickly repressed by the suffrages of the company, and Minim went away from every dispute with elation of heart and increase of confidence.

He now grew conscious of his abilities, and began to talk of the present state of dramatic poetry; wondered what was become of the comic genius which supplied our ancestors with wit and pleasantry, and why no writer could be found that durst now venture beyond a farce. He saw no reason for thinking that the vein of humour was exhausted, since we live in a country where liberty suffers every character to spread itself to its utmost bulk, and which, therefore, produces more originals than all the rest of the world together. Of tragedy he concluded business to be the soul, and yet often hinted that love predominates too much upon the modern stage.

He was now an acknowledged critic, and had his own seat in a coffee-house, and headed a party in the pit. Minim has more vanity than ill nature, and seldom desires to do much mischief; he will perhaps murmur a little in the ear of him that sits next him, but endeavours to influence the audience to favour, by clapping when an actor exclaims, "Ye gods!" or laments the misery of his country.

By degrees he was admitted to rehearsals; and many of his friends are of opinion, that our present poets are indebted to him for their happiest thoughts; by his contrivance the bell was rung twice in Barbarossa, and by his persuasion the author of Cleone concluded his play with a couplet; for what can be more absurd, said Minim, than that part of a play should be rhymed, and part written in blank verse? and by what acquisition of faculties is the speaker, who never could find rhymes before, enabled to rhyme at the conclusion of an act?

He is the great investigator of hidden beauties, and is particularly delighted when he finds *the sound an echo to the sense.* He has read all our poets with particular attention to this delicacy of versification, and wonders at the supineness with which their works have been hitherto perused, so that no man has found the sound of a drum in this distich.

> "When pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,
> Was beat with fist instead of a stick;"

and that the wonderful lines upon honour and a bubble, have hitherto passed without notice:

> "Honour is like the glassy bubble,
> Which costs philosophers such trouble:
> Where, one part crack'd, the whole does fly,
> And wits are crack'd to find out why."

In these verses, says Minim, we have two striking accommodations of the sound to the sense. It is impossible to utter the two lines emphatically without an act like that which they describe; bubble and trouble causing a momentary inflation of the cheeks by the retention of the breath, which is afterwards forcibly emitted, as in the practice of blowing bubbles. But the greatest excellence is in the third line, which is cracked in the middle to express a crack, and then shivers into monosyllables. Yet hath this diamond lain neglected with common stones, and among the innumerable admirers of Hudibras the observation of this superlative passage has been reserved for the sagacity of Minim.

No. 61.] SATURDAY, JUNE 16, 1759.

MR. MINIM had now advanced himself to the zenith of critical reputation; when he was in the pit, every eye in the boxes was fixed upon him; when he entered his coffee-house, he was surrounded by circles of candidates, who passed their noviciate of literature under his tuition: his opinion was asked by all who had no opinion of their own, and yet loved to debate and decide; and no composition was supposed to pass in safety to posterity, till it had been secured by Minim's approbation.

Minim professes great admiration of the wisdom and munificence by which the academies of the continent were raised; and often wishes for some standard of taste, for some tribunal, to which merit may appeal from caprice, prejudice, and malignity. He has formed a plan for an academy of criticism, where every work of imagi-

nation may be read before it is printed, and which shall authoritatively direct the theatres what pieces to receive or reject, to exclude or to revive.

Such an institution would, in Dick's opinion, spread the fame of English literature over Europe, and make London the metropolis of elegance and politeness, the place to which the learned and ingenious of all countries would repair for instruction and improvement, and where nothing would any longer be applauded or endured that was not conformed to the nicest rules, and finished with the highest elegance.

Till some happy conjunction of the planets shall dispose our princes or ministers to make themselves immortal by such an academy, Minim contents himself to preside four nights in a week in a critical society selected by himself, where he is heard without contradiction, and whence his judgment is disseminated through the great vulgar and the small.

When he is placed in the chair of criticism, he declares loudly for the noble simplicity of our ancestors, in opposition to the petty refinements, and ornamental luxuriance. Sometimes he is sunk in despair, and perceives false delicacy daily gaining ground, and sometimes brightens his countenance with a gleam of hope, and predicts the revival of the true sublime. He then fulminates his loudest censures against the monkish barbarity of rhyme; wonders how beings that pretend to reason can be pleased with one line always ending like another; tells how unjustly and unnaturally sense is sacrificed to sound; how often the best thoughts are mangled by the necessity of confining or extending them to the dimensions of a couplet; and rejoices that genius has, in our days, shaken off the shackles which had encumbered it so long. Yet he allows that rhyme may sometimes be borne, if the lines be often broken, and the pauses judiciously diversified.

From blank verse he makes an easy transition to Milton, whom he produces as an example of the slow advance of lasting reputation. Milton is the only writer in whose books Minim can read for ever without weariness. What cause is it that exempts this pleasure from satiety he has long and diligently inquired, and believes it to consist in the perpetual variation of the numbers, by which the ear is gratified and the attention awakened. The lines that are commonly thought rugged and unmusical, he conceives to have been written to temper the melodious luxury of the rest, or to express things by a proper cadence: for he scarcely finds a verse that has not this favourite beauty; he declares that he could shiver in a hot-house when he reads that

> " the ground
> Burns frore, and cold performs the effect of fire;

and that, when Milton bewails his blindnes, the verse,

> " So thick a drop serene has quench'd these orbs,"

has, he knows not how, something that strikes him with an obscure sensation like that which he fancies would be felt from the sound of darkness.

Minim is not so confident of his rules of judgment as not very eagerly to catch new light from the name of the author. He is commonly so prudent as to spare those whom he cannot resist, unless, as will sometimes happen, he finds the public combined against them. But a fresh pretender to fame he is strongly inclined to censure, till his own honour requires that he commend him. Till he knows the success of a composition, he intrenches himself in general terms; there are some new thoughts and beautiful passages, but there is likewise much which he would have advised the author to expunge. He has several favourite epithets, of which he has never settled the meaning, but which are very commodiously applied to books which he has not read, or cannot understand. One is manly, another is dry, another stiff, and another flimsy: sometimes he discovers delicacy of style, and sometimes meets with strange expressions.

He is never so great nor so happy, as when a youth of promising parts is brought to receive his directions for the prosecution of his studies. He then puts on a very serious air; he advises the pupil to read none but the best authors, and, when he finds one congenial to his own mind, to study his beauties, but avoid his faults, and, when he sits down to write, to consider how his favourite author would think at the present time on the present occasion. He exhorts him to catch those moments when he finds his thoughts expanded and his genius exalted, but to take care lest imagination hurry him beyond the bounds of nature. He holds diligence the mother of success; yet enjoins him with great earnestness, not to read more than he can digest, and not to confuse his mind, by pursuing studies of contrary tendencies. He tells him, that every man has his genius, and that Cicero could never be a poet. The boy retires illuminated, resolves to follow his genius, and to think how Milton would have thought: and Minim feasts upon his own beneficence till another day brings another pupil.

No. 62.] Saturday, June 23, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

An opinion prevails almost universally in the

world, that he who has money has every thing. This is not a modern paradox, or the tenet of a small and obscure sect, but a persuasion which appears to have operated upon most minds in all ages, and which is supported by authorities so numerous and so cogent, that nothing but long experience could have given me confidence to question its truth.

But experience is the test by which all the philosophers of the present age agree, that speculation must be tried; and I may therefore be allowed to doubt the power of money, since I have been a long time rich, and I have not yet found that riches can make me happy.

My father was a farmer neither wealthy nor indigent, who gave me a better education than was suitable to my birth, because my uncle in the city designed me for his heir, and desired that I might be bred a gentleman. My uncle's wealth was the perpetual subject of conversation in the house; and when any little misfortune befel us, or any mortification dejected us, my father always exhorted me to hold up my head, for my uncle would never marry.

My uncle, indeed, kept his promise. Having his mind completely busied between his warehouse and the Change, he felt no tediousness of life, nor any want of domestic amusements. When my father died, he received me kindly; but after a few months, finding no great pleasure in the conversation of each other, we parted; and he remitted me a small annuity, on which I lived a quiet and studious life, without any wish to grow great by the death of my benefactor.

But though I never suffered any malignant impatience to take hold on my mind, I could not forbear sometimes to imagine to myself the pleasure of being rich; and when I read of diversions and magnificence, resolved to try, when time should put the trial in my power, what pleasure they could afford.

My uncle, in the latter spring of his life, when his ruddy cheek and his firm nerves promised him a long and healthy age, died of an apoplexy. His death gave me neither joy nor sorrow. He did me good, and I regarded him with gratitude; but I could not please him, and therefore could not love him.

He had the policy of little minds, who love to surprise; and having always represented his fortune as less than it was, had, I suppose, often gratified himself with thinking, how I should be delighted to find myself twice as rich as I expected. My wealth was such as exceeded all the schemes of expense which I had formed; and I soon began to expand my thoughts, and look round for some purchase of felicity.

The most striking effect of riches is the splendour of dress, which every man has observed to enforce respect, and facilitate reception; and my first desire was to be fine. I sent for a tailor who was employed by the nobility, and ordered such a suit of clothes as I had often looked on with involuntary submission, and am ashamed to remember with what flutters of expectation I waited for the hour when I should issue forth in all the splendour of embroidery. The clothes were brought, and for three days I observed many eyes turned towards me as I passed; but I felt myself obstructed in the common intercourse of civility, by an uneasy consciousness of my new appearance; as I thought myself more observed, I was more anxious about my mien and behaviour; and the mien which is formed by care is commonly ridiculous. A short time accustomed me to myself, and my dress was without pain, and without pleasure.

For a little while I tried to be a rake, but I began too late; and having by nature no turn for a frolic, was in great danger of ending in a drunkard. A fever, in which not one of my companions paid me a visit, gave me time for reflection. I found that there was no great pleasure in breaking windows and lying in the round-house; and resolved to associate no longer with those whom, though I had treated and bailed them, I could not make friends.

I then changed my measures, kept running horses, and had the comfort of seeing my name very often in the news. I had a chesnut horse, the grandson of Childers, who won four plates, and ten by-matches; and a bay filly who carried off the five-years-old plate, and was expected to perform much greater exploits, when my groom broke her wind, because I happened to catch him selling oats for beer. This happiness was soon at an end; there was no pleasure when I lost, and when I won I could not much exalt myself by the virtues of my horse. I grew ashamed of the company of jockey-lords, and resolved to spend no more of my time in the stable.

It was now known that I had money, and would spend it, and I passed four months in the company of architects, whose whole business was, to persuade me to build a house. I told them that I had more room than I wanted, but could not get rid of their importunities. A new plan was brought me every morning; till at last my constancy was overpowered, and I began to build. The happiness of building lasted but a little while, for though I love to spend, I hate to be cheated; and I soon found, that to build is to be robbed.

How I proceed in the pursuit of happiness, you shall hear when I find myself disposed to write.

I am, Sir,

TIM. RANGER.

No. 63.] Saturday, June 30, 1759.

The natural progress of the works of men is from rudeness to convenience, from convenience to elegance, and from elegance to nicety.

The first labour is enforced by necessity. The savage finds himself incommoded by heat and cold, by rain and wind; he shelters himself in the hollow of a rock, and learns to dig a cave where there was none before. He finds the sun and the wind excluded by the thicket, and when the accidents of the chase, or the convenience of pasturage, lead him into more open places, he forms a thicket for himself, by planting stakes at proper distances, and laying branches from one to another.

The next gradation of skill and industry produces a house closed with doors, and divided by partitions; and apartments are multiplied and disposed according to the various degrees of power or invention; improvement succeeds improvement, as he that is freed from a greater evil grows impatient of a less, till ease in time is advanced to pleasure.

The mind set free from the importunities of natural want, gains leisure to go in search of superfluous gratifications, and adds to the uses of habitation the delights of prospect. Then begins the reign of symmetry; orders of architecture are invented, and one part of the edifice is conformed to another, without any other reason, than that the eye may not be offended.

The passage is very short from elegance to luxury. Ionic and Corinthian columns are soon succeeded by gilt cornices, inlaid floors, and petty ornaments, which show rather the wealth than the taste of the possessor.

Language proceeds, like every thing else, through improvement to degeneracy. The rovers who first take possession of a country, having not many ideas, and those not nicely modified or discriminated, were contented, if by general terms and abrupt sentences they could make their thoughts known to one another; as life begins to be more regulated, and property to become limited, disputes must be decided, and claims adjusted; the differences of things are noted, and distinctness and propriety of expression become necessary. In time, happiness and plenty give rise to curiosity, and the sciences are cultivated for ease and pleasure; to the arts, which are now to be taught, emulation soon adds the art of teaching; and the studious and ambitious contend not only who shall think best, but who shall tell their thoughts in the most pleasing manner.

Then begin the arts of rhetoric and poetry, the regulation of figures, the selection of words, the modulation of periods, the graces of transition, the complication of clauses, and all the delicacies of style and subtilties of composition, useful while they advance perspicuity, and laudable while they increase pleasure, but easy to be refined by needless scrupulosity till they shall more embarrass the writer than assist the reader or delight him.

The first state is commonly antecedent to the practice of writing; the ignorant essays of imperfect diction pass away with the savage generation that uttered them. No nation can trace their language beyond the second period, and even of that it does not often happen that many monuments remain.

The fate of the English tongue is like that of others. We know nothing of the scanty jargon of our barbarous ancestors; but we have specimens of our language when it began to be adapted to civil and religious purposes, and find it such as might naturally be expected, artless and simple, unconnected and concise. The writers seem to have desired little more than to be understood, and perhaps seldom aspired to the praise of pleasing. Their verses were considered chiefly as memorial, and therefore did not differ from prose but by the measure or the rhyme.

In this state, varied a little according to the different purposes or abilities of writers, our language may be said to have continued to the time of Gower, whom Chaucer calls his master, and who, however obscured by his scholar's popularity, seems justly to claim the honour which has been hitherto denied him, of showing his countrymen that something more was to be desired, and that English verse might be exalted into poetry.

From the time of Gower and Chaucer, the English writers have studied elegance, and advanced their language, by successive improvements, to as much harmony as it can easily receive, and as much copiousness as human knowledge has hitherto required. These advances have not been made at all times with the same diligence or the same success. Negligence has suspended the course of improvement, or affectation turned it aside; time has elapsed with little change, or change has been made without amendment. But elegance has been long kept in view with attention as near to constancy as life permits, till every man now endeavours to excel others in accuracy, or outshine them in splendour of style, and the danger is, lest care should too soon pass to affectation.

No. 64.] Saturday, July 7, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

As nature has made every man desirous of hap-

iuess, I flatter myself, that you and your read-
rs cannot but feel some curiosity to know the
equel of my story; for though, by trying the
ifferent schemes of pleasure, I have yet found
othing in which I could finally acquiesce; yet
he narrative of my attempts will not be wholly
ithout use, since we always approach nearer
o truth as we detect more and more varieties of
rror.

When I had sold my racers, and put the orders
f architecture out of my head, my next resolu-
on was to be a fine gentleman. I frequented
he polite coffee-houses, grew acquainted with
ll the men of humour, and gained the right of
owing familiary to half the nobility. In this
ew scene of life my great labour was, to learn
o laugh. I had been used to consider laughter
s the effect of merriment; but I soon learned
hat it is one of the arts of adulation, and, from
aughing only to show that I was pleased, I now
egan to laugh when I wished to please. This
as at first very difficult. I sometimes heard
he story with dull indifference; and, not ex-
lting myself to merriment by due gradations,
urst out suddenly into an awkward noise,
hich was not always favourably interpreted.
ometimes I was behind the rest of the com-
any, and lost the grace of laughing by delay,
nd sometimes when I began at the right time
as deficient in loudness or in length. But, by
iligent imitation of the best models, I attained
t last such flexibility of muscles, that I was al-
ays a welcome auditor of a story, and got the
eputation of a good-natured fellow.

This was something; but much more was to
e done, that I might be universally allowed to
e a fine gentleman. I appeared at court on all
ublic days; betted at gaming-tables, and play-
d at all the routs of eminence. I went every
ight to the opera, took a fiddler of disputed
erit under my protection, became the head of
musical faction, and had sometimes concerts
t my own house. I once thought to have at-
ained the highest rank of elegance, by taking
foreign singer into keeping. But my favourite
ddler contrived to be arrested on the night of a
oncert, for a finer suit of clothes than I had ever
resumed to wear, and I lost all the fame of
atronage by refusing to bail him.

My next ambition was, to sit for my picture.
spent a whole winter in going from painter to
ainter, to bespeak a whole length of one, and a
alf length of another; I talked of nothing but
ttitudes, draperies, and proper lights; took my
riends to see the pictures after every sitting;
eard every day of a wonderful performer in
rayons and miniature, and sent my pictures to
e copied; was told by the judges that they were
ot like, and was recommended to other artists.
At length, being not able to please my friends,
grew less pleased myself, and at last resolved
o think no more about it.

It was impossible to live in total idleness: and wandering about in search of something to do, I was invited to a weekly meeting of virtuosos, and felt myself instantaneously seized with an unextinguishable ardour for all natural curiosities. I ran from auction to auction, became a critic in shells and fossils, bought a *Hortus siccus* of inestimable value, and purchased a secret art of preserving insects, which made my collection the envy of the other philosophers. I found this pleasure mingled with much vexation. All the faults of my life were for nine months circulated through the town with the most active malignity, because I happened to catch a moth of peculiar variegation; and because I once outbid all the lovers of shells, and carried off a nautilus, it was hinted that the validity of my uncle's will ought to be disputed. I will not deny that I was very proud both of the moth and of the shell, and gratified myself with the envy of my companions, and perhaps more than became a benevolent being. But in time I grew weary of being hated for that which produced no advantage, gave my shells to children that wanted play-things, and suppressed the art of drying butterflies, because I would not tempt idleness and cruelty to kill them.

I now began to feel life tedious, and wished to store myself with friends, with whom I might grow old in the interchange of benevolence. I had observed that popularity was most easily gained by an open table, and therefore hired a French cook, furnished my sideboard with great magnificence, filled my cellar with wines of pompous appellations, bought every thing that was dear before it was good, and invited all those who were most famous for judging of a dinner. In three weeks my cook gave me warning, and, upon inquiry, told me that Lord Queasy, who dined with me the day before, had sent him an offer of double wages. My pride prevailed: I raised his wages, and invited his lordship to another feast. I love plain meat, and was therefore soon weary of spreading a table of which I could not partake. I found that my guests, when they went away, criticised their entertainment, and censured my profusion; my cook thought himself necessary, and took upon him the direction of the house; and I could not rid myself of flatterers, or break from slavery, but by shutting up my house, and declaring my resolution to live in lodgings.

After all this, tell me, dear Idler, what I must do next; I have health, I have money, and I hope that I have understanding; yet, with all these, I have never been able to pass a single day which I did not wish at an end before sunset. Tell me, dear Idler, what I shall do. I am,

Your humble servant,

TIM. RANGER.

No. 65.] Saturday, July 14, 1759.

The sequel of Clarendon's history, at last happily published, is an accession to English literature equally agreeable to the admirers of elegance and the lovers of truth; many doubtful facts may now be ascertained, and many questions, after long debate, may be determined by decisive authority. He that records transactions in which himself was engaged, has not only an opportunity of knowing innumerable particulars which escape spectators, but has his natural powers exalted by that ardour which always rises at the remembrance of our own importance, and by which every man is enabled to relate his own actions better than another's.

The difficulties through which this work has struggled into light, and the delays with which our hopes have been long mocked, naturally lead the mind to the consideration of the common fate of posthumous compositions.

He who sees himself surrounded by admirers, and whose vanity is hourly feasted with all the luxuries of studied praise, is easily persuaded that his influence will be extended beyond his life; that they who cringe in his presence will reverence his memory, and that those who are proud to be numbered among his friends, will endeavour to vindicate his choice by zeal for his reputation.

With hopes like these, to the executors of Swift was committed the history of the last years of Queen Anne, and to those of Pope, the works which remained unprinted in his closet. The performances of Pope were burnt by those whom he had perhaps selected from all mankind as most likely to publish them; and the history had likewise perished, had not a straggling transcript fallen into busy hands.

The papers left in the closet of Pieresc, supplied his heirs with a whole winter's fuel; and many of the labours of the learned bishop Lloyd were consumed in the kitchen of his descendants.

Some works, indeed, have escaped total destruction, but yet have had reason to lament the fate of orphans exposed to the frauds of unfaithful guardians. How Hale would have borne the mutilations which his "Pleas of the Crown" have suffered from the editor, they who know his character will easily conceive.

The original copy of Burnet's history, though promised to some public * library, has been never given; and who then can prove the fidelity of the publication, when the authenticity of Clarendon's history, though printed with the sanction of one of the first universities of the world, had not an unexpected manuscript been happily discovered, would, with the help of factious credulity, have been brought into question by the two lowest of all human beings, a scribbler for a party, and a commissioner of excise?

Vanity is often no less mischievous than negligence or dishonesty. He that possesses a valuable manuscript, hopes to raise its esteem by concealment, and delights in the distinction which he imagines himself to obtain by keeping the key of a treasure which he neither uses nor imparts. From him it falls to some other owner, less vain but more negligent, who considers it as useless lumber, and rids himself of the incumbrance.

Yet there are some works which the authors must consign unpublished to posterity, however uncertain be the event, however hopeless be the trust. He that writes the history of his own times, if he adheres steadily to truth, will write that which his own times will not easily endure. He must be content to reposite his book till all private passions shall cease, and love and hatred give way to curiosity.

But many leave the labours of half their life to their executors and to chance, because they will not send them abroad unfinished, and are unable to finish them, having prescribed to themselves such a degree of exactness as human diligence can scarcely attain. "Lloyd," says Burnet, "did not lay out his learning with the same diligence as he laid it in." He was always hesitating and inquiring, raising objections and removing them, and waiting for clearer light and fuller discovery. Baker, after many years passed in biography, left his manuscripts to be buried in a library, because that was imperfect which could never be perfected.

Of these learned men, let those who aspire to the same praise imitate the diligence, and avoid the scrupulosity. Let it be always remembered that life is short, that knowledge is endless, and that many doubts deserve not to be cleared. Let those whom nature and study have qualified to teach mankind, tell us what they have learned while they are yet able to tell it, and trust their reputation only to themselves.

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* It would be proper to reposite, in some public place, the manuscript of Clarendon, which has not escaped all suspicion of unfaithful publication.

No. 66.] Saturday, July 21, 1759.

No complaint is more frequently repeated among the learned, than that of the waste made by time among the labours of antiquity. Of those who once filled the civilized world with their renown, nothing is now left but their

names, which are left only to raise desires that never can be satisfied, and sorrow which never can be comforted.

Had all the writings of the ancients been faithfully delivered down from age to age, had the Alexandrian library been spared, and the Palatine repositories remained unimpaired, how much might we have known of which we are now doomed to be ignorant! how many laborious inquiries, and dark conjectures; how many collations of broken hints, and mutilated passages might have been spared! We should have known the successions of princes, the revolutions of empire, the actions of the great, and opinions of the wise, the laws and constitutions of every state, and the arts by which public grandeur and happiness are acquired and preserved; we should have traced the progress of life, seen colonies from distant regions take possession of European deserts, and troops of savages settled into communities by the desire of keeping what they had acquired; we should have traced the gradations of civility, and travelled upward to the original of things by the light of history, till in remoter times it had glimmered in fable, and at last sunk into darkness.

If the works of imagination had been less diminished, it is likely that all future times might have been supplied with inexhaustible amusement by the fictions of antiquity. The tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides would have shown all the stronger passions in all their diversities; and the comedies of Menander would have furnished all the maxims of domestic life. Nothing would have been necessary to mortal wisdom but to have studied these great masters, whose knowledge would have guided doubt, and whose authority would have silenced cavils.

Such are the thoughts that rise in every student, when his curiosity is eluded, and his searches are frustrated; yet it may perhaps be doubted, whether our complaints are not sometimes inconsiderate, and whether we do not imagine more evil than we feel. Of the ancients, enough remains to excite our emulation and direct our endeavours. Many of the works which time has left us, we know to have been those that were most esteemed, and which antiquity itself considered as models; so that, having the originals, we may without much regret lose the imitations. The obscurity which the want of contemporary writers often produces, only darkens single passages, and those commonly of slight importance. The general tendency of every piece may be known: and though that diligence deserves praise which leaves nothing unexamined, yet its miscarriages are not much to be lamented; for the most useful truths are always universal, and unconnected with accidents and customs.

Such is the general conspiracy of human nature against contemporary merit, that, if we had inherited from antiquity enough to afford employment for the laborious, and amusement for the idle, I know not what room would have been left for modern genius or modern industry; almost every subject would have been pre-occupied, and every style would have been fixed by a precedent from which few would have ventured to depart. Every writer would have had a rival, whose superiority was already acknowledged, and to whose fame his work would, even before it was seen, be marked out for a sacrifice.

We see how little the united experience of mankind hath been able to add to the heroic characters displayed by Homer, and how few incidents the fertile imagination of modern Italy has yet produced, which may not be found in the Iliad and Odyssey. It is likely, that if all the works of the Athenian philosophers had been extant, Malbranche and Locke would have been condemned to be silent readers of the ancient metaphysicians; and it is apparent, that, if the old writers had all remained, the Idler could not have written a disquisition on the loss.

No. 67.] Saturday, July 28, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

In the observations which you have made on the various opinions and pursuits of mankind, you must often, in literary conversations, have met with men who consider dissipation as the great enemy of the intellect; and maintain, that, in proportion as the student keeps himself within the bounds of a settled plan, he will more certainly advance in science.

This opinion is, perhaps, generally true; yet when we contemplate the inquisitive nature of the human mind, and its perpetual impatience of all restraint, it may be doubted whether the faculties may not be contracted by confining the attention; and whether it may not sometimes be proper to risk the certainty of little for the chance of much. Acquisitions of knowledge, like blazes of genius, are often fortuitous. Those who had proposed to themselves a methodical course of reading, light by accident on a new book, which seizes their thoughts and kindles their curiosity, and opens an unexpected prospect, to which the way which they had prescribed to themselves would never have conducted them.

To enforce and illustrate my meaning, I have sent you a journal of three days' employment, found among the papers of a late intimate ac-

quaintance; who, as will plainly appear, was a man of vast designs, and of vast performances, though he sometimes designed one thing and performed another. I allow that the Spectator's inimitable productions of this kind may well discourage all subsequent journalists; but as the subject of this is different from that of any which the Spectator has given us, I leave it to you to publish or suppress it.

Mem. The following three days I propose to give up to reading; and intend, after all the delays which have obtruded themselves upon me, to finish my "Essay on the Extent of the Mental Powers;" to revise my "Treatise on Logic;" to begin the "Epic" which I have long projected; to proceed in my perusal of the "Scriptures with Grotius's Comment;" and at my leisure to regale myself with the works of classics ancient and modern, and to finish my "Ode to Astronomy."

Monday. Designed to rise at six, but, by my servant's laziness, my fire was not lighted before eight, when I dropped into a slumber that lasted till nine, at which time I arose, and after breakfast at ten sat down to study, proposing to begin upon my Essay: but, finding occasion to consult a passage in Plato, was absorbed in the perusal of the Republic till twelve. I had neglected to forbid company, and now enters Tom Careless, who after half an hour's chat, insisted upon my going with him to enjoy an absurd character, that he had appointed, by an advertisement, to meet him at a particular coffee-house. After we had for some time entertained ourselves with him, we sallied out, designing each to repair to his home; but, as it fell out, coming up in the street to a man whose steel by his side declared him a butcher, we overheard him opening an address to a genteelish sort of young lady, whom he walked with: "Miss, though your father is master of a coal-lighter, and you will be a great fortune, 'tis true; yet I wish I may be cut into quarters, if it is not only love, and not lucre of gain, that is my motive for offering terms of marriage." As this lover proceeded in his speech, he misled us the length of three streets, in admiration at the unlimited power of the tender passion that could soften even the heart of a butcher. We then adjourned to a tavern, and from thence to one of the public gardens, where I was regaled with a most amusing variety of men possessing great talents, so discoloured by affectation, that they only made them eminently ridiculous; shallow things, who, by continual dissipation, had annihilated the few ideas nature had given them, and yet were celebrated for wonderful pretty gentlemen; young ladies extolled for their wit, because they were handsome; illiterate empty women, as well as men, in high life, admired for their knowledge, from their being resolutely positive; and women of real understanding so far from pleasing the polite million, that the frightened them away, and were left solitary When we quitted this entertaining scene, To pressed me irresistibly to sup with him. reached home at twelve, and then reflected, th though indeed I had, by remarking variou characters, improved my insight into huma nature, yet still I neglected the studies propose and accordingly took up my Treatise on Logi to give it the intended revisal, but found n spirits too much agitated, and could not forbe a few satirical lines, under the title of "T Evening's Walk."

Tuesday. At breakfast, seeing my "Ode Astronomy" lying on my desk, I was stru with a train of ideas, that I thought might co tribute to its improvement. I immediate rang my bell to forbid all visitants, when n servant opened the door, with "Sir, Mr. Jeffr Gape." My cup dropped out of one hand, ar my poem out of the other. I could scarcely as him to sit; he told me he was going to wal but as there was a likelihood of rain, he wou sit with me; he said, he intended at first have called at Mr. Vacant's. but as he had n seen me a great while, he did not mind comi out of his way to wait on me; I made him bow, but thanks for the favour stuck in n throat. I asked him if he had been to t coffee house; he replied, two hours.

Under the oppression of this dull interru tion, I sat looking wishfully at the clock; f which, to increase my satisfaction, I had chos the inscription, "Art is long, and life is short exchanging questions and answers at long i tervals, and not without some hints that t weather glass promised fair weather. At h an hour after three he told me he would tr pass on me for a dinner, and desired me to se to his house for a bundle of papers, about l closing a common upon his estate, which would read to me in the evening. I declar myself busy, and Mr. Gape went away.

Having dined, to compose my chagrin, I to my Virgil, and several other classics, but cou not calm my mind, or proceed in my schem At about five I laid my hand on a Bible that l on my table, at first with coldness and inse sibility; but was imperceptibly engaged in close attention to its sublime morality, and f my heart expanded by warm philanthropy, a exalted to dignity of sentiment. I then ce sured my too great solicitude, and my disgu conceived at my acquaintance, who had been far from designing to offend, that he only mea to show kindness and respect. In this strain mind I wrote "An Essay on Benevolence," a "An Elegy on Sublunary Disappointments When I had finished these at eleven, I suppo and recollected how little I had adhered to n plan, and almost questioned the possibility pursuing any settled and uniform design; how

ever, I was not so far persuaded of the truth of these suggestions, but that I resolved to try once more at my scheme. As I observed the moon shining through my window, from a calm and bright sky, spangled with innumerable stars, I indulged a pleasing meditation on the splendid scene, and finished my "Ode to Astronomy."

Wednesday. Rose at seven, and employed three hours in perusal of the "Scriptures with Grotius's Comment;" and after breakfast fell into meditation concerning my projected Epic; and being in some doubt as to the particular lives of some heroes, whom I proposed to celebrate, I consulted Bayle and Moreri, and was engaged two hours in examining various lives and characters, but then resolved to go to my employment. When I was seated at my desk, and began to feel the glowing succession of poetical ideas, my servant brought me a letter from a lawyer requiring my instant attendance at Gray's Inn for half an hour. I went full of vexation, and was involved in business till eight at night; and then, being too much fatigued to study, supped, and went to bed.

Here my friend's journal concludes, which perhaps is pretty much a picture of the manner in which many prosecute their studies. I therefore resolved to send it you, imagining, that, if you think it worthy of appearing in your paper, some of your readers may receive entertainment by recognizing a resemblance between my friend's conduct and their own. It must he left to the Idler accurately to ascertain the proper methods of advancing in literature; but this one position, deducible from what has been said above, may, I think, be reasonably asserted, that he who finds himself strongly attracted to any particular study, though it may happen to be out of his proposed scheme, if it is not trifling or vicious, had better continue his application to it, since it is likely that he will with much more ease and expedition, attain that which a warm inclination stimulates him to pursue, than that at which a prescribed law compels him to toil.

I am, Sir, &c.

No. 68.] Saturday, Aug. 4, 1759.

Among the studies which have exercised the ingenious and the learned for more than three centuries, none has been more diligently or more successfully cultivated than the art of translation; by which the impediments which bar the way to science are, in some measure, removed, and the multiplicity of languages becomes less incommodious.

Of every other kind of writing the ancients have left us models which all succeeding ages have laboured to imitate; but translation may justly be claimed by the moderns as their own. In the first ages of the world instruction was commonly oral, and learning traditional, and what was not written could not be translated. When alphabetical writing made the conveyance of opinions and the transmission of events more easy and certain, literature did not flourish in more than one country at once, for distant nations had little commerce with each other; and those few whom curiosity sent abroad in quest of improvement, delivered their acquisitions in their own manner, desirous perhaps to be considered as the inventors of that which they had learned from others.

The Greeks for a time travelled into Egypt, but they translated no books from the Egyptian language; and when the Macedonians had overthrown the empire of Persia, the countries that became subject to Grecian dominion studied only the Grecian literature. The books of the conquered nations, if they had any among them, sunk into oblivion; Greece considered herself as the mistress, if not as the parent of arts; her language contained all that was supposed to be known, and, except the sacred writings of the Old Testament, I know not that the library of Alexandria adopted any thing from a foreign tongue.

The Romans confessed themselves the scholars of the Greeks, and do not appear to have expected what has since happened, that the ignorance of succeeding ages would prefer them to their teachers. Every man, who in Rome aspired to the praise of literature, thought it necessary to learn Greek, and had no need of versions when they could study the originals. Translation, however, was not wholly neglected. Dramatic poems could be understood by the people in no language but their own, and the Romans were sometimes entertained with the tragedies of Euripides and the comedies of Menander. Other works were sometimes attempted; in an old scholiast there is mention of a Latin Iliad; and we have not wholly lost Tully's version of the poem of Aratus; but it does not appear that any man grew eminent by interpreting another, and perhaps it was more frequent to translate for exercise or amusement, than for fame.

The Arabs were the first nation who felt the ardour of translation: when they had subdued the eastern provinces of the Greek empire, they found their captives wiser than themselves, and made haste to relieve their wants by imparted knowledge. They discovered that many might grow wise by the labour of a few, and that improvements might be made with speed, when they had the knowledge of former ages in their own language. They therefore made haste to lay hold on medicine and philosophy, and turned their chief authors into Arabic. Whether they

attempted the poets is not known; their literary zeal was vehement, but it was short, and probably expired before they had time to add the arts of elegance to those of necessity.

The study of ancient literature was interrupted in Europe by the irruption of the northern nations, who subverted the Roman empire, and erected new kingdoms with new languages. It is not strange, that such confusion should suspend literary attention; those who lost, and those who gained dominion, had immediate difficulties to encounter, and immediate miseries to redress, and had little leisure, amidst the violence of war, the trepidation of flight, the distresses of forced migration, or the tumults of unsettled conquest, to inquire after speculative truth, to enjoy the amusement of imaginary adventures, to know the history of former ages, or study the events of any other lives. But no sooner had this chaos of dominion sunk into order, than learning began again to flourish in the calm of peace. When life and possessions were secure, convenience and enjoyment were soon sought, learning was found the highest gratification of the mind, and translation became one of the means by which it was imparted.

At last, by a concurrence of many causes, the European world was roused from its lethargy; those arts which had been long obscurely studied in the gloom of monasteries became the general favourites of mankind; every nation vied with its neighbour for the prize of learning; the epidemical emulation spread from south to north, and curiosity and translation found their way to Britain.

No. 69.] Saturday, Aug. 11, 1759.

He that reviews the progress of English literature, will find that translation was very early cultivated among us, but that some principles either wholly erroneous or too far extended, hindered our success from being always equal to our diligence.

Chaucer, who is generally considered as the father of our poetry, has left a version of Boetius on the Comforts of Philosophy, the book which seems to have been the favourite of the middle ages, which had been translated into Saxon by King Alfred, and illustrated with a copious Comment ascribed to Aquinas. It may be supposed that Chaucer would apply more than common attention to an author of so much celebrity, yet he has attempted nothing higher than a version strictly literal, and has degraded the poetical parts to prose, that the constraint of versification might not obstruct his zeal for fidelity.

Caxton taught us typography about the year 1474. The first book printed in English was a translation. Caxton was both the translator and printer of the Destruction of Troye, a book which, in that infancy of learning, was considered as the best account of the fabulous ages, and which, though now driven out of notice by authors of no greater use or value, still continued to be read in Caxton's English to the beginning of the present century.

Caxton proceeded as he began, and except the poems of Gower and Chaucer, printed nothing but translations from the French, in which the original is so scrupulously followed, that they afford us little knowledge of our own language; though the words are English, the phrase is foreign.

As learning advanced, new works were adopted into our language, but I think with little improvement of the art of translation, though foreign nations and other languages offered us models of a better method; till in the age of Elizabeth we began to find that greater liberty was necessary to elegance, and that elegance was necessary to general reception; some essays were then made upon the Italian poets, which deserve the praise and gratitude of posterity.

But the old practice was not suddenly forsaken; Holland filled the nation with literal translation; and what is yet more strange, the same exactness was obstinately practised in the versions of the poets. This absurd labour of construing into rhyme was countenanced by Jonson in his version of Horace; and whether it be that more men have learning than genius, or that the endeavours of that time were more directed towards knowledge than delight, the accuracy of Jonson found more imitators than the elegance of Fairfax; and May, Sandys, and Holiday, confined themselves to the toil of rendering line for line, not indeed with equal felicity, for May and Sandys were poets, and Holiday only a scholar, and a critic.

Feltham appears to consider it as the established law of poetical translation, that the lines should be neither more nor fewer than those of the original; and so long had this prejudice prevailed, that Denham praises Fanshaw's version of Guarini as the example of a "new and noble way," as the first attempt to break the boundaries of custom, and assert the natural freedom of the Muse.

In the general emulation of wit and genius which the festivity of the Restoration produced, the poets shook off their constraint, and considered translation as no longer confined to servile closeness. But reformation is seldom the work of pure virtue, or unassisted reason. Translation was improved more by accident than conviction. The writers of the foregoing age had at least learning equal to their genius and being often more able to explain the sentiments or illustrate the allusions of the ancients, than to exhibit their graces and transfuse their

spirit, were perhaps willing sometimes to conceal their want of poetry by profusion of literature, and therefore translated literally, that their fidelity might shelter their insipidity or harshness. The wits of Charles's time had seldom more than slight and superficial views; and their care was, to hide their want of learning behind the colours of a gay imagination: they therefore translated always with freedom, sometimes with licentiousness, and perhaps expected that their readers should accept sprightliness for knowledge, and consider ignorance and mistake as the impatience and negligence of a mind too rapid to stop at difficulties, and too elevated to descend to minuteness.

Thus was translation made more easy to the writer, and more delightful to the reader; and there is no wonder if ease and pleasure have found their advocates. The paraphrastic liberties have been almost universally admitted; and Sherbourn, whose learning was eminent, and who had no need of any excuse to pass slightly over obscurities, is the only writer who in later times has attempted to justify or revive the ancient severity.

There is undoubtedly a mean to be observed. Dryden saw very early that closeness best preserved an author's sense, and that freedom best exhibited his spirit; he therefore will deserve the highest praise, who can give a representation at once faithful and pleasing, who can convey the same thoughts with the same graces, and who, when he translates, changes nothing but the language.

No. 70.] Saturday, Aug. 18, 1759.

Few faults of style, whether real or imaginary, excite the malignity of a more numerous class of readers than the use of hard words.

If an author be supposed to involve his thoughts in voluntary obscurity, and to obstruct, by unnecessary difficulties, a mind eager in pursuit of truth; if he writes not to make others learned, but to boast the learning which he possesses himself, and wishes to be admired rather than understood, he counteracts the first end of writing, and justly suffers the utmost severity of censure, or the more afflictive severity of neglect.

But words are only hard to those who do not understand them; and the critic ought always to inquire, whether he is incommoded by the fault of the writer, or by his own.

Every author does not write for every reader; many questions are such as the illiterate part of mankind can have neither interest nor pleasure in discussing, and which therefore it would be a useless endeavour to level with common minds, by tiresome circumlocutions or laborious explanations; and many subjects of general use may be treated in a different manner, as the book is intended for the learned or the ignorant. Diffusion and explication are necessary to the instruction of those who, being neither able nor accustomed to think for themselves, can learn only what is expressly taught; but they who can form parallels, discover consequences, and multiply conclusions, are best pleased with involution of argument and compression of thought; they desire only to receive the seeds of knowledge which they may branch out by their own power, to have the way to truth pointed out, which they can then follow without a guide.

The Guardian directs one of his pupils "to think with the wise, but speak with the vulgar." This is a precept specious enough, but not always practicable. Difference of thoughts will produce difference of language. He that thinks with more extent than another will want words of larger meaning; he that thinks with more subtilty will seek for terms of more nice discrimination; and where is the wonder, since words are but the images of things, that he who never knew the original should not know the copies?

Yet vanity inclines us to find faults any where rather than in ourselves. He that reads and grows no wiser, seldom suspects his own deficiency; but complains of hard words and obscure sentences, and asks why books are written which cannot be understood?

Among the hard words which are no longer to be used, it has been long the custom to number terms of art. "Every man," says Swift, "is more able to explain the subject of an art than its professors; a farmer will tell you, in two words, that he has broken his leg; but a surgeon, after a long discourse, shall leave you as ignorant as you were before." This could only have been said by such an exact observer of life, in gratification of malignity, or in ostentation of acuteness. Every hour produces instances of the necessity of terms of art. Mankind could never conspire in uniform affectation; it is not but by necessity that every science and every trade has its peculiar language. They that content themselves with general ideas may rest in general terms; but those, whose studies or employments force them upon closer inspection, must have names for particular parts, and words by which they may express various modes of combination, such as none but themselves have occasion to consider.

Artists are indeed sometimes ready to suppose that none can be strangers to words to which themselves are familiar, talk to an incidental inquirer as they talk to one another, and make their knowledge ridiculous by injudicious obtrusion. An art cannot be taught but by its proper terms, but it is not always necessary to teach the art.

That the vulgar express their thoughts clearly is far from true; and what perspicuity can be found among them proceeds not from the easiness of their language, but the shallowness of their thoughts. He that sees a building as a common spectator, contents himself with relating that it is great or little, mean or splendid, lofty or low; all these words are intelligible and common, but they convey no distinct or limited ideas; if he attempts, without the terms of architecture, to delineate the parts, or enumerate the ornaments, his narration at once becomes unintelligible. The terms, indeed, generally displease, because they are understood by few; but they are little understood only because few that look upon an edifice, examine its parts, or analyse its columns into their members.

The state of every other art is the same; as it is cursorily surveyed or accurately examined, different forms of expression become proper. In morality it is one thing to discuss the niceties of the casuist, and another to direct the practice of common life. In agriculture, he that instructs the farmer to plough and sow, may convey his notions without the words which he would find necessary in explaining to philosophers the process of vegetation; and if he, who has nothing to do but to be honest by the shortest way, will perplex his mind with subtile speculations; or if he, whose task is to reap and thresh, will not be contented without examining the evolution of the seed, and circulation of the sap, the writers whom either shall consult are very little to be blamed, though it should sometimes happen that they are read in vain.

No. 71.] SATURDAY, AUG. 25, 1759.

DICK SHIFTER was born in Cheapside, and having passed reputably through all the classes of St. Paul's school, has been for some years a student in the Temple. He is of opinion, that intense application dulls the faculties, and thinks it necessary to temper the severity of the law by books that engage the mind, but do not fatigue it. He has therefore made a copious collection of plays, poems, and romances, to which he has recourse when he fancies himself tired with statutes and reports; and he seldom inquires very nicely whether he is weary or idle.

Dick has received from his favourite authors very strong impressions of a country life; and though his furthest excursions have been to Greenwich on one side, and Chelsea on the other, he has talked for several years with great pomp of language and elevation of sentiments, about a state too high for contempt and too low for envy, about homely quiet, and blameless simplicity, pastoral delights, and rural innocence.

His friends who had estates in the country, often invited him to pass the summer among them, but something or other had always hindered him; and he considered that to reside in the house of another man was to incur a kind of dependence inconsistent with that laxity of life which he had imagined as the chief good.

This summer he resolved to be happy, and procured a lodging to be taken for him at a solitary house, situated about thirty miles from London, on the banks of a small river, with corn fields before it, and a hill on each side covered with wood. He concealed the place of his retirement, that none might violate his obscurity, and promised himself many a happy day when he should hide himself among the trees, and contemplate the tumults and vexations of the town.

He stepped into the post-chaise with his heart beating and his eyes sparkling, was conveyed through many varieties of delightful prospects, saw hills and meadows, corn fields and pasture, succeed each other, and for four hours charged none of his poets with fiction or exaggeration. He was now within six miles of happiness, when, having never felt so much agitation before, he began to wish his journey at an end, and the last hour was passed in changing his posture, and quarrelling with his driver.

An hour may be tedious, but cannot be long. He at length alighted at his new dwelling, and was received as he expected; he looked round upon the hills and rivulets, but his joints were stiff and his muscles sore, and his first request was to see his bed-chamber.

He rested well, and ascribed the soundness of his sleep to the stillness of the country. He expected from that time nothing but nights of quiet and days of rapture, and, as soon as he had risen, wrote an account of his new state to one of his friends in the Temple.

"Dear Frank,

"I never pitied thee before. I am now as I could wish every man of wisdom and virtue to be, in the regions of calm content and placid meditation; with all the beauties of nature soliciting my notice, and all the diversities of pleasure courting my acceptance; the birds are chirping in the hedges, and the flowers blooming in the mead; the breeze is whistling in the wood, and the sun dancing on the water. I can now say with truth, that a man, capable of enjoying the purity of happiness, is never more busy than in his hours of leisure, nor ever less solitary than in a place of solitude.

"I am, dear Frank, &c."

When he had sent away his letter, he walked into the wood, with some inconvenience, from

he furze that pricked his legs, and the briers hat scratched his face. He at last sat down nder a tree, and heard with great delight a hower, by which he was not wet, rattling mong the branches: this, said he, is the true nage of obscurity; we hear of troubles and ommotions, but never feel them.

His amusement did not overpower the calls f nature, and he therefore went back to order is dinner. He knew that the country proluces whatever is eaten or drunk, and imagingg that he was now at the source of luxury, esolved to indulge himself with dainties which e supposed might be procured at a price next o nothing, if any price at all was expected; and ntended to amaze the rustics with his generosity, y paying more than they would ask. Of twenty ishes which he named, he was amazed to find hat scarcely one was to be had; and heard, ith astonishment and indignation, that all the uits of the earth were sold at a higher price han in the streets of London.

His meal was short and sullen; and he rered again to his tree, to inquire how dearness ould be consistent with abundance, or how raud should be practised by simplicity. He as not satisfied with his own speculations, nd, returning home early in the evening, went while from window to window, and found hat he wanted something to do.

He inquired for a newspaper, and was told hat farmers never minded news, but that they ould send for it from the ale-house. A messenger was despatched, who ran away at full speed, ut loitered an hour behind the hedges, and at st coming back with his feet purposely bemired, instead of expressing the gratitude which Mr. Shifter expected for the bounty of a shilng, said that the night was wet, and the way irty, and he hoped that his worship would not hink it much to give him half-a-crown.

Dick now went to bed with some abatement f his expectations; but sleep, I know not how, evives our hopes, and rekindles our desires. He rose early in the morning, surveyed the andscape, and was pleased. He walked out, nd passed from field to field, without observing ny beaten path, and wondered that he had not een the shepherdesses dancing, nor heard the wains piping to their flocks.

At last he saw some reapers and harvestvomen at dinner. Here, said he, are the true Arcadians, and advanced courteously towards hem, as afraid of confusing them by the dignity f his presence. They acknowledged his superority by no other token than that of asking him or something to drink. He imagined that he ad now purchased the privilege of discourse, nd began to descend to familiar questions, enleavouring to accommodate his discourse to the rossness of rustic understandings. The clowns oon found that he did not know wheat from rye, and began to despise him; one of the boys, by pretending to show him a bird's nest, decoyed him into a ditch; and one of the wenches sold him a bargain.

This walk had given him no great pleasure; but he hoped to find other rustics less coarse of manners, and less mischievous of disposition. Next morning he was accosted by an attorney, who told him, that, unless he made farmer Dobson satisfaction for trampling his grass, he had orders to indict him. Shifter was offended, but not terrified; and, telling the attorney that he was himself a lawyer, talked so volubly of pettifoggers and barraters, that he drove him away.

Finding his walks thus interrupted, he was inclined to ride, and being pleased with the appearance of a horse that was grazing in a neighbouring meadow, inquired the owner, who warranted him sound, and would not sell him, but that he was too fine for a plain man. Dick paid down the price, and, riding out to enjoy the evening, fell with his new horse into a ditch; they got out with difficulty, and as he was going to mount again, a countryman looked at the horse, and perceived him to be blind. Dick went to the seller, and demanded back his money; but was told that a man who rented his ground must do the best for himself, that his landlord had his rent though the year was barren, and that, whether horses had eyes or no, he should sell them to the highest bidder.

Shifter now began to be tired with rustic simplicity, and on the fifth day took possession again of his chambers, and bade farewell to the regions of calm content and placid meditation.

No. 72.] Saturday, Sept. 1, 1759.

Men complain of nothing more frequently than of deficient memory; and, indeed, every one finds that many of the ideas which he desired to retain have slipped irretrievably away; that the acquisitions of the mind are sometimes equally fugitive with the gifts of fortune; and that a short intermission of attention more certainly lessens knowledge than impairs an estate.

To assist this weakness of our nature, many methods have been proposed, all of which may be justly suspected of being ineffectual; for no art of memory, however its effects have been boasted or admired, has been ever adopted into general use, nor have those who possessed it appeared to excel others in readiness of recollection or multiplicity of attainments.

There is another art of which all have felt the want, though Themistocles only confessed

it. We suffer equal pain from the pertinacious adhesion of unwelcome images, as from the evanescence of those which are pleasing and useful; and it may be doubted whether we should be more benefited by the art of memory or the art of forgetfulness.

Forgetfulness is necessary to remembrance. Ideas are retained by renovation of that impression which time is always wearing away, and which new images are striving to obliterate. If useless thoughts could be expelled from the mind, all the valuable parts of our knowledge would more frequently recur, and every recurrence would reinstate them in their former place.

It is impossible to consider, without some regret, how much might have been learned, or how much might have been invented by a rational and vigorous application of time, uselessly or painfully passed in the revocation of events which have left neither good nor evil behind them, in grief for misfortunes either repaired or irreparable, in resentment of injuries known only to ourselves, of which death has put the authors beyond our power.

Philosophy has accumulated precept upon precept, to warn us against the anticipation of future calamities. All useless misery is certainly folly, and he that feels evils before they come may be deservedly censured; yet surely to dread the future is more reasonable than to lament the past. The business of life is to go forwards: he who sees evil in prospect meets it in his way; but he who catches it by retrospection turns back to find it. That which is feared may sometimes be avoided, but that which is regretted to-day, may be regretted again to-morrow.

Regret is indeed useful and virtuous, and not only allowable but necessary, when it tends to the amendment of life, or to admonition of error which we may be again in danger of committing. But a very small part of the moments spent in meditation on the past, produce any reasonable caution or salutary sorrow. Most of the mortifications that we have suffered, arose from the concurrence of local and temporary circumstances, which can never meet again; and most of our disappointments have succeeded those expectations, which life allows not to be formed a second time.

It would add much to human happiness, if an art could be taught of forgetting all of which the remembrance is at once useless and afflictive, if that pain which never can end in pleasure could be driven totally away, that the mind might perform its functions without incumbrance, and the past might no longer encroach upon the present.

Little can be done well to which the whole mind is not applied; the business of every day calls for the day to which it is assigned; and he will have no leisure to regret yesterday's vexations who resolves not to have a new subject of regret to-morrow.

But to forget or to remember at pleasure, are equally beyond the power of man. Yet as memory may be asisted by method, and the decays of knowledge repaired by stated times of recollection, so the power of forgetting is capable of improvement. Reason will, by a resolute contest, prevail over imagination, and the power may be obtained of transferring the attention as judgment shall direct.

The incursions of troublesome thoughts are often violent and importunate; and it is not easy to a mind accustomed to their inroads to expel them immediately by putting better images into motion; but this enemy of quiet is above all others weakened by every defeat; the reflection which has been once overpowered and ejected, seldom returns with any formidable vehemence.

Employment is the great instrument of intellectual dominion. The mind cannot retire from its enemy into total vacancy, or turn aside from one object but by passing to another. The gloomy and the resentful are always found among those who have nothing to do, or who do nothing. We must be busy about good or evil, and he to whom the present offers nothing will often be looking backward on the past.

No. 73.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 8, 1759.

THAT every man would be rich if a wish could obtain riches, is a position which I believe few will contest, at least in a nation like ours, in which commerce has kindled a universal emulation of wealth, and in which money receives all the honours which are the proper right of knowledge and of virtue.

Yet though we are all labouring for gold, as for the chief good, and, by the natural effort of unwearied diligence, have found many expeditious methods of obtaining it, we have not been able to improve the art of using it, or to make it produce more happiness than it afforded in former times, when every declaimer expatiated on its mischiefs, and every philosopher taught his followers to despise it.

Many of the dangers imputed of old to exorbitant wealth are now at an end. The rich are neither way-laid by robbers nor watched by informers; there is nothing to be dreaded from proscriptions, or seizures. The necessity of concealing treasure has long ceased; no man now needs counterfeit mediocrity, and condemn his plate and jewels to caverns and darkness, or feast his mind with the consciousness of clouded splendour, of finery which is useless till it is shown, and which he dares not show.

In our time the poor are strongly tempted to assume the appearance of wealth, but the wealthy very rarely desire to be thought poor; for we are all at full liberty to display riches by every mode of ostentation. We fill our houses with useless ornaments, only to show that we can buy them; we cover our coaches with gold, and employ artists in the discovery of new fashions of expense; and yet it cannot be found that riches produce happiness.

Of riches, as of every thing else, the hope is more than the enjoyment; while we consider them as the means to be used, at some future time, for the attainment of felicity, we press on our pursuit ardently and vigorously, and that ardour secures us from weariness of ourselves; but no sooner do we sit down to enjoy our acquisitions, than we find them insufficient to fill up the vacuities of life.

One cause which is not always observed of the insufficiency of riches is, that they very seldom make their owner rich. To be rich is to have more than is desired, and more than is wanted; to have something which may be spent without reluctance, and scattered without care, with which the sudden demands of desire may be gratified, the casual freaks of fancy indulged, or the unexpected opportunities of benevolence improved.

Avarice is always poor, but poor by her own fault. There is another poverty to which the rich are exposed with less guilt by the officiousness of others. Every man, eminent for exuberance of fortune, is surrounded from morning to evening, and from evening to midnight, by flatterers, whose art of adulation consists in exciting artificial wants, and in forming new schemes of profusion.

Tom Tranquil, when he came to age, found himself in possession of a fortune of which the twentieth part might, perhaps, have made him rich. His temper is easy, and his affections soft; he receives every man with kindness, and bears him with credulity. His friends took care to settle him by giving him a wife, whom, having no particular inclination, he rather accepted than chose, because he was told that she was proper for him.

He was now to live with dignity proportionate to his fortune. What his fortune requires or admits Tom does not know, for he has little skill in computation, and none of his friends think it their interest to improve it. If he was suffered to live by his own choice, he would leave every thing as he finds it, and pass through the world distinguished only by inoffensive gentleness. But the ministers of luxury have marked him out as one at whose expense they may exercise their arts. A companion, who had just learned the names of the Italian masters, runs from sale to sale, and buys pictures, for which Mr. Tranquil pays, without inquiring where they shall be hung. Another fills his garden with statues, which Tranquil wishes away, but dares not remove. One of his friends is learning architecture, by building him a house, which he passed by and enquired to whom it belonged; another has been for three years digging canals, and raising mounts; cutting trees down in one place, and planting them in another, on which Tranquil looks with a serene indifference, without asking what will be the cost. Another projector tells him that a waterwork, like that of Versailles, will complete the beauties of his seat, and lays his draughts before him; Tranquil turns his eyes upon them, and the artist begins his explanations; Tranquil raises no objections, but orders him to begin the work, that he may escape from talk which he does not understand.

Thus a thousand hands are busy at his expense without adding to his pleasures. He pays and receives visits, and has loitered in public or in solitude, talking in summer of the town, and in winter of the country, without knowing that his fortune is impaired, till his steward told him this morning that he could pay the workmen no longer but by mortgaging a manor.

No. 74.] Saturday, Sept. 15, 1759.

In the mythological pedigree of learning, memory is made the mother of the muses, by which the masters of ancient wisdom, perhaps, meant to show the necessity of storing the mind copiously with true notions, before the imagination should be suffered to form fictions or collect embellishments; for the works of an ignorant poet can afford nothing higher than pleasing sound, and fiction is of no other use than to display the treasures of memory.

The necessity of memory to the acquisition of knowledge is inevitably felt and universally allowed, so that scarcely any other of the mental faculties are commonly considered as necessary to a student: he that admires the proficiency of another, always attributes it to the happiness of this memory; and he that laments his own defects, concludes with a wish that his memory was better.

It is evident that when the power of retention is weak, all the attempts at eminence of knowledge must be vain; and as few are willing to be doomed to perpetual ignorance, I may, perhaps, afford consolation to some that have fallen too easily into despondence, by observing that such weakness is, in my opinion, very rare, and that few have reason to complain of nature as unkindly sparing of the gifts of memory.

In the common business of life, we find the memory of one like that of another, and honestly

impute omissions not to involuntary forgetfulness, but culpable inattention; but in literary inquiries, failure is imputed rather to want of memory than of diligence.

We consider ourselves as defective in memory, either because we remember less than we desire, or less than we suppose others to remember.

Memory is like all other human powers, with which no man can be satisfied who measures them by what he can conceive, or by what he can desire. He whose mind is most capacious, finds it much too narrow for his wishes; he that remembers most, remembers little compared with what he forgets. He, therefore, that, after the perusal of a book, finds few ideas remaining in his mind, is not to consider the disappointment as peculiar to himself, or to resign all hopes of improvement, because he does not retain what even the author has, perhaps, forgotten.

He who compares his memory with that of others, is often too hasty to lament the inequality. Nature has sometimes, indeed, afforded examples of enormous, wonderful, and gigantic memory. Scaliger reports of himself, that, in his youth, he could repeat above a hundred verses, having once read them; and Barthius declares that he wrote his "Comment upon Cladian" without consulting the text. But not to have such degrees of memory is no more to be lamented than not to have the strength of Hercules, or the swiftness of Achilles. He that, in the distribution of good, has an equal share with common men, may justly be contented. Where there is no striking disparity, it is difficult to know of two which remembers most, and still more difficult to discover which reads with greater attention, which has renewed the first impression by more frequent repetitions, or by what accidental combination of ideas either mind might have united any particular narrative or argument to its former stock.

But memory, however impartially distributed, so often deceives our trust, that almost every man attempts, by some artifice or other, to secure its fidelity.

It is the practice of many readers to note, in the margin of their books, the most important passages, the strongest arguments, or the brightest sentiments. Thus they load their minds with superfluous attention, repress the vehemence of curiosity by useless deliberation, and by frequent interruption break the current of narration or the chain of reasoning, and at last close the volume, and forget the passages and marks together.

Others I have found unalterably persuaded that nothing is certainly remembered but what is transcribed; and they have, therefore, passed weeks and months in transferring large quotations to a common-place book. Yet why any part of a book, which can be consulted at pleasure, should be copied, I was never able to discover. The hand has no closer correspondence with the memory than the eye. The act of writing itself distracts the thoughts, and what is read twice, is commonly better remembered than what is transcribed. The method therefore, consumes time without assisting memory.

The true art of memory is the art of attention. No man will read with much advantage who is not able, at pleasure, to evacuate his mind, or who brings not to his author, an intellect defecated and pure, neither turbid with care, nor agitated by pleasure. If the repositories of thought are already full, what can they receive; if the mind is employed on the past or future, the book will be held before the eyes in vain. What is read with delight is commonly retained, because pleasure always secures attention; but the books which are consulted by occasional necessity, and perused with impatience, seldom leave any traces on the mind.

No. 75.] Saturday, Sept. 22, 1759.

In the time when Bassora was considered as the school of Asia, and flourished by the reputation of its professors, and the confluence of its students, among the pupils that listened round the chair of Albamazar was Gelaleddin, a native of Tauris, in Persia, a young man, amiable in his manners and beautiful in his form, of boundless curiosity, incessant diligence, and irresistible genius, of quick apprehension, and tenacious memory, accurate without narrowness, and eager for novelty without inconstancy.

No sooner did Gelaleddin appear at Bassora than his virtues and abilities raised him to distinction. He passed from class to class rather admired than envied by those whom the rapidity of his progress left behind: he was consulted by his fellow-students as an oraculous guide and admitted as a competent auditor to the conferences of the sages.

After a few years, having passed through all the exercises of probation, Gelaleddin was invited to a professor's seat, and intreated to increase the splendour of Bassora. Gelaleddin affected to deliberate on the proposal, with which before he considered it, he resolved to comply, and next morning retired to a garden planted for the recreation of the students, and entering a solitary walk, began to meditate upon his future life.

"If I am thus eminent," said he, "in the regions of literature, I shall be yet more con

spicuous in any other place; if I should now devote myself to study and retirement, I must pass my life in silence, unacquainted with the delights of wealth, the influence of power, the pomp of greatness, and the charms of elegance, with all that man envies and desires, with all that keeps the world in motion, by the hope of gaining or the fear of losing it. I will, therefore, depart to Tauris, where the Persian monarch resides in all the splendour of absolute dominion: my reputation will fly before me, my arrival will be congratulated by my kinsmen and friends; I shall see the eyes of those who predicted my greatness sparkling with exultation, and the faces of those that once despised me clouded with envy, or counterfeiting kindness by artificial smiles. I will show my wisdom by my discourse, and my moderation by my silence; I will instruct the modest with easy gentleness, and repress the ostentatious by seasonable superciliousness. My apartments will be crowded by the inquisitive, and the vain, by those that honour and those that rival me; my name will soon reach the court; I shall stand before the throne of the emperor; the judges of the law will confess my wisdom, and the nobles will contend to heap gifts upon me. If I shall find that my merit, like that of others, excites malignity, or feel myself tottering on the seat of elevation, I may at last retire to academical obscurity, and become, in my lowest state, a professor of Bassora."

Having thus settled his determination, he declared to his friends his design of visiting Tauris, and saw with more pleasure than he ventured to express, the regret with which he was dismissed. He could not bear to delay the honours to which he was designed, and therefore hastened away, and in a short time entered the capital of Persia. He was immediately immersed in the crowd, and passed unobserved to his father's house. He entered, and was received, though not unkindly, yet without any excess of fondness, or exclamations of rapture. His father had, in his absence, suffered many losses, and Gelaleddin was considered as an additional burden to a falling family.

When he recovered from his surprise, he began to display his acquisitions, and practised all the arts of narration and disposition: but the poor have no leisure to be pleased with eloquence; they heard his arguments without reflection, and his pleasantries without a smile. He then applied himself singly to his brothers and sisters, but found them all chained down by invariable attention to their own fortunes, and insensible of any other excellence than that which could bring some remedy for indigence.

It was now known in the neighbourhood that Gelaleddin was returned, and he sat for some days in expectation that the learned would visit him for consultation, or the great for entertainment. But who would be pleased or instructed in the mansions of poverty? He then frequented places of public resort, and endeavoured to attract notice by the copiousness of his talk. The sprightly were silenced, and went away to censure in some other place his arrogance and his pedantry; and the dull listened quietly for a while, and then wondered why any man should take pains to obtain so much knowledge which would never do him good.

He next solicited the viziers for employment, not doubting but his service would be eagerly accepted. He was told by one that there was no vacancy in his office; by another, that his merit was above any patronage but that of the emperor; by a third, that he would not forget him; and by the chief vizier, that he did not think literature of any great use in public business. He was sometimes admitted to their tables, where he exerted his wit and diffused his knowledge; but he observed, that where, by endeavour or accident, he had remarkably excelled, he was seldom invited a second time.

He now returned to Bassora, wearied and disgusted, but confident of resuming his former rank, and reveling again in satiety of praise. But he who had been neglected at Tauris, was not much regarded at Bassora; he was considered as a fugitive, who returned only because he could live in no other place; his companions found that they had formerly over-rated his abilities, and he lived long without notice or esteem.

No. 76.] SATURDAY, SEPT. 29, 1759. by — Reynolds.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

I WAS much pleased with your ridicule of those shallow critics, whose judgment, though often right as far as it goes, yet reaches only to inferior beauties, and who, unable to comprehend the whole, judge only by parts, and from thence determine the merit of extensive works. But there is another kind of critic still worse, who judges by narrow rules, and those too often false, and which, though they should be true, and founded on nature, will lead him but a very little way toward the just estimation of the sublime beauties in works of genius; for whatever part of an art can be executed or criticised by rules, that part is no longer the work of genius, which implies excellence out of the reach of rules. For my own part I profess myself an *Idler*, and love to give my judgment, such as it is, from my immediate perceptions without much fatigue of thinking: and I am of opinion, that if a man has not those perceptions right, it will be vain for him to endeavour to

supply their place by rules, which may enable him to talk more learnedly, but not to distinguish more acutely. Another reason which has lessened my affection for the study of criticism is, that critics, so far as I have observed, debar themselves from receiving any pleasure from the polite arts, at the same time that they profess to love and admire them: for these rules, being always uppermost, give them such a propensity to criticise, that instead of giving up the reins of their imagination into their author's hands, their frigid minds are employed in examining whether the performance be according to the rules of art.

To those who are resolved to be critics in spite of nature, and at the same time have no great disposition to much reading and study, I would recommend to them to assume the character of connoisseur, which may be purchased at a much cheaper rate than that of a critic in poetry. The remembrance of a few names of painters, with their general characters, with a few rules of the academy, which they may pick up among the painters, will go a great way towards making a very notable connoisseur.

With a gentleman of this cast, I visited last week the Cartoons at Hampton-court; he was just returned from Italy, a connoisseur of course, and of course his mouth full of nothing, but the grace of Raffaelle, the purity of Dominichino, the learning of Poussin, and the air of Guido, the greatness of taste of the Carrachis, and the sublimity and grand contorno of Michael Angelo; with all the rest of the cant of criticism, which he emitted with that volubility which generally those orators have who annex no ideas to their words.

As we were passing through the rooms, in our way to the gallery, I made him observe a whole length of Charles the First, by Vandyke, as a perfect representation of the character as well as the figure of the man. He agreed it was very fine, but it wanted spirit and contrast, and had not the flowing line, without which a figure could not possibly be graceful. When we entered the gallery, I thought I could perceive him recollecting his rules by which he was to criticise Raffaelle. I shall pass over his observation of the boots being too little, and other criticisms of that kind, till we arrived at St. Paul preaching. "This," says he, "is esteemed the most excellent of all the cartoons; what nobleness, what dignity there is in that figure of St. Paul! and yet what an addition to that nobleness could Raffaelle have given, had the art of contrast been known in his time! but, above all, the flowing line, which constitutes grace and beauty! You would not have then seen an upright figure standing equally on both legs, and both hands stretched forward in the same direction, and his drapery, to all appearance, without the least art of disposition." The following picture is the Charge to Peter. "Here," says he, "are twelve upright figures; what a pity it is that Raffaelle was not acquainted with the pyramidal principle! He would then have contrived the figures in the middle to have been on higher ground, or the figures at the extremities stooping or lying, which would not only have formed the group into the shape of a pyramid, but likewise contrasted the standing figures. Indeed," added he, "I have often lamented that so great a genius as Raffaelle had not lived in this enlightened age, since the art has been reduced to principles, and had had his education in one of the modern academies; what glorious works might we then have expected from his divine pencil!"

I shall trouble you no longer with my friend's observations, which, I suppose, you are now able to continue by yourself. It is curious to observe, that, at the same time that great admiration is pretended for a name of fixed reputation, objections are raised against those very qualities by which that great name was acquired.

Those critics are continually lamenting that Raffaelle had not the colouring and harmony of Rubens, or the light and shadow of Rembrant, without considering how much the gay harmony of the former, and affectation of the latter, would take from the dignity of Raffaelle; and yet Rubens had great harmony, and Rembrant understood light and shadow; but what may be an excellence in a lower class of painting, becomes a blemish in a higher; as the quick, sprightly turn, which is the life and beauty of epigrammatic compositions, would but ill suit with the majesty of heroic poetry.

To conclude; I would not be thought to infer from any thing that has been said, that rules are absolutely unnecessary; but to censure scrupulosity, a servile attention to minute exactness, which is sometimes inconsistent with higher excellency, and is lost in the blaze of expanded genius.

I do not know whether you will think painting a general subject. By inserting this letter, perhaps, you will incur the censure a man would deserve, whose business being to entertain a whole room, should turn his back to the company, and talk to a particular person.

I am, Sir, &c.

No. 77.] Saturday, Oct. 6, 1759.

Easy poetry is universally admired; but I know not whether any rule has yet been fixed, by which it may be decided when poetry can be properly called easy. Horace has told us, that it is such as "every reader hopes to equal, but

after long labour finds unattainable." This is a very loose description, in which only the effect is noted; the qualities which produce this effect remain to be investigated.

Easy poetry is that in which natural thoughts are expressed without violence to the language. The discriminating character of ease consists principally in the diction; for all true poetry requires that the sentiments be natural. Language suffers violence by harsh or by daring figures, by transposition, by unusual acceptations of words, and by any license which would be avoided by a writer of prose. Where any artifice appears in the construction of the verse, that verse is no longer easy. Any epithet which can be ejected without diminution of the sense, any curious iteration of the same word, and all unusual, though not ungrammatical structure of speech, destroy the grace of easy poetry.

The first lines of Pope's Iliad afford examples of many licenses which an easy writer must decline:—

Achilles' wrath, to Greece the direful spring
Of woes unnumber'd heavenly goddess sing,
The wrath which hurl'd to Pluto's gloomy reign
The souls of mighty chiefs untimely slain.

In the first couplet the language is distorted by inversions, clogged with superfluities, and clouded by a harsh metaphor; and in the second there are two words used in an uncommon sense, and two epithets inserted only to lengthen the line; all these practices may in a long work easily be pardoned, but they always produce some degree of obscurity and ruggedness.

Easy poetry has been so long excluded by ambition of ornament, and luxuriance of imagery, that its nature seems now to be forgotten. Affectation, however opposite to ease, is sometimes mistaken for it: and those who aspire to gentle elegance, collect female phrases and fashionable barbarisms, and imagine that style to be easy which custom has made familiar. Such was the idea of the poet who wrote the following verses to a countess cutting paper:—

Pallas grew vap'rish once and odd,
She would not do the least right thing
Either for goddess or for god,
Nor work, nor play, nor paint, nor sing.

Jove frowned, and "Use," he cried, "those eyes
So skilful, and those hands so taper;
Do something exquisite and wise."—
She bow'd, obey'd him, and cut paper.

This vexing him who gave her birth,
Thought by all heaven a burning shame,
What does she next, but lids on earth
Her Burlington do just the same!

Pallas, you give yourself strange airs;
But sure you'll find it hard to spoil
The sense and taste of one that bears
The name of Saville and of Boyle.

Alas! one bad example shown,
How quickly all the sex pursue!
See, Madam! see the arts o'erthrown
Between John Overton and you.

It is the prerogative of easy poetry to be understood as long as the language lasts; but modes of speech, which owe their prevalence only to modish folly, or to the eminence of those that use them, die away with their inventors, and their meaning, in a few years, is no longer known.

Easy poetry is commonly sought in petty compositions upon minute subjects; but ease, though it excludes pomp, will admit greatness. Many lines in Cato's soliloquy are at once easy and sublime:—

The divinity that stirs within us;
'Tis heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man.
——If there is a power above us,
And that there is all nature cries aloud
Thro' all her works, he must delight in virtue,
And that which he delights in must be happy.

Nor is ease more contrary to wit than to sublimity: the celebrated stanza of Cowley, on a lady elaborately dressed, loses nothing of its freedom by the spirit of the sentiment:—

Th' adorning thee with so much art
Is but a barbarous skill,
'Tis like the pois'ning of a dart,
Too apt before to kill.

Cowley seems to have possessed the power of writing easily beyond any other of our poets; yet his pursuit of remote thoughts led him often into harshness of expression. Waller often attempted, but seldom attained it; for he is too frequently driven into transpositions. The poets, from the time of Dryden, have gradually advanced in embellishment, and consequently departed from simplicity and ease.

To require from any author many pieces of easy poetry, would be, indeed, to oppress him with too hard a task. It is less difficult to write a volume of lines swelled with epithets, brightened by figures, and stiffened by transpositions, than to produce a few couplets graced only by naked elegance and simple purity, which requires so much care and skill, that I doubt whether any of our authors have yet been able, for twenty lines together, nicely to observe the true definition of easy poetry.

No. 78.] Saturday, Oct. 13, 1759.

I have passed the summer in one of those places to which a mineral spring gives the idle

and luxurious an annual reason for resorting, whenever they fancy themselves offended by the heat of London. What is the true motive of this periodical assembly I have never yet been able to discover. The greater part of the visitants neither feel diseases nor fear them. What pleasure can be expected, more than the variety of the journey, I know not, for the numbers are too great for privacy, and too small for diversion. As each is known to be a spy upon the rest, they all live in continual restraint; and having but a narrow range for censure, they gratify its cravings by preying on one another.

But every condition has some advantages. In this confinement a smaller circle affords opportunities for more exact observation. The glass that magnifies its object contracts the sight to a point; and the mind must be fixed upon a single character to remark its minute peculiarities. The quality or habit which passes unobserved in the tumult of successive multitudes, becomes conspicuous when it is offered to the notice day after day; and perhaps I have, without any distinct notice, seen thousands, like my late companions; for when the scene can be varied at pleasure, a slight disgust turns us aside before a deep impression can be made upon the mind.

There was a select set, supposed to be distinguished by superiority of intellects, who always passed the evening together. To be admitted to their conversation was the highest honour of the place; many youths aspired to distinction, by pretending to occasional invitations! and the ladies were often wishing to be men, that they might partake the pleasures of learned society.

I know not whether by merit or destiny, I was, soon after my arrival, admitted to this envied party, which I frequented till I had learned the art by which each endeavoured to support his character.

Tom Steady was a vehement assertor of uncontroverted truth; and by keeping himself out of the reach of contradiction had acquired all the confidence which the consciousness of irresistible abilities could have given. I was once mentioning a man of eminence, and after having recounted his virtues, endeavoured to represent him fully, by mentioning his faults. "Sir," said Mr. Steady, "that he has faults I can easily believe, for who is without them? No man, Sir, is now alive, among the innumerable multitudes that swarm upon the earth, however wise, or however good, who has not, in some degree, his failings and his faults. If there be any man faultless, bring him forth into public view, show him openly, and let him be known; but I will venture to affirm, and, till the contrary be plainly shown, shall always maintain, that no such man is to be found. Tell not me, Sir, of impeccability and perfection; such talk is for those that are strangers in the world; I have seen several nations, and conversed with all ranks of people; I have known the great and the mean, the learned and the ignorant, the old and the young, the clerical and the lay; but I have never found a man without a fault; and I suppose shall die in the opinion, that to be human is to be frail."

To all this nothing could be opposed. I listened with a hanging head: Mr. Steady looked round on the hearers with triumph, and saw every eye congratulating his victory; he departed, and spent the next morning in following those who retired from the company, and telling them, with injunctions of secresy, how poor Sprightly began to take liberties with men wiser than himself; but that he suppressed him by a decisive argument, which put him totally to silence.

Dick Snug is a man of sly remark and pithy sententiousness; he never immerges himself in the stream of conversation, but lies to catch his companions in the eddy: he is often very successful in breaking narratives, and confounding eloquence. A gentleman, giving the history of one of his acquaintance, made mention of a lady that had many lovers: "Then," said Dick, "she was either handsome or rich." This observation being well received, Dick watched the progress of the tale; and hearing of a man lost in a shipwreck, remarked, that "no man was ever drowned upon dry land."

Will Startle is a man of exquisite sensibility, whose delicacy of frame, and quickness of discernment, subject him to impressions from the slightest causes; and who, therefore, passes his life between rapture and horror, in quiverings of delight, or convulsions of disgust. His emotions are too violent for many words; his thoughts are always discovered by exclamations. "Vile, odious, horrid, detestable," and "sweet, charming, delightful, astonishing," compose almost his whole vocabulary, which he utters with various contortions and gesticulations, not easily related or described.

Jack Solid is a man of much reading, who utters nothing but quotations; but having been, I suppose, too confident of his memory, he has for some time neglected his books, and his stock grows every day more scanty. Mr. Solid has found an opportunity every night to repeat, from Hudibras,

> Doubtless the pleasure is as great
> Of being cheated, as to cheat;

and from Waller,

> Poets lose half the praise they would have got,
> Were it but known what they discretely blot.

Dick Misty is a man of deep research, and forcible penetration. Others are content with superficial appearances: but Dick holds, that

there is no effect without a cause, and values himself upon his power of explaining the difficulty, and displaying the abstruse. Upon a dispute among us, which of two young strangers was more beautiful, "You," says Mr. Misty, turning to me, "like Amaranthia better than Chloris. I do not wonder at the preference, for the cause is evident; there is in man a perception of harmony, and a sensibility of perfection, which touches the finer fibres of the mental texture; and before reason can descend from her throne, to pass her sentence upon the things compared, drives us towards the object proportioned to our faculties, by an impulse gentle, yet irresistible; for the harmonic system of the universe, and the reciprocal magnetism of similar natures, are always operating towards conformity and union; nor can the powers of the soul cease from agitation, till they find something on which they can repose." To this nothing was opposed; and Amaranthia was acknowledged to excel Chloris.

Of the rest you may expect an account from,

Sir, yours,

ROBIN SPRITELY.

No. 79.] SATURDAY, OCT. 20, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

YOUR acceptance of a former letter on painting, gives me encouragement to offer a few more sketches on the same subject.

Amongst the painters and the writers on painting, there is one maxim universally admitted, and continually inculcated. Imitate nature is the invariable rule; but I know none who have explained in what manner this rule is to be understood; the consequence of which is, that every one takes it in the most obvious sense, that objects are represented naturally when they have such relief that they seem real. It may appear strange, perhaps, to hear this sense of the rule disputed; but it must be considered, that, if the excellence of a painter consisted only in this kind of imitation, painting must lose its rank, and be no longer considered as a liberal art, and sister to poetry, this imitation being merely mechanical, in which the slowest intellect is always sure to succeed best; for the painter of genius cannot stoop to drudgery, in which the understanding has no part; and what pretence has the art to claim kindred with poetry, but by its powers over the imagination? To this power the painter of genius directs his aim; in this sense he studies nature, and often arrives at his end, even by being unnatural in the confined sense of the word.

The grand style of painting requires this minute attention to be carefully avoided, and must be kept as separate from it as the style of poetry from that of history. Poetical ornaments destroy that air of truth and plainness which ought to characterise history; but the very being of poetry consists in departing from this plain narration, and adopting every ornament that will warm the imagination. To desire to see the excellencies of each style united, to mingle the Dutch with the Italian school, is to join contrarieties which cannot subsist together, and which destroy the efficacy of each other. The Italian attends only to the invariable, the great and general ideas which are fixed and inherent in universal nature; the Dutch, on the contrary, to literal truth, and a minute exactness in the detail, as I may say of nature modified by accident. The attention to these petty peculiarities is the very cause of this naturalness, so much admired in the Dutch pictures, which, if we suppose it to be a beauty, is certainly of a lower order, which ought to give place to a beauty of a superior kind, since one cannot be obtained but by departing from the other.

If my opinion was asked concerning the works of Michael Angelo, whether they would receive any advantage from possessing this mechanical merit, I should not scruple to say they would not only receive no advantage, but would lose, in a great measure, the effect which they now have on every mind susceptible of great and noble ideas. His works may be said to be all genius and soul; and why should they be loaded with heavy matter, which can only counteract his purpose by retarding the progress of the imagination?

If this opinion should be thought one of the wild extravagancies of enthusiasm, I shall only say, that those who censure it are not conversant in the works of the great masters. It is very difficult to determine the exact degree of enthusiasm that the arts of painting and poetry may admit. There may perhaps be too great an indulgence, as well as too great a restraint of imagination; and if the one produces incoherent monsters, the other produces what is full as bad, lifeless insipidity. An intimate knowledge of the passions, and good sense, but not common sense, must at last determine its limits. It has been thought, and I believe with reason, that Michael Angelo sometimes transgressed those limits; and I think I have seen figures of him of which it was very difficult to determine whether they were in the highest degree sublime or extremely ridiculous. Such faults may be said to be the ebullitions of genius; but at least he had this merit, that he never was insipid, and whatever passion his works may excite, they will always escape contempt.

What I have had under consideration is the sublimest style, particularly that of Michael

Angelo, the Homer of painting. Other kinds may admit of this naturalness, which of the lowest kind is the chief merit; but in painting, as in poetry, the highest style has the least of common nature.

One may very safely recommend a little more enthusiasm to the modern painters: too much is certainly not the vice of the present age. The Italians seem to have been continually declining in this respect from the time of Michael Angelo to that of Carlo Maratti, and from thence to the very bathos of insipidity to which they are now sunk; so that there is no need of remarking, that where I mentioned the Italian painters in opposition to the Dutch, I mean not the moderns, but the heads of the old Roman and Bolognian schools; nor did I mean to include in my idea of an Italian painter, the Venetian school, which may be said to be the Dutch part of the Italian genius. I have only to add a word of advice to the painters, that however excellent they may be in painting naturally, they would not flatter themselves very much upon it; and to the connoisseurs, that when they see a cat or fiddle painted so finely, that as the phrase is, "It looks as if you could take it up," they would not for that reason immediately compare the painter to Raffaelle and Michael Angelo.

No. 80.] Saturday, Oct. 27, 1759.

That every day has its pains and sorrows is universally experienced, and almost universally confessed; but let us not attend only to mournful truths; if we look impartially about us, we shall find that every day has likewise its pleasures and its joys.

The time is now come when the town is again beginning to be full, and the rusticated beauty sees an end of her banishment. Those whom the tyranny of fashion had condemned to pass the summer among shades and brooks, are now preparing to return to plays, balls, and assemblies, with health restored by retirement, and spirits kindled by expectation.

Many a mind, which has languished some months without emotion or desire, now feels a sudden renovation of its faculties. It was long ago observed by Pythagoras, that ability and necessity dwell near each other. She that wandered in the garden without sense of its fragrance, and lay day after day stretched upon a couch behind a green curtain, unwilling to wake and unable to sleep, now summons her thoughts to consider which of her last year's clothes shall be seen again, and to anticipate the raptures of a new suit; the day and the night are now filled with occupation; the laces, which were too fine to be worn among rustics, are taken from the boxes, and reviewed, and the eye is no sooner closed after its labours, than whole shops of silk busy the fancy.

But happiness is nothing if it is not known, and very little if it is not envied. Before the day of departure a week is always appropriated to the payment and reception of ceremonial visits, at which nothing can be mentioned but the delights of London. The lady who is hastening to the scene of action, flutters her wings, displays her prospect of felicity, tells how she grudges every moment of delay, and, in the presence of those whom she knows condemned to stay at home, is sure to wonder by what arts life can be made supportable through a winter in the country, and to tell how often, amidst the ecstacies of an opera, she shall pity those friends whom she has left behind. Her hope of giving pain is seldom disappointed: the affected indifference of one, the faint congratulations of another, the wishes of some openly confessed, and the silent dejection of the rest, all exalt her opinion of her own superiority.

But, however we may labour for our own deception, truth, though unwelcome, will sometimes intrude upon the mind. They who have already enjoyed the crowds and noise of the great city, know that their desire to return is little more than the restlessness of a vacant mind, that they are not so much led by hope as driven by disgust, and wish rather to leave the country than to see the town. There is commonly in every coach a passenger enwrapped in silent expectation, whose joy is more sincere, and whose hopes are more exalted. The virgin whom the last summer released from her governess, and who is now going between her mother and her aunt to try the fortune of her wit and beauty, suspects no fallacy in the gay representation. She believes herself passing into another world, and images London as an Elysian region, where every hour has its proper pleasure, where nothing is seen but the blaze of wealth, and nothing heard but merriment and flattery; where the morning always rises on a show, and the evening closes on a ball; where the eyes are used only to sparkle, and the feet only to dance.

Her aunt and her mother amuse themselves on the road, with telling her of dangers to be dreaded, and cautions to be observed. She hears them as they heard their predecessors, with incredulity or contempt. She sees that they have ventured and escaped; and one of the pleasures which she promises herself is, to detect their falsehoods, and be freed from their admonitions.

We are inclined to believe those whom we do not know, because they have never deceived us. The fair adventurer may perhaps listen to the Idler, whom she cannot suspect of rivalry or

malice; yet he scarcely expects to be credited when he tells her, that her expectations will likewise end in disappointment.

The uniform necessities of human nature produce in a great measure uniformity of life, and for part of the day make one place like another; to dress and undress, to eat and to sleep, are the same in London as in the country. The supernumerary hours have indeed a greater variety both of pleasure and of pain. The stranger, gazed on by multitudes at her first appearance in the Park, is perhaps on the highest summit of female happiness: but how great is the anguish when the novelty of another face draws her worshippers away! The heart may leap for a time under a fine gown; but the sight of a gown yet finer puts an end to rapture. In the first row at an opera, two hours may be happily passed in listening to the music on the stage, and watching the glances of the company; but how will the night end in despondency when she that imagined herself the sovereign of the place, sees lords contending to lead Iris to her chair! There is little pleasure in conversation to her whose wit is regarded but in the second place; and who can dance with ease or spirit that sees Amaryllis led out before her? She that fancied nothing but a succession of pleasures, will find herself engaged without design in numberless competitions, and mortified without provocation with numberless afflictions.

But I do not mean to extinguish that ardour which I wish to moderate, or to discourage those whom I am endeavouring to restrain. To know the world is necessary, since we are born for the help of one another; and to know it early is convenient, if it be only that we may learn early to despise it. She that brings to London a mind well prepared for improvement, though she misses her hope of uninterrupted happiness, will gain in return an opportunity of adding knowledge to vivacity, and enlarging innocence to virtue.

No. 81.] Saturday, Nov. 3, 1759.

As the English army was passing towards Quebec, along a soft savanna between a mountain and a lake, one of the petty chiefs of the inland regions stood upon a rock surrounded by his clan, and from behind the shelter of the bushes contemplated the art and regularity of European war. It was evening, the tents were pitched: he observed the security with which the troops rested in the night, and the order with which the march was renewed in the morning. He continued to pursue them with his eye till they could be seen no longer, and then stood for some time silent and pensive.

Then turning to his followers, "My children," said he, "I have often heard from men hoary with long life, that there was a time when our ancestors were absolute lords of the woods, the meadows, and the lakes, wherever the eye can reach, or the foot can pass. They fished and hunted, feasted and danced, and, when they were weary lay down under the first thicket, without danger, and without fear. They changed their habitations as the seasons required, convenience prompted, or curiosity allured them; and sometimes gathered the fruits of the mountain, and sometimes sported in canoes along the coast.

"Many years and ages are supposed to have been thus passed in plenty and security; when, at last, a new race of men entered our country from the great ocean. They inclosed themselves in habitations of stone, which our ancestors could neither enter by violence, nor destroy by fire. They issued from those fastnesses, sometimes, covered like the armadillo with shells, from which the lance rebounded on the striker, and sometimes carried by mighty beasts which had never been seen in our vales or forests, of such strength and swiftness, that flight and opposition were vain alike. Those invaders ranged over the continent, slaughtering in their rage those that resisted, and those that submitted, in their mirth. Of those that remained, some were buried in caverns, and condemned to dig metals for their masters; some were employed in tilling the ground, of which foreign tyrants devour the produce; and, when the sword and the mines have destroyed the natives, they supply their place by human beings of another colour, brought from some distant country to perish here under toil and torture.

"Some there are who boast their humanity, and content themselves to seize our chaces and fisheries, who drive us from every track of ground where fertility and pleasantness invite them to settle, and make no war upon us except when we intrude upon our own lands.

"Others pretend to have purchased a right of residence and tyranny; but surely the insolence of such bargains is more offensive than the avowed and open dominion of force. What reward can induce the possessor of a country to admit a stranger more powerful than himself? Fraud or terror must operate in such contracts; either they promised protection which they never have afforded, or instruction which they never imparted. We hoped to be secured by their favour from some other evil, or to learn the arts of Europe, by which we might be able to secure ourselves. Their power they never have exerted in our defence, and their arts they have studiously concealed from us. Their treaties are only to deceive, and their traffic only to defraud us. They have a written law among them, of which they boast as derived from Him

who made the earth and sea, and by which they profess to believe that man will be made happy when life shall forsake him. Why is not this law communicated to us? It is concealed because it is violated. For how can they preach it to an Indian nation, when I am told that one of its first precepts forbids them to do to others what they would not that others should do to them?

"But the time perhaps is now approaching when the pride of usurpation shall be crushed, and the cruelties of invasion shall be revenged. The sons of rapacity have now drawn their swords upon each other, and referred their claims to the decision of war; let us look unconcerned upon the slaughter, and remember that the death of every European delivers the country from a tyrant and a robber; for what is the claim of either nation, but the claim of the vulture to the leveret, of the tiger to the fawn? Let them then continue to dispute their title to regions which they cannot people, to purchase by danger and blood the empty dignity of dominion over mountains which they will never climb, and rivers which they will never pass. Let us endeavour in the mean time, to learn their discipline, and to forge their weapons; and, when they shall be weakened with mutual slaughter, let us rush down upon them, force their remains to take shelter in their ships, and reign once more in our native country."

No. 82.] Saturday, Nov. 10, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

Discoursing in my last letter on the different practice of the Italian and Dutch painters, I observed, that "the Italian painter attends only to the invariable, the great and general ideas which are fixed and inherent in universal nature."

I was led into the subject of this letter by endeavouring to fix the original cause of this conduct of the Italian masters. If it can be proved that by this choice they selected the most beautiful part of the creation, it will show how much their principles are founded on reason, and, at the same time, discover the origin of our ideas of beauty.

I suppose it will be easily granted, that no man can judge whether any animal be beautiful in its kind, or deformed, who has seen only one of that species; that is as conclusive in regard to the human figure; so that if a man, born blind, was to recover his sight, and the most beautiful woman was brought before him, he could not determine whether she was handsome or not; nor, if the most beautiful and most deformed were produced, could he any better determine to which he should give the preference, having seen only those two. To distinguish beauty, then, implies the having seen many individuals of that species. If it is asked, how is more skill acquired by the observation of greater numbers? I answer, that, in consequence of having seen many, the power is acquired, even without seeking after it, of distinguishing between accidental blemishes and excrescences which are continually varying the surface of Nature's works, and the invariable general form which nature most frequently produces, and always seems to intend in her productions.

Thus amongst the blades of grass or leaves of the same tree, though no two can be found exactly alike, yet the general form is invariable: a naturalist, before he chose one as a sample, would examine many, since, if he took the first that occurred, it might have, by accident, or otherwise, such a form as that it would scarcely be known to belong to that species; he selects, as the painter does, the most beautiful, that is, the most general form of nature.

Every species of the animal as well as the vegetable creation may be said to have a fixed or determinate form towards which nature is continually inclining, like various lines terminating in the centre; or it may be compared to pendulums vibrating in different directions over one central point, and as they all cross the centre though only one passes through any other point, so it will be found that perfect beauty is oftener produced by nature than deformity; I do not mean than deformity in general, but than any one kind of deformity. To instance in a particular part of a feature: the line that forms the ridge of the nose is beautiful when it is straight; this then is the central form, which is oftener found than either concave, convex, or any other irregular form that shall be proposed. As we are then more accustomed to beauty than deformity, we may conclude that to be the reason why we approve and admire it, as we approve and admire customs, and fashions of dress for no other reason than that we are used to them; so that though habit and custom cannot be said to be the cause of beauty, it is certainly the cause of our liking it; and I have no doubt but that, if we were more used to deformity than beauty, deformity would then lose the idea now annexed to it, and take that of beauty; as, if the whole world should agree that *yes* and *no* should change their meanings, *yes* would then deny, and *no* would affirm.

Whoever undertakes to proceed farther in this argument, and endeavours to fix a general criterion of beauty respecting different species, or to show why one species is more beautiful than another, it will be required from him first to prove that one species is more beautiful than

another. That we prefer one to the other, and with very good reason, will be readily granted; but it does not follow from thence that we think it a more beautiful form; for we have no criterion of form by which to determine our judgment. He who says a swan is more beautiful than a dove, means little more than that he has more pleasure in seeing a swan than a dove, either from the stateliness of its motions, or its being a more rare bird; and he who gives the preference to the dove, does it from some association of ideas of innocence that he always annexes to the dove; but if he pretends to defend the preference he gives to one or the other by endeavouring to prove that this more beautiful form proceeds from a particular gradation of magnitude, undulation of a curve, or direction of a line, or whatever other conceit of his imagination he shall fix on as a criterion of form, he will be continually contradicting himself, and find at last that the great mother of nature will not be subjected to such narrow rules. Among the various reasons why we prefer one part of her works to another, the most general, I believe, is habit and custom; custom makes, in a certain sense, white black, and black white! it is custom alone determines our preference of the colour of the Europeans to the Æthiopians; and they, for the same reason, prefer their own colour to ours. I suppose nobody will doubt, if one of their painters were to paint the goddess of beauty, but that he would represent her black, with thick lips, flat nose, and woolly hair; and, it seems to me, he would act very unnaturally if he did not; for by what criterion will any one dispute the propriety of his idea? We, indeed, say, that the form and colour of the European is preferable to that of the Æthiopian; but I know of no reason we have for it, but that we are more accustomed to it. It is absurd to say that beauty is possessed of attractive powers, which irresistibly seize the corresponding mind with love and admiration, since that argument is equally conclusive in the favour of the white and the black philosopher.

The black and white nations must, in respect of beauty, be considered as of different kinds, at least a different species of the same kind; from one of which to the other, as I observed, no inference can be drawn.

Novelty is said to be one of the causes of beauty: that novelty is a very sufficient reason why we should admire, is not denied; but because it is uncommon, is it therefore beautiful? The beauty that is produced by colour, as when we prefer one bird to another, though of the same form, on account of its colour, has nothing to do with this argument, which reaches only to form. I have here considered the word beauty as being properly applied to form alone. There is a necessity of fixing this confined sense; for there can be no argument if the sense of the word is extended to every thing that is approved. A rose may as well be said to be beautiful because it has a fine smell, as a bird because of its colour. When we apply the word beauty, we do not mean always by it a more beautiful form, but something valuable on account of its rarity, usefulness, colour, or any other property. A horse is said to be a beautiful animal; but, had a horse as few good qualities as a tortoise, I do not imagine that he would be then esteemed beautiful.

A fitness to the end proposed, is said to be another cause of beauty; but supposing we were proper judges of what form is the most proper in an animal to constitute strength or swiftness, we always determine concerning its beauty, before we exert our understanding to judge of its fitness.

From what has been said, it may be inferred, that the works of nature, if we compare one species with another, are all equally beautiful; and that preference is given from custom, or some association of ideas; and that, in creatures of the same species, beauty is the medium or centre of all various forms.

To conclude, then, by way of corollary; if it has been proved, that the painter, by attending to the invariable and general ideas of nature, produces beauty, he must, by regarding minute particularities and accidental discriminations, deviate from the universal rule, and pollute his canvass with deformity.

No. 83.] SATURDAY, Nov. 17, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

I SUPPOSE you have forgotten that many weeks ago I promised to send you an account of my companions at the Wells. You would not deny me a place among the most faithful votaries of idleness, if you knew how often I have recollected my engagement, and contented myself to delay the performance for some reason which I durst not examine because I knew it to be false; how often I have sat down to write and rejoiced at interruption; and how often I have praised the dignity of resolution, determined at night to write in the morning, and deferred it in the morning to the quiet hours of night.

I have at last begun what I have long wished at an end, and find it more easy than I expected to continue my narration.

Our assembly could boast no such constellation of intellects as Clarendon's band of associates. We had among us no Selden, Falkland, or Waller; but we had men not less important in their own eyes, though less distinguished by the public; and many a time have we lamented

the partiality of mankind, and agreed that men of the deepest inquiry sometimes let their discoveries die away in silence, that the most comprehensive observers have seldom opportunities of imparting their remarks, and that modest merit passes in the crowd unknown and unheeded.

One of the greatest men of the society was Sim Scruple, who lives in a continual equipoise of doubt, and is a constant enemy to confidence and dogmatism. Sim's favourite topic of conversation is, the narrowness of the human mind, the fallaciousness of our senses, the prevalence of early prejudice, and the uncertainty of appearances. Sim has many doubts about the nature of death, and is sometimes inclined to believe that sensation may survive motion, and that a dead man may feel though he cannot stir. He has sometimes hinted that man might perhaps have been naturally a quadruped; and thinks it would be very proper, that at the Foundling Hospital some children should be inclosed in an apartment in which the nurses should be obliged to walk half upon four and half upon two, that the younglings, being bred without the prejudice of example, might have no other guide than nature, and might at last come forth into the world as genius should direct, erect or prone, on two legs or on four.

The next in dignity of mien and fluency of talk was Dick Wormwood, whose sole delight is, to find every thing wrong. Dick never enters a room but he shows that the door and the chimney are ill-placed. He never walks into the fields but he finds ground ploughed which is fitter for pasture. He is always an enemy to the present fashion. He holds that all the beauty and virtue of women will soon be destroyed by the use of tea. He triumphs when he talks on the present system of education, and tells us with great vehemence, that we are learning words when we should learn things. He is of opinion that we suck in errors at the nurse's breast, and thinks it extremely ridiculous that children should be taught to use the right hand rather than the left.

Bob Sturdy considers it as a point of honour to say again what he has once said, and wonders how any man that has been known to alter his opinion, can look his neighbours in the face. Bob is the most formidable disputant of the whole company; for, without troubling himself to search for reasons, he tires his antagonist with repeated affirmations. When Bob has been attacked for an hour with all the powers of eloquence and reason, and his position appears to all but himself utterly untenable, he always closes the debate with his first declaration, introduced by a stout preface of contemptuous civility. "All this is very judicious; you may talk, Sir, as you please; but I will still say what I said at first." Bob deals much in universals, which he has now obliged us to let pass without exceptions. He lives on an annuity, and holds that "there are as many thieves as traders;" he is of loyalty unshaken, and always maintains, that "he who sees a Jacobite sees a rascal."

Phil Gentle is an enemy to the rudeness of contradiction and the turbulence of debate. Phil has no notions of his own, and therefore willingly catches from the last speaker such as he shall drop. This inflexibility of ignorance is easily accommodated to any tenet; his only difficulty is, when the disputants grow zealous, how to be of two contrary opinions at once. If no appeal is made to his judgment, he has the art of distributing his attention and his smiles in such a manner, that each thinks him of his own party; but if he is obliged to speak, he then observes that the question is difficult; that he never received so much pleasure from a debate before; that neither of the controvertists could have found his match in any other company; that Mr. Wormwood's assertion is very well supported, and yet there is great force in what Mr. Scruple advanced against it. By this indefinite declaration both are commonly satisfied; for he that has prevailed is in good humour; and he that has felt his own weakness is very glad to have escaped so well.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

ROBIN SPRITELY.

No. 84.] SATURDAY, Nov. 24, 1759.

BIOGRAPHY is, of the various kind of narrative writing, that which is most eagerly read, and most easily applied to the purposes of life.

In romances, when the wide field of possibility lies open to invention, the incidents may easily be made more numerous, the vicissitudes more sudden, and the events more wonderful; but from the time of life when fancy begins to be over-ruled by reason and corrected by experience, the most artful tale raises little curiosity when it is known to be false; though it may, perhaps, be sometimes read as a model of a neat or elegant style, not for the sake of knowing what it contains, but how it is written; or those that are weary of themselves, may have recourse to it as a pleasing dream, of which, when they awake, they voluntarily dismiss the images from their minds.

The examples and events of history, press, indeed, upon the mind with the weight of truth; but when they are reposited in the memory, they are oftener employed for show than use, and rather diversify conversation than regulate life. Few are engaged in such scenes as give

them opportunities of growing wiser by the downfal of statesmen or the defeat of generals. The stratagems of war, and the intrigues of courts, are read by far the greater part of mankind with the same indifference as the adventures of fabled heroes, or the revolutions of a fairy region. Between falsehood and useless truth there is little difference. As gold which he cannot spend will make no man rich, so knowledge which he cannot apply will make no man wise.

The mischievous consequences of vice and folly, of irregular desires and predominant passions, are best discovered by those relations which are levelled with the general surface of life, which tell not how any man became great, but how he was made happy; not how he lost the favour of his prince, but how he became discontented with himself.

Those relations are therefore commonly of most value in which the writer tells his own story. He that recounts the life of another commonly dwells most upon conspicuous events, lessens the familiarity of his tale to increase its dignity, shows his favourite at a distance decorated and magnified like the ancient actors in their tragic dress, and endeavours to hide the man that he may produce a hero.

But if it be true, which was said by a French prince, "That no man was a hero to the servants of his chamber," it is equally true that every man is yet less a hero to himself. He that is most elevated above the crowd by the importance of his employments, or the reputation of his genius, feels himself affected by fame or business but as they influence his domestic life. The high and low, as they have the same faculties and the same senses, have no less similitudes in their pains and pleasures. The sensations are the same in all, though produced by very different occasions. The prince feels the same pain when an invader seizes a province, as the farmer when a thief drives away his cow. Men thus equal in themselves will appear equal in honest and impartial biography; and those whom fortune or nature place at the greatest distance, may afford instruction to each other.

The writer of his own life has at least the first qualification of an historian, the knowledge of the truth; and though it may be plausibly objected that his temptations to disguise it are equal to his opportunities of knowing it, yet I cannot but think that impartiality may be expected with equal confidence from him that relates the passages of his own life, as from him that delivers the transactions of another.

Certainty of knowledge not only excludes mistake, but fortifies veracity. What we collect by conjecture, and by conjecture only can one man judge of another's motives or sentiments, is easily modified by fancy or by desire; as objects imperfectly discerned take forms from the hope or fear of the beholder. But that which is fully known cannot be falsified but with reluctance of understanding, and alarm of conscience: of understanding, the lover of truth; of conscience, the sentinel of virtue.

He that writes the life of another is either his friend or his enemy, and wishes either to exalt his praise or aggravate his infamy: many temptations to falsehood will occur in the disguise of passions, too specious to fear much resistance. Love of virtue will animate panegyric, and hatred of wickedness imbitter censure. The zeal of gratitude, the ardour of patriotism, fondness for an opinion, or fidelity to a party, may easily overpower the vigilance of a mind habitually well disposed, and prevail over unassisted and unfriended veracity.

But he that speaks of himself has no motive to falsehood or partiality except self-love, by which all have so often been betrayed, that all are on the watch against its artifices. He that writes an apology for a single action, to confute an accusation, to recommend himself to favour, is indeed always to be suspected of favouring his own cause; but he that sits down calmly and voluntarily to review his life for the admonition of posterity, or to amuse himself, and leaves this account unpublished, may be commonly presumed to tell truth, since falsehood cannot appease his own mind, and fame will not be heard beneath the tomb.

No. 85.] Saturday, Dec. 1, 1759.

One of the peculiarities which distinguish the present age is the multiplication of books. Every day brings new advertisements of literary undertakings, and we are flattered with repeated promises of growing wise on easier terms than our progenitors.

How much either happiness or knowledge is advanced by this multitude of authors, it is not very easy to decide.

He that teaches us any thing which we knew not before, is undoubtedly to be reverenced as a master.

He that conveys knowledge by more pleasing ways, may very properly be loved as a benefactor; and he that supplies life with innocent amusement, will be certainly caressed as a pleasing companion.

But few of those who fill the world with books have any pretensions to the hope either of pleasing or instructing. They have often no other task than to lay two books before them, out of which they compile a third, without any new materials of their own, and with very little application of judgment to those which former authors have supplied.

That all compilations are useless I do not assert. Particles of science are often very widely scattered. Writers of extensive comprehension have incidental remarks upon topics very remote from the principal subject, which are often more valuable than formal treatises, and which yet are not known because they are not promised in the title. He that collects those under proper heads is very laudably employed, for though he exerts no great abilities in the work, he facilitates the progress of others, and by making that easy of attainment which is already written, may give some mind, more vigorous or more adventurous than his own, leisure for new thoughts and original designs.

But the collections poured lately from the press have been seldom made at any great expense of time or inquiry, and therefore only serve to distract choice without supplying any real want.

It is observed that "a corrupt society has many laws:" I know not whether it is not equally true, that "an ignorant age has many books." When the treasures of ancient knowledge lie unexamined, and original authors are neglected and forgotten, compilers and plagiaries are encouraged, who give us again what we had before, and grow great by setting before us what our own sloth had hidden from our view.

Yet are not even these writers to be indiscriminately censured and rejected. Truth like beauty varies its fashions, and is best recommended by different dresses to different minds; and he that recalls the attention of mankind to any part of learning which time has left behind it, may be truly said to advance the literature of his own age. As the manners of nations vary, new topics of persuasion become necessary, and new combinations of imagery are produced; and he that can accommodate himself to the reigning taste, may always have readers who perhaps would not have looked upon better performances.

To exact of every man who writes, that he should say something new, would be to reduce authors to a small number; to oblige the most fertile genius to say only what is new would be to contract his volumes to a few pages. Yet, surely, there ought to be some bounds to repetition; libraries ought no more to be heaped for ever with the same thoughts differently expressed, than with the same books differently decorated.

The good or evil which these secondary writers produce, is seldom of any long duration. As they owe their existence to change of fashion, they commonly disappear when a new fashion becomes prevalent. The authors that in any nation last from age to age are very few, because there are very few that have any other claim to notice than that they catch hold on present curiosity, and gratify some accidental desire, or pr duce some temporary conveniency.

But however the writers of the day may de pair of future fame, they ought at least to fo bear any present mischief. Though they ca not arrive at eminent heights of excellence, th might keep themselves harmless. They mig take care to inform themselves before they a tempt to inform others, and exert the little i fluence which they have for honest purposes.

But such is the present state of our literatu that the ancient sage, who thought "a great bo a great evil," would now think the multitude books a multitude of evils. He would consid a bulky writer who engrossed a year, and swarm of pamphleteers who stole each an hou as equal wasters of human life, and would ma no other difference between them, than betwe a beast of prey and a flight of locusts.

No. 86.] Saturday, Dec. 8, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

I am a young lady newly married to a you gentleman. Our fortune is large, our min are vacant, our dispositions gay, our acquain ances numerous, and our relations splendid. W considered that marriage, like life, has its youth that the first year is the year of gayety a revel, and resolved to see the shows and feel t joys of London before the increase of our fami should confine us to domestic cares and dome tic pleasures.

Little time was spent in preparation; t coach was harnessed, and a few days broug us to London, and we alighted at a lodgi provided for us by Miss Biddy Trifle, a maid niece of my husband's father, where we fou apartments on a second floor, which my cous told us would serve us till we could please ou selves with a more commodious and elegant h bitation, and which she had taken at a very hi price, because it was not worth the while make a hard bargain for so short a time.

Here I intended to lie concealed till my ne clothes were made, and my new lodging hired but Miss Trifle had so industriously given n tice of our arrival to all our acquaintance, that had the mortification next day of seeing the do thronged with painted coaches and chairs wi coronets, and was obliged to receive all my hu band's relations on a second floor.

Inconveniences are often balanced by so advantage: the elevation of my apartments fu nished a subject for conversation, which, wit out some such help, we should have been

danger of wanting. Lady Stately told us how many years had passed since she climbed so many steps. Miss Airy ran to the window, and thought it charming to see the walkers so little in the street; and Miss Gentle went to try the same experiment, and screamed to find herself so far above the ground.

They all knew that we intended to remove, and, therefore, all gave me advice about a proper choice. One street was recommended for the purity of its air, another for its freedom from noise, another for its nearness to the park, another because there was but a step from it to all places of diversion, and another, because its inhabitants enjoyed at once the town and country.

I had civility enough to hear every recommendation with a look of curiosity while it was made, and of acquiesence when it was concluded, but in my heart felt no other desire than to be free from the disgrace of a second floor, and cared little where I should fix if the apartments were spacious and splendid.

Next day a chariot was hired, and Miss Trifle was despatched to find a lodging. She returned in the afternoon, with an account of a charming place, to which my husband went in the morning to make the contract. Being young and unexperienced, he took with him his friend Ned Quick, a gentleman of great skill in rooms and furniture, who sees, at a single glance, whatever there is to be commended or censured. Mr. Quick, at the first view of the house, declared that it could not be inhabited, for the sun in the afternoon shone with full glare on the windows of the dining room.

Miss Trifle went out again and soon discovered another lodging, which Mr. Quick went to survey, and found, that, whenever the wind should blow from the east, all the smoke of the city would be driven upon it.

A magnificent set of rooms was then found in one of the streets near Westminster-Bridge, which Miss Trifle preferred to any which she had yet seen; but Mr. Quick having mused upon it for a time, concluded that it would be too much exposed in the morning to the fogs that rise from the river.

Thus Mr. Quick proceeded to give us every day new testimonies of his taste and circumspection; sometimes the street was too narrow for a double range of coaches; sometimes it was an obscure place, not inhabited by persons of quality. Some places were dirty, and some crowded; in some houses the furniture was ill-suited, and in others the stairs were too narrow. He had such fertility of objections that Miss Trifle was at last tired, and desisted from all attempts for our accommodation.

In the meantime I have still continued to see my company on a second floor, and am asked twenty times a day when I am to leave those odious lodgings, in which I live tumultuously without pleasure, and expensively without honour. My husband thinks so highly of Mr. Quick, that he cannot be persuaded to remove without his approbation; and Mr. Quick thinks his reputation raised by the multiplication of difficulties.

In this distress to whom can I have recourse? I find my temper vitiated by daily disappointment, by the sight of pleasure which I cannot partake, and the possession of riches which I cannot enjoy. Dear Mr. Idler, inform my husband that he is trifling away, in superfluous vexation, the few months which custom has appropriated to delight; that matrimonial quarrels are not easily reconciled between those that have no children; that wherever we settle he must always find some inconvenience; but nothing is so much to be avoided as a perpetual state of inquiry and suspense.

I am, Sir,
Your humble Servant,
PEGGY HEARTLESS.

No. 87.] SATURDAY, DEC. 15, 1759.

OF what we know not, we can only judge by what we know. Every novelty appears more wonderful as it is more remote from any thing with which experience or testimony have hitherto acquainted us; and if it passes farther beyond the notions that we have been accustomed to form, it becomes at last incredible.

We seldom consider that human knowledge is very narrow, that national manners are formed by chance, that uncommon conjunctures of causes produce rare effects, or that what is impossible at one time or place may yet happen in another. It is always easier to deny than to inquire. To refuse credit confers for a moment an appearance of superiority, which every little mind is tempted to assume when it may be gained so cheaply as by withdrawing attention from evidence, and declining the fatigue of comparing probabilities. The most pertinacious and vehement demonstrator may be wearied in time by continual negation; and incredulity, which an old poet, in his address to Raleigh, calls "the wit of fools," obtunds the argument which it cannot answer, as woolsacks deaden arrows though they cannot repel them.

Many relations of travellers have been slighted as fabulous, till more frequent voyages have confirmed their veracity; and it may reasonably be imagined, that many ancient historians are unjustly suspected of falsehood, because our own times afford nothing that resembles what they tell.

Had only the writers of antiquity informed us that there was once a nation in which the

wife lay down upon the burning pile, only to mix her ashes with those of her husband, we should have thought it a tale to be told with that of Endymion's commerce with the Moon. Had only a single traveller related that many nations of the earth were black, we should have thought the accounts of the Negroes and of the Phœnix equally credible. But of black men the numbers are too great who are now repining under English cruelty, and the custom of voluntary cremation is not yet lost among the ladies of India.

Few narratives will either to men or women appear more incredible than the histories of the Amazons; of female nations of whose constitution it was the essential and fundamental law, to exclude men from all participation either of public affairs or domestic business; where female armies marched under female captains, female farmers gathered the harvest, female partners danced together, and female wits diverted one another.

Yet several sages of antiquity have transmitted accounts of the Amazons of Caucasus; and of the Amazons of America, who have given their name to the greatest river in the world. Condamine lately found such memorials, as can be expected among erratic and unlettered nations, where events are recorded only by tradition, and new swarms settling in the country from time to time, confuse and efface all traces of former times.

To die with husbands, or to live without them, are the two extremes which the prudence and moderation of European ladies have, in all ages, equally declined; they have never been allured to death by the kindness or civility of the politest nations, nor has the roughness and brutality of more savage countries ever provoked them to doom their male associates to irrevocable banishment. The Bohemian matrons are said to have made one short struggle for superiority, but instead of banishing the men, they contented themselves with condemning them to servile offices; and their constitution thus left imperfect, was quickly overthrown.

There is, I think, no class of English women from whom we are in any danger of Amazonian usurpation. The old maids seem nearest to independence, and most likely to be animated by revenge against masculine authority; they often speak of men with acrimonious vehemence, but it is seldom found that they have any settled hatred against them, and it is yet more rarely observed that they have any kindness for each other. They will not easily combine in any plot; and if they should ever agree to retire and fortify themselves in castles or in mountains, the sentinel will betray the passes in spite, and the garrison will capitulate upon easy terms, if the beseigers have handsome sword knots, and are well supplied with fringe and lace.

The gamesters, if they were united, would make a formidable body; and since they consider men only as beings that are to lose their money, they might live together without any wish for the officiousness of gallantry, or the delights of diversified conversation. But as nothing would hold them together but the hope of plundering one another, their government would fail from the defect of its principles, the men would need only to neglect them, and they would perish in a few weeks by a civil war.

I do not mean to censure the ladies of England as defective in knowledge or in spirit, when I suppose them unlikely to revive the military honours of their sex. The character of the ancient Amazons was rather terrible than lovely; the hand could not be very delicate that was only employed in drawing the bow and brandishing the battle-axe; their power was maintained by cruelty, their courage was deformed by ferocity, and their example only shows that men and women live best together.

No. 88.] SATURDAY, DEC. 22, 1759.

WHEN the philosophers of the last age were first congregated into the Royal Society, great expectations were raised of the sudden progress of useful arts; the time was supposed to be near, when engines should turn by a perpetual motion, and health be secured by the universal medicine; when learning should be facilitated by a real character, and commerce extended by ships which could reach their ports in defiance of the tempest.

But improvement is naturally slow. The Society met and parted without any visible diminution of the miseries of life. The gout and stone were still painful, the ground that was not ploughed brought no harvest, and neither oranges nor grapes would grow upon the hawthorn. At last, those who were disappointed began to be angry; those, likewise, who hated innovation were glad to gain an opportunity of ridiculing men who had depreciated, perhaps with too much arrogance, the knowledge of antiquity. And it appears from some of their earliest apologies, that the philosophers felt with great sensibility the unwelcome importunities of those, who were daily asking, "What have ye done?"

The truth is, that little had been done compared with what fame had been suffered to promise; and the question could only be answered by general apologies and by new hopes, which, when they were frustrated, gave a new occasion to the same vexatious inquiry.

This fatal question has disturbed the quiet of many other minds. He that in the latter part

of his life too strictly inquires what he has done, can very seldom receive from his own heart such an account as will give him satisfaction.

We do not, indeed, so often disappoint others as ourselves. We not only think more highly than others of our own abilities, but allow ourselves to form hopes which we never communicate, and please our thoughts with employments which none ever will allot us, and with elevations to which we are never expected to rise; and when our days and years are passed away in common business or common amusements, and we find, at last, that we have suffered our purposes to sleep till the time of action is past, we are reproached only by our own reflections; neither our friends nor our enemies wonder that we live and die like the rest of mankind; that we live without notice, and die without memorial; they know not what task we had proposed, and, therefore, cannot discern whether it is finished.

He that compares what he has done with what he has left undone, will feel the effect which must always follow the comparison of imagination with reality; he will look with contempt on his own unimportance, and wonder to what purpose he came into the world; he will repine that he shall leave behind him no evidence of his having been, that he has added nothing to the system of life, but has glided from youth to age among the crowd, without any effort for distinction.

Man is seldom willing to let fall the opinion of his own dignity, or to believe that he does little only because every individual is a very little being. He is better content to want diligence than power, and sooner confesses the depravity of his will than the imbecility of his nature.

From this mistaken notion of human greatness it proceeds, that many who pretend to have made great advances in wisdom so loudly declare that they despise themselves. If I had ever found any of the self-contemners much irritated or pained by the consciousness of their meanness, I should have given them consolation by observing, that a little more than nothing is as much as can be expected from a being, who, with respect to the multitudes about him is himself little more than nothing. Every man is obliged by the Supreme Master of the universe to improve all the opportunities of good which are afforded him, and to keep in continual activity such abilities as are bestowed upon him. But he has no reason to repine, though his abilities are small and his opportunities few. He that has improved the virtue, or advanced the happiness of one fellow-creature, he that has ascertained a single moral proposition, or added one useful experiment to natural knowledge, may be contented with his own performance, and, with respect to mortals like himself, may demand, like Augustus, to be dismissed at his departure with applause.

No. 89.] SATURDAY, DEC. 29, 1759.

Ἀνέχου καὶ ἀπέχου. EPICT.

How evil came into the world—for what reason it is that life is overspread with such boundless varieties of misery—why the only thinking being of this globe is doomed to think, merely to be wretched, and to pass his time from youth to age in fearing or in suffering calamities, is a question which philosophers have long asked, and which philosophy could never answer.

Religion informs us that misery and sin were produced together. The depravation of human will was followed by a disorder of the harmony of nature; and by that Providence which often places antidotes in the neighbourhood of poisons, vice was checked by misery, lest it should swell to universal and unlimited dominion.

A state of innocence and happiness is so remote from all that we have ever seen, that though we can easily conceive it possible, and may, therefore, hope to attain it, yet our speculations upon it must be general and confused. We can discover that where there is universal innocence, there will probably be universal happiness; for why should afflictions be permitted to infest beings who are not in danger of corruption from blessings, and where there is no use of terror nor cause of punishment? But in a world like ours, where our senses assault us, and our hearts betray us, we should pass on from crime to crime, heedless and remorseless, if misery did not stand in our way, and our own pains admonish us of our folly.

Almost all the moral good which is left among us, is the apparent effect of physical evil.

Goodness is divided by divines into soberness, righteousness, and godliness. Let it be examined how each of these duties would be practised if there were no physical evil to enforce it.

Sobriety, or temperance, is nothing but the forbearance of pleasure; and if pleasure was not followed by pain, who would forbear it? We see every hour those in whom the desire of present indulgence overpowers all sense of past and all foresight of future misery. In a remission of the gout, the drunkard returns to his wine, and the glutton to his feast; and if neither disease nor poverty were felt or dreaded, every one would sink down in idle sensuality, without any care of others, or of himself. To eat and drink, and lie down to sleep, would be the whole business of mankind.

Righteousness, or the system of social duty,

may be subdivided into justice and charity. Of justice one of the heathen sages has shown, with great acuteness, that it was impressed upon mankind only by the inconveniencies which injustice had produced. "In the first ages," says he, "men acted without any rule but the impulse of desire; they practised injustice upon others, and suffered it from others in their turn; but in time it was discovered, that the pain of suffering wrong was greater than the pleasure of doing it; and mankind, by a general compact, submitted to the restraint of laws, and resigned the pleasure to escape the pain."

Of charity it is superfluous to observe, that it could have no place if there were no want; for of a virtue which could not be practised, the omission could not be culpable. Evil is not only the occasional but the efficient cause of charity; we are incited to the relief of misery by the consciousness that we have the same nature with the sufferer, that we are in danger of the same distresses, and may sometimes implore the same assistance.

Godliness, or piety, is elevation of the mind towards the Supreme Being, and extension of the thoughts to another life. The other life is future, and the Supreme Being is invisible. None would have recourse to an invisible power, but that all other subjects had eluded their hopes. None would fix their attention upon the future, but that they are discontented with the present. If the senses were feasted with perpetual pleasure, they would always keep the mind in subjection. Reason has no authority over us, but by its power to warn us against evil.

In childhood, while our minds are yet unoccupied, religion is impressed upon them, and the first years of almost all who have been well educated are passed in a regular discharge of the duties of piety. But as we advance forward into the crowds of life, innumerable delights solicit our inclinations, and innumerable cares distract our attention; the time of youth is passed in noisy frolics; manhood is led on from hope to hope, and from project to project; the dissoluteness of pleasure, the inebriation of success, the ardour of expectation, and the vehemence of competition, chain down the mind alike to the present scene, nor is it remembered how soon this mist of trifles must be scattered, and the bubbles that float upon the rivulet of life be lost for ever in the gulph of eternity. To this consideration scarcely any man is awakened but by some pressing and resistless evil. The death of those from whom he derived his pleasures, or to whom he destined his possessions; some disease which shows him the vanity of all external acquisitions, or the gloom of age, which intercepts his prospects of long enjoyment, forces him to fix his hopes upon another state, and when he has contended with the tempests of life till his strength fails him, he flies, at last, to the shelter of religion.

That misery does not make all virtuous, experience too clearly informs us; but it is no less certain that of what virtue there is, misery produces far the greater part. Physical evil may be, therefore, endured with patience, since it is the cause of moral good; and patience itself is one virtue by which we are prepared for that state in which evil shall be no more.

No. 90.] Saturday, Jan. 5, 1760.

It is a complaint which has been made from time to time, and which seems to have lately become more frequent, that English oratory, however forcible in argument, or elegant in expression, is deficient and inefficacious, because our speakers want the grace and energy of action.

Among the numerous projectors who are desirous to refine our manners, and improve our faculties, some are willing to supply the deficiency of our speakers. We have had more than one extortion to study the neglected art of moving the passions, and have been encouraged to believe that our tongues, however feeble in themselves, may, by the help of our hands and legs, obtain an uncontrollable dominion over the most stubborn audience, animate the insensible, engage the careless, force tears from the obdurate, and money from the avaricious.

If by slight of hand, or nimbleness of foot, all these wonders can be performed, he that shall neglect to attain the free use of his limbs may be justly censured as criminally lazy. But I am afraid that no specimen of such effects will easily be shown. If I could once find a speaker in 'Change Alley raising the price of stocks by the power of persuasive gestures, I should very zealously recommend the study of his art; but having never seen any action by which language was much assisted, I have been hitherto inclined to doubt whether my countrymen are not blamed too hastily for their calm and motionless utterance.

Foreigners of many nations accompany their speech with action: but why should their example have more influence upon us than ours upon them? Customs are not to be changed but for better. Let those who desire to reform us show the benefits of the change proposed. When the Frenchman waves his hands, and writhes his body, in recounting the revolutions of a game at cards, or the Neapolitan, who tells the hour of the day, shows upon his fingers the number which he mentions, I do not perceive that their manual exercise is of much use, or that they leave any image more deeply im-

pressed by their bustle and vehemence of communication.

Upon the English stage there is no want of action, but the difficulty of making it at once various and proper, and its perpetual tendency to become ridiculous, notwithstanding all the advantages which art and show, and custom and prejudice can give it, may prove how little it can be admitted into any other place, where it can have no recommendation but from truth and nature.

The use of English oratory is only at the bar, in the parliament, and in the church. Neither the judges of our laws, nor the representatives of our people, would be much affected by laboured gesticulation, or believe any man the more because he rolled his eyes, or puffed his cheeks, or spread abroad his arms, or stamped the ground, or thumped his breast, or turned his eyes sometimes to the ceiling, and sometimes to the floor. Upon men intent only upon truth, the arm of an orator has little power; a credible testimony, or a cogent argument, will overcome all the art of modulation, and all the violence of contortion.

It is well known that, in the city which may be called the parent of oratory, all the arts of mechanical persuasion were banished from the court of supreme judicature. The judges of the Areopagus considered action and vociferation as a foolish appeal to the external senses, and unworthy to be practised before those who had no desire of idle amusement, and whose only pleasure was to discover right.

Whether action may not be yet of use in churches, where the preacher addresses a mingled audience, may deserve inquiry. It is certain that the senses are more powerful as the reason is weaker; and that he whose ears convey little to his mind, may sometimes listen with his eyes till truth may gradually take possession of his heart. If there be any use of gesticulation, it must be applied to the ignorant and rude, who will be more affected by vehemence than delighted by propriety. In the pulpit little action can be proper, for action can illustrate nothing but that to which it may be referred by nature or by custom. He that imitates by his hand a motion which he describes, explains it by a natural similitude; he that lays his hand on his breast, when he expresses pity, enforces his words by a customary allusion. But theology has few topics to which action can be appropriated; that action which is vague and indeterminate will at last settle into habit, and habitual peculiarities are quickly ridiculous.

It is, perhaps, the character of the English, to despise trifles; and that art may surely be accounted a trifle which is at once useless and ostentatious, which can seldom be practised with propriety, and which, as the mind is more cultivated, is less powerful. Yet as all innocent means are to be used for the propagation of truth, I would not deter those who are employed in preaching to common congregations from any practice which they may find persuasive; for, compared with the conversion of sinners, propriety and elegance are less than nothing.

No. 91.] Saturday, Jan. 12, 1760.

It is common to overlook what is near, by keeping the eye fixed upon something remote. In the same manner present opportunities are neglected, and attainable good is slighted, by minds busied in extensive ranges, and intent upon future advantages. Life, however short, is made still shorter by waste of time, and its progress towards happiness, though naturally slow, is yet retarded by unnecessary labour.

The difficulty of obtaining knowledge is universally confessed. To fix deeply in the mind the principles of science, to settle their limitations, and deduce the long succession of their consequences; to comprehend the whole compass of complicated systems, with all the arguments, objections, and solutions, and to reposite in the intellectual treasury the numberless facts, experiments, apophthegms, and positions, which must stand single in the memory, and of which none has any perceptible connection with the rest, is a task which, though undertaken with ardour, and pursued with diligence, must at last be left unfinished by the frailty of our nature.

To make the way to learning either less short or less smooth, is certainly absurd; yet this is the apparent effect of the prejudice which seems to prevail among us in favour of foreign authors, and of the contempt of our native literature, which this excursive curiosity must necessarily produce. Every man is more speedily instructed by his own language, than by any other; before we search the rest of the world for teachers, let us try whether we may not spare our trouble by finding them at home.

The riches of the English language are much greater than they are commonly supposed. Many useful and valuable books lie buried in shops and libraries, unknown and unexamined, unless some lucky compiler opens them by chance, and finds an easy spoil of wit and learning. I am far from intending to insinuate that other languages are not necessary to him who aspires to eminence, and whose whole life is devoted to study; but to him who reads only for amusement, or whose purpose is not to deck himself with the honours of literature, but to be qualified for domestic usefulness, and sit down content with subordinate reputation, we

have authors sufficient to fill up all the vacancies of his time, and gratify most of his wishes for information.

Of our poets I need say little, because they are, perhaps, the only authors to whom their country has done justice. We consider the whole succession from Spenser to Pope, as superior to any names which the continent can boast; and therefore the poets of other nations, however familiarly they may be sometimes mentioned, are very little read, except by those who design to borrow their beauties.

There is, I think, not one of the liberal arts which may not be competently learned in the English language. He that searches after mathematical knowledge may busy himself among his own countrymen, and will find one or other able to instruct him in every part of those abstruse sciences. He that is delighted with experiments, and wishes to know the nature of bodies from certain and visible effects, is happily placed where the mechanical philosophy was first established by a public institution, and from which it was spread to all other countries.

The more airy and elegant studies of philology and criticism have little need of any foreign help. Though our language not being very analogical, gives few opportunities for grammatical researches, yet we have not wanted authors who have considered the principles of speech; and with critical writings we abound sufficiently to enable pedantry to impose rules which can seldom be observed, and vanity to talk of books which are seldom read.

But our own language has, from the Reformation to the present time, been chiefly dignified and adorned by the works of our divines, who, considered as commentators, controvertists, or preachers, have undoubtedly left all other nations far behind them. No vulgar language can boast such treasures of theological knowledge, or such multitudes of authors at once learned, elegant, and pious. Other countries, and other communions, have authors perhaps equal in abilities and diligence to ours; but if we unite number with excellence, there is certainly no nation which must not allow us to be superior. Of morality little is necessary to be said, because it is comprehended in practical divinity, and is, perhaps, better taught in English sermons than in any other books ancient and modern. Nor shall I dwell on our excellence in metaphysical speculations, because he that reads the works of our divines will easily discover how far human subtilty has been able to penetrate.

Political knowledge is forced upon us by the form of our constitution; and all the mysteries of government are discovered in the attack or defence of every minister. The original law of society, the rights of subjects, and the prerogatives of kings, have been considered with the utmost nicety, sometimes profoundly investigated, and sometimes familiarly explained.

Thus copiously instructive is the English language; and thus needless is all recourse to foreign writers. Let us not, therefore, make our neighbours proud by soliciting help which we do not want, nor discourage our own industry by difficulties which we need not suffer.

No. 92.] Saturday, Jan. 19, 1760.

Whatever is useful or honourable will be desired by many who never can obtain it; and that which cannot be obtained when it is desired, artifice or folly will be diligent to counterfeit. Those to whom fortune has denied gold and diamonds, decorate themselves with stones and metals, which have something of the show, but little of the value; and every moral excellence, or intellectual faculty, has some vice or folly which imitates its appearance.

Every man wishes to be wise, and they who cannot be wise are almost always cunning. The less is the real discernment of those whom business or conversation brings together, the more illusions are practised; nor is caution ever so necessary as with associates or opponents of feeble minds.

Cunning differs from wisdom as twilight from open day. He that walks in the sunshine goes boldly forward by the nearest way; he sees that where the path is straight and even he may proceed in security, and where it is rough and crooked he easily complies with the turns and avoids the obstructions. But the traveller in the dusk fears more as he sees less; he knows there may be danger, and therefore suspects that he is never safe, tries every step before he fixes his foot, and shrinks at every noise, lest violence should approach him. Wisdom comprehends at once the end and the means, estimates easiness or difficulty, and is cautious or confident in due proportion. Cunning discovers little at a time, and has no other means of certainty than multiplication of stratagems and superfluity of suspicion. The man of cunning always considers that he can never be too safe, and therefore always keeps himself enveloped in a mist, impenetrable, as he hopes, to the eye of rivalry or curiosity.

Upon this principle Tom Double has formed a habit of eluding the most harmless question. What he has no inclination to answer, he pretends sometimes not to hear, and endeavours to divert the inquirer's attention by some other subject; but if he be pressed hard by repeated interrogation, he always evades a direct reply. Ask him whom he likes best on the stage; he

ready to tell that there are several excellent performers. Inquire when he was last at the coffee-house; he replies, that the weather has been bad lately. Desire him to tell the age of any of his acquaintance; he immediately mentions another who is older or younger.

Will Puzzle values himself upon a long reach. He foresees every thing before it will happen, though he never relates his prognostications till the event is past. Nothing has come to pass for these twenty years of which Mr. Puzzle had not given broad hints, and told at least that it was not proper to tell. Of those predictions, which every conclusion will equally verify, he always claims the credit, and wonders that his friends did not understand them. He supposes very truly, that much may be known which he knows not, and therefore pretends to know much of which he and all mankind are equally ignorant. I desired his opinion, yesterday, of the German war, and was told, that if the Prussians were well supported, something great may be expected; but that they have very powerful enemies to encounter; that the Austrian general has long experience, and the Russians are hardy and resolute; but that no human power is invincible. I then drew the conversation to our own affairs, and invited him to balance the probabilities of war and peace. He told me that war requires courage, and negotiation judgment, and that the time will come when it will be seen whether our skill in treaty is equal to our bravery in battle. To this general prattle he will appeal hereafter, and will demand to have his foresight applauded, whoever shall at last be conquered or victorious.

With Ned Smuggle all is a secret. He believes himself watched by observation and malignity on every side, and rejoices in the dexterity by which he has escaped snares that never were laid. Ned holds that a man is never deceived if he never trusts, and therefore will not tell the name of his tailor or his hatter. He rides out every morning for the air, and pleases himself with thinking that nobody knows where he has been. When he dines with a friend, he never goes to his house the nearest way, but walks up a bye street to perplex the scent. When he has a coach called, he never tells him at the door the true place to which he is going, but stops him in the way, that he may give him directions where nobody can hear him. The price of what he buys or sells is always concealed. He often takes lodgings in the country by a wrong name, and thinks that the world is wondering where he can be hid. All these transactions he registers in a book, which, he says, will some time or other amaze posterity.

It is remarked by Bacon, that many men try to procure reputation only by objections, of which, if they are once admitted, the nullity never appears, because the design is laid aside. "This false feint of wisdom," says he, "is the ruin of business." The whole power of cunning is privative; to say nothing, and to do nothing, is the utmost of its reach. Yet men thus narrow by nature, and mean by art, are sometimes able to rise by the miscarriages of bravery and the openness of integrity; and by watching failures, and snatching opportunities obtain advantages which belong properly to higher characters.

No. 93.] Saturday, Jan. 26, 1760.

Sam Softly was bread a sugar baker; but succeeding to a considerable estate on the death of his elder brother, he retired early from business, married a fortune, and settled in a country-house near Kentish-town. Sam, who formerly was a sportsman, and in his apprenticeship used to frequent Barnet races, keeps a high chaise, with a brace of seasoned geldings. During the summer months, the principal passion and employment of Sam's life is to visit, in this vehicle, the most eminent seats of the nobility and gentry in different parts of the kingdom, with his wife and some select friends. By these periodical excursions Sam gratifies many important purposes. He assists the several pregnancies of his wife; he shows his chaise to the best advantage; he indulges his insatiable curiosity for finery, which, since he has turned gentleman, has grown upon him to an extraordinary degree; he discovers taste and spirit; and, what is above all, he finds frequent opportunities of displaying to the party, at every house he sees, his knowledge of family connections. At first Sam was contented with driving a friend between London and his villa. Here he prided himself in pointing out the boxes of the citizens on each side of the road, with an accurate detail of their respective failures or successes in trade; and harangued on the several equipages that were accidentally passing. Here, too, the seats interspersed on the surrounding hills, afforded ample matter for Sam's curious discoveries. For one, he told his companion, a rich Jew had offered money; and that a retired widow was courted at another, by an eminent dry-salter. At the same time he discussed the utility, and enumerated the expenses, of the Islington turnpike. But Sam's ambition is at present raised to nobler undertakings.

When the happy hour of the annual expedition arrives, the seat of the chaise is furnished with "Ogilvy's Book of Roads," and a choice quantity of cold tongues. The most alarming disaster which can happen to our hero, who thinks he "throws a whip" admirably well, is to be overtaken in a road which affords no "quarter" for wheels. Indeed, few men possess more skill

or discernment for concerting and conducting a "party of pleasure." When a seat is to be surveyed, he has a peculiar talent in selecting some shady bench in the park, where the company may most commodiously refresh themselves with cold tongue, chicken, and French rolls; and is very sagacious in discovering what cool temple in the garden will be best adapted for drinking tea, brought for this purpose, in the afternoon, and from which the chaise may be resumed with the greatest convenience. In viewing the house itself, he is principally attracted by the chairs and beds, concerning the cost of which his minute inquiries generally gain the clearest information. An agate table easily diverts his eyes from the most capital strokes of Rubens, and a Turkey carpet has more charms than a Titian. Sam, however, dwells with some attention on the family portraits, particularly the most modern ones; and as this is a topic on which the house-keeper usually harangues in a more copious manner, he takes this opportunity of improving his knowledge of intermarriages. Yet, notwithstanding this appearance of satisfaction, Sam has some objection to all he sees. One house has too much gilding; at another, the chimney-pieces are all monuments; at a third, he conjectures that the beautiful canal must certainly be dried up in a hot summer. He despises the statues at Wilton, because he thinks he can see much better carving at Westminster Abbey. But there is one general objection which he is sure to make at almost every house, particularly at those which are most distinguished. He allows that all the apartments are extremely fine, but adds, with a sneer, that they are too fine to be inhabited.

Misapplied genius most commonly proves ridiculous. Had Sam, as nature intended, contentedly continued in the calmer and less conspicuous pursuits of sugar-baking, he might have been a respectable and useful character. At present he dissipates his life in a specious idleness, which neither improves himself nor his friends. Those talents which might have benefitted society, he exposes to contempt by false pretensions. He affects pleasures which he cannot enjoy, and is acquainted only with those subjects on which he has no right to talk, and which it is no merit to understand.

No. 94.] SATURDAY, FEB. 2, 1760.

IT is common to find young men ardent and diligent in the pursuit of knowledge; but the progress of life very often produces laxity and indifference; and not only those who are at liberty to choose their business and amusements, but those likewise whose professions engage them in literary inquiries, pass the latter part of their time without improvement, and spend the day rather in any other entertainment than that which they might find among their books.

This abatement of the vigour of curiosity is sometimes imputed to the insufficiency of learning. Men are supposed to remit their labours, because they find their labours to have been vain; and to search no longer after truth and wisdom, because they at last despair of finding them.

But this reason is for the most part very falsely assigned. Of learning, as of virtue, it may be affirmed, that it is at once honoured and neglected. Whoever forsakes it will for ever look after it with longing, lament the loss which he does not endeavour to repair, and desire the good which he wants resolution to seize and keep. The Idler never applauds his own idleness, nor does any man repent of the diligence of his youth.

So many hinderances may obstruct the acquisition of knowledge, that there is little reason for wondering that it is in a few hands. To the greater part of mankind the duties of life are inconsistent with much study; and the hours which they would spend upon letters must be stolen from their occupations and their families. Many suffer themselves to be lured by more sprightly and luxurious pleasures from the shades of contemplation, where they find seldom more than a calm delight, such as though greater than all others, its certainty and its duration being reckoned with its power of gratification, is yet easily quitted for some extemporary joy, which the present moment offers, and another, perhaps, will put out of reach.

It is the great excellence of learning, that it borrows very little from time or place; it is not confined to season or to climate, to cities, or to the country, but may be cultivated and enjoyed where no other pleasure can be obtained. But this quality, which constitutes much of its value, is one occasion of neglect; what may be done at all times with equal propriety is deferred from day to day, till the mind is gradually reconciled to the omission, and the attention is turned to other objects. Thus habitual idleness gains too much power to be conquered, and the soul shrinks from the idea of intellectual labour and intenseness of meditation.

That those who profess to advance learning sometimes obstruct it, cannot be denied; the continual multiplication of books not only distracts choice, but disappoints inquiry. To him that has moderately stored his mind with images, few writers afford any novelty; or what little they have to add to the common stock of learning, is so buried in the mass of general notions, that like silver mingled with the ore of lead, it is too little to pay for the labour of separation;

and he that has often been deceived by the promise of a title, at last grows weary of examining, and is tempted to consider all as equally fallacious.

There are, indeed, some repetitions always lawful, because they never deceive. He that writes the history of past times, undertakes only to decorate known facts by new beauties of method or style, or at most to illustrate them by his own reflections. The author of a system, whether moral or physical, is obliged to nothing beyond care of selection and regularity of disposition. But there are others who claim the name of authors merely to disgrace it, and fill the world with volumes only to bury letters in their own rubbish. The traveller who tells, in a pompous folio, that he saw the Pantheon at Rome, and the Medicean Venus at Florence; the natural historian, who, describing the productions of a narrow island, recounts all that it has in common with every other part of the world; the collector of antiquities, that accounts every thing a curiosity which the ruins of Herculaneum happen to emit, though an instrument already shown in a thousand repositories, or a cup common to the ancients, the moderns, and all mankind, may be justly censured as the persecutors of students, and the thieves of that time which never can be restored.

No. 95.] Saturday, Feb. 9, 1760.

TO THE IDLER.

Mr. Idler,

It is, I think, universally agreed, that seldom any good is gotten by complaint; yet we find that few forbear to complain but those who are afraid of being reproached as the authors of their own miseries. I hope, therefore, for the common permission to lay my case before you and your readers, by which I shall disburden my heart, though I cannot hope to receive either assistance or consolation.

I am a trader, and owe my fortune to frugality and industry. I began with little; but by the easy and obvious method of spending less than I gain, I have every year added something to my stock, and expect to have a seat in the common-council, at the next election.

My wife, who was as prudent as myself, died six years ago, and left me one son and one daughter, for whose sake I resolved never to marry again, and rejected the overtures of Mrs. Squeeze, the broker's widow, who had ten thousand pounds at her own disposal.

I bred my son at a school near Islington; and when he had learned arithmetic, and wrote a good hand, I took him into the shop, designing, in about ten years, to retire to Stratford or Hackney, and leave him established in the business.

For four years he was diligent and sedate, entered the shop before it was opened, and when it was shut always examined the pins of the window. In any intermission of business it was his constant practice to peruse the ledger. I had always great hopes of him, when I observed how sorrowfully he would shake his head over a bad debt, and how eagerly he would listen to me when I told him that he might at one time or other become an alderman.

We lived together with mutual confidence, till unluckily a visit was paid him by two of his school-fellows who were placed, I suppose, in the army, because they were fit for nothing better; they came glittering in their military dress, accosted their old acquaintance, and invited him to a tavern, where, as I have been since informed, they ridiculed the meanness of commerce, and wondered how a youth of spirit could spend the prime of his life behind a counter.

I did not suspect any mischief. I knew my son was never without money in his pocket, and was better able to pay his reckoning than his companions; and expected to see him return triumphing in his own advantages, and congratulating himself that he was not one of those who expose their heads to a musket bullet for three shillings a day.

He returned sullen and thoughtful; I supposed him sorry for the hard fortune of his friends; and tried to comfort him by saying that the war would soon be at an end, and that, if they had any honest occupation, half-pay would be a pretty help. He looked at me with indignation; and snatching up his candle, told me, as he went up stairs, that "he hoped to see a battle yet."

Why he should hope to see a battle I could not conceive, but let him go quietly to sleep away his folly. Next day he made two mistakes in the first bill, disobliged a customer by surly answers, and dated all his entries in the journal in a wrong month. At night he met his military companions again, came home late, and quarrelled with the maid.

From this fatal interview he has gradually lost all his laudable passions and desires. He soon grew useless in the shop, where, indeed, I did not willingly trust him any longer; for he often mistook the price of goods to his own loss, and once gave a promissory note instead of a receipt.

I did not know to what degree he was corrupted, till an honest tailor gave me notice that he had bespoke a laced suit, which was to be left for him at a house kept by the sister of one of my journeymen. I went to this clandestine lodging, and found, to my amazement, all the ornaments of a fine gentleman, which he has

taken upon credit, or purchased with money subducted from the shop.

This detection has made him desperate. He now openly declares his resolution to be a gentleman; says that his soul is too great for a counting-house; ridicules the conversation of city taverns; talks of new plays, and boxes, and ladies; gives dutchesses for his toasts; carries silver, for readiness, in his waistcoat pocket; and comes home at night in a chair, with such thunders at the door as have more than once brought the watchmen from their stands.

Little expenses will not hurt us; and I could forgive a few juvenile frolics, if he would be careful of the main: but his favourite topic is contempt of money, which he says, is of no use but to be spent. Riches, without honour, he holds empty things; and once told me to my face, that wealthy plodders were only purveyors to men of spirit.

He is always impatient in the company of his old friends, and seldom speaks till he is warmed with wine; he then entertains us with accounts that we do not desire to hear, of intrigues among lords and ladies, and quarrels between officers of the guards; shows a miniature on his snuff-box, and wonders that any man can look upon the new dancer without rapture.

All this is very provoking; and yet all this might be borne, if the boy could support his pretensions. But, whatever he may think, he is yet far from the accomplishments which he has endeavoured to purchase at so dear a rate. I have watched him in public places. He sneaks in like a man that knows he is where he should not be; he is proud to catch the slightest salutation, and often claims it when it is not intended. Other men receive dignity from dress, but my booby looks always more meanly for his finery. Dear Mr. Idler, tell him what must at last become of a fop, whom pride will not suffer to be a trader, and whom long habits in a shop forbid to be a gentleman.

I am, Sir, &c.

Tim Wainscot.

No. 96.] Saturday, Feb. 16, 1760.

Hacho, a king of Lapland, was in his youth the most renowned of the Northern warriors. His martial achievements remain engraved on a pillar of flint in the rocks of Hanga, and are to this day solemnly carolled to the harp by the Laplanders, at the fires with which they celebrate their nightly festivities. Such was his intrepid spirit, that he ventured to pass the lake Vether to the isle of Wizards, where he descended alone into the dreary vault in which a magician had been kept bound for six ages, and read the Gothic characters inscribed on his brazen mace. His eye was so piercing, that, as ancient chronicles report, he could blunt the weapons of his enemies only by looking at them. At twelve years of age he carried an iron vessel of a prodigious weight, for the length of five furlongs, in the presence of all the chiefs of his father's castle.

Nor was he less celebrated for his prudence and wisdom. Two of his proverbs are yet remembered and repeated among Laplanders. To express the vigilance of the Supreme Being, he was wont to say, "Odin's belt is always buckled." To show that the most prosperous condition of life is often hazardous, his lesson was, "When you slide on the smoothest ice, beware of pits beneath." He consoled his countrymen, when they were once preparing to leave the frozen desarts of Lapland, and resolved to seek some warmer climate, by telling them, that the Eastern nations, notwithstanding their boasted fertility, passed every night amidst the horrors of anxious apprehension, and were inexpressibly affrighted, and almost stunned, every morning, with the noise of the sun while he was rising.

His temperance and severity of manner were his chief praise. In his early years he never tasted wine; nor would he drink out of a painted cup. He constantly slept in his armour, with his spear in his hand; nor would he use a battle-axe whose handle was inlaid with brass. He did not, however, persevere in this contempt of luxury; nor did he close his days with honour.

One evening, after hunting the gulos, or wild dog, being bewildered in a solitary forest, and having passed the fatigues of the day without any interval of refreshment, he discovered a large store of honey in the hollow of a pine. This was a dainty which he had never tasted before; and being at once faint and hungry, he fed greedily upon it. From this unusual and delicious repast he received so much satisfaction, that, at his return home, he commanded honey to be served up at his table every day. His palate, by degrees, became refined and vitiated; he began to lose his native relish for simple fare, and contracted a habit of indulging himself in delicacies; he ordered the delightful gardens of his castle to be thrown open, in which the most luscious fruits had been suffered to ripen and decay, unobserved and untouched, for many revolving autumns, and gratified his appetite with luxurious desserts. At length he found it expedient to introduce wine, as an agreeable improvement; or a necessary ingredient to his new way of living; and having once tasted it, he was tempted by little and little, to give a loose to the excesses of intoxication. His general simplicity of life was changed; he per-

fumed his apartments by burning the wood of the most aromatic fir, and commanded his helmet to be ornamented with beautiful rows of the teeth of the rein-deer. Indolence and effeminacy stole upon him by pleasing and imperceptible gradations, relaxed the sinews of his resolution, and extinguished his thirst of military glory.

While Hacho was thus immersed in pleasure and in repose, it was reported to him, one morning, that the preceding night a disastrous omen had been discovered, and that bats and hideous birds had drank up the oil which nourished the perpetual lamp in the temple of Odin. About the same time, a messenger arrived to tell him, that the king of Norway had invaded his kingdom with a formidable army. Hacho, terrified as he was with the omen of the night, and enervated with indulgence, roused himself from his voluptuous lethargy, and recollecting some faint and few sparks of veteran valour, marched forward to meet him. Both armies joined battle in the forest where Hacho had been lost after hunting; and it so happened, that the king of Norway challenged him to single combat, near the place where he had tasted the honey. The Lapland chief, languid and long disused to arms, was soon overpowered; he fell to the ground; and before his insulting adversary struck his head from his body, uttered this exclamation, which the Laplanders still use as an early lesson to their children: "The vicious man should date his destruction from the first temptation. How justly do I fall a sacrifice to sloth and luxury, in the place where I first yielded to those allurements which seduced me to deviate from temperance and innocence! the honey which I tasted in this forest, and not the hand of the king of Norway, conquers Hacho."

No. 97.] Saturday, Feb. 23, 1760.

It may, I think, be justly observed, that few books disappoint their readers more than the narrations of travellers. One part of mankind is naturally curious to learn the sentiments, manners, and condition of the rest; and every mind that has leisure or power to extend its views, must be desirous of knowing in what proportion Providence has distributed the blessings of nature, or the advantages of art, among the several nations of the earth.

This general desire easily procures readers to every book from which it can expect gratification. The adventurer upon unknown coasts, and the describer of distant regions, is always welcomed as a man who has laboured for the pleasure of others, and who is able to enlarge our knowledge and rectify our opinions; but when the volume is opened, nothing is found but such general accounts as leave no distinct idea behind them, or such minute enumerations as few can read with either profit or delight.

Every writer of travels should consider, that, like all other authors, he undertakes either to instruct or please, or to mingle pleasure with instruction. He that instructs, must offer to the mind something to be imitated, or something to be avoided; he that pleases must offer new images to his reader, and enable him to form a tacit comparison of his own state with that of others.

The greater part of travellers tell nothing, because their method of travelling supplies them with nothing to be told. He that enters a town at night and surveys it in the morning, and then hastens away to another place, and gucsses at the manners of the inhabitants by the entertainment which his inn afforded him, may please himself for a time with a hasty change of scenes, and a confused remembrance of palaces and churches; he may gratify his eye with a variety of landscapes, and regale his palate with a succession of vintages: but let him be contented to please himself without endeavouring to disturb others. Why should he record excursions by which nothing could be learned, or wish to make a show of knowledge, which, without some power of intuition unknown to other mortals, he never could attain?

Of those who crowd the world with their itineraries, some have no other purpose than to describe the face of the country; those who sit idle at home, and are curious to know what is done or suffered in distant countries, may be informed by one of these wanderers, that on a certain day he set out early with the caravan, and in the first hour's march saw, towards the south, a hill covered with trees, then passed over a stream, which ran northward with a swift course, but which is probably dry in the summer months; that an hour after he saw something to the right which looked at a distance like a castle with towers, but which he discovered afterward to be a craggy rock; that he then entered a valley, in which he saw several trees tall and flourishing, watered by a rivulet not marked in the maps, of which he was not able to learn the name; that the road afterward grew stony, and the country uneven, where he observed among the hills many hollows worn by torrents, and was told that the road was passable only part of the year, that going on they found the remains of a building, once perhaps a fortress to secure the pass, or to restrain the robbers, of which the present inhabitants can give no other account than that it is haunted by fairies; that they went to dine at the foot of a rock, and travelled the rest of the day along the banks of a river, from which the road turned aside towards evening, and brought

them within sight of a village, which was once a considerable town, but which afforded them neither good victuals nor commodious lodging.

Thus he conducts his reader through wet and dry, over rough and smooth, without incidents, without reflection: and, if he obtains his company for another day, will dismiss him again at night, equally fatigued with a like succession of rocks and streams, mountains and ruins.

This is the common style of those sons of enterprise, who visit savage countries, and range through solitude and desolation; who pass a desert, and tell that it is sandy; who cross a valley, and find that it is green. There are others of more delicate sensibility, that visit only the realms of elegance and softness; that wander through Italian palaces, and amuse the gentle reader with catalogues of pictures; that hear masses in magnificent churches, and recount the number of the pillars or variegations of the pavement. And there are yet others, who, in disdain of trifles, copy inscriptions elegant and rude, ancient and modern; and transcribe into their book the walls of every edifice, sacred or civil. He that reads these books must consider his labour as its own reward; for he will find nothing on which attention can fix, or which memory can retain.

He that would travel for the entertainment of others, should remember that the great object of remark is human life. Every nation has something particular in its manufactures, its works of genius, its medicines, its agriculture, its customs, and its policy. He only is a useful traveller, who brings home something by which his country may be benefitted; who procures some supply of want, or some mitigation of evil, which may enable his readers to compare their condition with that of others, to improve it whenever it is worse, and whenever it is better to enjoy it.

No. 98.] Saturday, March 1, 1760.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

I am the daughter of a gentleman, who during his life-time enjoyed a small income which arose from a pension from the court, by which he was enabled to live in a genteel and comfortable manner.

By the situation of life in which he was placed, he was frequently introduced into the company of those of much greater fortunes than his own, among whom he was always received with complaisance, and treated with civility.

At six years of age I was sent to a boarding-school in the country, at which I continued till my father's death. This melancholy event happened at a time when I was by no means of a sufficient age to manage for myself, while the passions of youth continued unsubdued, and before experience could guide my sentiments or my actions.

I was then taken from school by an uncle, to the care of whom my father had committed me on his dying bed. With him I lived several years; and as he was unmarried, the management of his family was committed to me. In this character I always endeavoured to acquit myself, if not with applause, at least without censure.

At the age of twenty-one, a young gentleman of some fortune paid his addresses to me, and offered me terms of marriage. This proposal I should readily have accepted, because from vicinity of residence, and from many opportunities of observing his behaviour, I had in some sort contracted an affection for him. My uncle, for what reason I do not know, refused his consent to this alliance, though it would have been complied with by the father of the young gentleman; and, as the future condition of my life was wholly dependant on him, I was not willing to disoblige him, and therefore, though unwillingly, declined the offer.

My uncle, who possessed a plentiful fortune, frequently hinted to me in conversation, that at his death I should be provided for in such a manner that I should be able to make my future life comfortable and happy. As this promise was often repeated, I was the less anxious about any provision for myself. In a short time my uncle was taken ill, and though all possible means were made use of for his recovery, in a few days he died.

The sorrow arising from the loss of a relation, by whom I had been always treated with the greatest kindness, however grievous, was not the worst of my misfortunes. As he enjoyed an almost uninterrupted state of health, he was the less mindful of his dissolution, and died intestate; by which means his whole fortune devolved to a nearer relation, the heir at law.

Thus excluded from all hopes of living in the manner with which I have so long flattered myself, I am doubtful what method I shall take to procure a decent maintenance. I have been educated in a manner that has set me above a state of servitude, and my situation renders me unfit for the company of those with whom I have hitherto conversed. But, though disappointed in my expectations, I do not despair. I will hope that assistance may still be obtained for innocent distress, and that friendship, though rare, is yet not impossible to be found.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

Sophia Heedful

No. 99.] Saturday, March 8, 1760.

As Ortogrul of Basra was one day wandering along the streets of Bagdat, musing on the varieties of merchandise which the shops offered to his view, and observing the different occupations which busied the multitudes on every side, he was awakened from the tranquillity of meditation by a crowd that obstructed his passage. He raised his eyes, and saw the chief vizier, who having returned from the divan, was entering his palace.

Ortogrul mingled with the attendants, and being supposed to have some petition for the vizier, was permitted to enter. He surveyed the spaciousness of the apartments, admired the walls hung with golden tapestry, and the floors covered with silken carpets, and despised the simple neatness of his own little habitation.

Surely, said he to himself, this palace is the seat of happiness, where pleasure succeeds to pleasure, and discontent and sorrow can have no admission. Whatever nature has provided for the delight of sense, is here spread forth to be enjoyed. What can mortals hope or imagine, which the master of this palace has not obtained? The dishes of luxury cover his table, the voice of harmony lulls him in his bowers; he breathes the fragrance of the groves of Java, and sleeps upon the down of the cygnets of Ganges. He speaks, and his mandate is obeyed; he wishes, and his wish is gratified; all whom he sees obey him, and all whom he hears flatter him. How different, Ortogrul, is thy condition, who art doomed to the perpetual torments of unsatisfied desire, and who has no amusement in thy power that can withhold thee from thy own reflections! They tell thee that thou art wise; but what does wisdom avail with poverty? None will flatter the poor, and the wise have very little power of flattering themselves. That man is surely the most wretched of the sons of wretchedness, who lives with his own faults and follies always before him, who has none to reconcile him to himself by praise and veneration. I have long sought content, and have not found it; I will from this moment endeavour to be rich.

Full of his new resolution, he shuts himself in his chamber for six months, to deliberate how he should grow rich; he sometimes proposed to offer himself as a counsellor to one of the kings of India, and sometimes resolved to dig for diamonds in the mines of Golconda. One day, after some hours passed in violent fluctuation of opinion, sleep insensibly seized him in his chair; he dreamed that he was ranging a desert country in search of some one that might teach him to grow rich; and as he stood on the top of a hill shaded with cypress, in doubt whether to direct his steps, his father appeared on a sudden standing before him. Ortogrul, said the old man, I know thy perplexity; listen to thy father; turn thine eye on the opposite mountain. Ortogrul looked, and saw a torrent tumbling down the rocks, roaring with the noise of thunder, and scattering its foam on the impending woods. Now, said his father, behold the valley that lies between the hills. Ortogrul looked, and espied a little well out of which issued a small rivulet. Tell me now, said his father, dost thou wish for sudden affluence, that may pour upon thee like the mountain torrent, or for a slow and gradual increase, resembling the rill gliding from the well? Let me be quickly rich, said Ortogrul; let the golden stream be quick and violent. Look round thee, said his father, once again. Ortogrul looked, and perceived the channel of the torrent dry and dusty; but following the rivulet from the well, he traced it to a wide lake, which the supply, slow and constant, kept always full. He waked, and determined to grow rich by silent profit and persevering industry.

Having sold his patrimony, he engaged in merchandise, and in twenty years purchased lands, on which he raised a house, equal in sumptuousness to that of the vizier, to which he invited all the ministers of pleasure, expecting to enjoy all the felicity which he had imagined riches able to afford. Leisure soon made him weary of himself, and he longed to be persuaded that he was great and happy. He was courteous and liberal; he gave all that approached him hopes of pleasing him, and all who should please him hopes of being rewarded. Every art of praise was tried, and every source of adulatory fiction was exhausted. Ortogrul heard his flatterers without delight, because he found himself unable to believe them. His own heart told him its frailties, his own understanding reproached him with his faults. How long, said he, with a deep sigh, have I been labouring in vain to amass wealth which at last is useless! Let no man hereafter wish to be rich, who is already too wise to be flattered.

No. 100.] Saturday, March 15, 1760.

TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

The uncertainty and defects of language have produced very frequent complaints among the learned; yet there still remain many words among us undefined, which are very necessary to be rightly understood, and which produce very mischievous mistakes when they are erroneously interpreted.

I lived in a state of celibacy beyond the usual time. In the hurry first of pleasure, and afterwards of business, I felt no want of a domestic companion; but becoming weary of labour, I soon grew more weary of idleness, and thought it reasonable to follow the custom of life, and to seek some solace of my cares in female tenderness, and some amusement of my leisure in female cheerfulness.

The choice which has been long delayed is commonly made at last with great caution. My resolution was, to keep my passions neutral, and to marry only in compliance with my reason. I drew upon a page of my pocket-book a scheme of all female virtues and vices, with the vices which border upon every virtue, and the virtues which are allied to every vice. I considered that wit was sarcastic, and magnanimity imperious; that avarice was economical, and ignorance obsequious; and having estimated the good and evil of every quality, employed my own diligence, and that of my friends, to find the lady in whom nature and reason had reached that happy mediocrity which is equally remote from exuberance and deficience.

Every woman had her admirers and her censurers; and the expectations which one raised were by another quickly depressed; yet there was one in whose favour almost all suffrages concurred. Miss Gentle was universally allowed to be a good sort of woman. Her fortune was not large, but so prudently managed, that she wore finer clothes, and saw more company, than many who were known to be twice as rich. Miss Gentle's visits were every where welcome; and whatever family she favoured with her company, she always left behind her such a degree of kindness as recommended her to others. Every day extended her acquaintance; and all who knew her declared that they never met with a better sort of woman.

To Miss Gentle I made my addresses, and was received with great equality of temper. She did not in the days of courtship assume the privilege of imposing rigorous commands, or resenting slight offences. If I forgot any of her injunctions, I was gently reminded; if I missed the minute of appointment, I was easily forgiven. I foresaw nothing in marriage but a halcyon calm, and longed for the happiness which was to be found in the inseparable society of a good sort of woman.

The jointure was soon settled by the intervention of friends, and the day came in which Miss Gentle was made mine for ever. The first month was passed easily enough in receiving and repaying the civilities of our friends. The bride practised with great exactness all the niceties of ceremony, and distributed her notice in the most punctilious proportions to the friends who surrounded us with their happy auguries.

But the time soon came when we were left to ourselves, and were to receive our pleasures from each other, and I then began to perceive that I was not formed to be much delighted by a good sort of woman. Her great principle is, that the orders of a family must not be broken. Every hour of the day has its employment inviolably appropriated; nor will any importunity persuade her to walk in the garden at the time which she has devoted to her needlework, or to sit up stairs in that part of the forenoon which she has accustomed herself to spend in the back parlour. She allows herself to sit half an hour after breakfast, and an hour after dinner; while I am talking or reading to her, she keeps her eye upon her watch, and when the minute of departure comes, will leave an argument unfinished, or the intrigue of a play unravelled. She once called me to supper when I was watching an eclipse, and summoned me at another time to bed when I was going to give directions at a fire.

Her conversation is so habitually cautious, that she never talks to me but in general terms, as to one whom it is dangerous to trust. For discriminations of character she has no names: all whom she mentions are honest men and agreeable women. She smiles not by sensation, but by practice. Her laughter is never excited but by a joke, and her notion of a joke is not very delicate. The repetition of a good joke does not weaken its effect; if she has laughed once, she will laugh again.

She is an enemy to nothing but ill-nature and pride; but she has frequent reason to lament that they are so frequent in the world. All who are not equally pleased with the good and the bad, with the elegant and gross, with the witty and the dull, all who distinguish excellence from defect, she considers as ill-natured; and she condemns as proud all who repress impertinence or quell presumption, or expect respect from any other eminence than that of fortune, to which she is always willing to pay homage.

There are none whom she openly hates, for if once she suffers, or believes herself to suffer, any contempt or insult, she never dismisses it from her mind, but takes all opportunities to tell how easily she can forgive. There are none whom she loves much better than others; for when any of her acquaintance decline in the opinion of the world, she always finds it inconvenient to visit them; her affection continues unaltered, but it is impossible to be intimate with the whole town.

She daily exercises her benevolence by pitying every misfortune that happens to every family within her circle of notice; she is in hourly terrors lest one should catch cold in the rain, and another be frighted by the high wind.

Her charity she shows by lamenting that so many poor wretches should languish in the streets, and by wondering what the great can think on that they do so little good with such large estates.

Her house is elegant and her table dainty, though she has little taste of elegance, and is wholly free from vicious luxury; but she comforts herself that nobody can say that her house is dirty, or that her dishes are not well dressed.

This, Mr. Idler, I have found by long experience to be the character of a good sort of woman, which I have sent you for the information of those by whom a "good sort of a woman," and a "good woman," may happen to be used as equivalent terms, and who may suffer by the mistake, like

Your humble servant,

TIM WARNER.

No. 101.] SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 1760.

OMAR, the son of Hassan, had passed seventy-five years in honour and prosperity. The favour of three successive califs had filled his house with gold and silver; and whenever he appeared, the benedictions of the people proclaimed his passage.

Terrestrial happiness is of short continuance. The brightness of the flame is wasting its fuel; the fragrant flower is passing away in its own odours. The vigour of Omar began to fail, the curls of beauty fell from his head, strength departed from his hands, and agility from his feet. He gave back to the calif the keys of trust and the seals of secrecy; and sought no other pleasure for the remains of life than the converse of the wise, and the gratitude of the good.

The powers of his mind were yet unimpaired. His chamber was filled by visitants, eager to catch the dictates of experience, and officious to pay the tribute of admiration. Caled, the son of the viceroy of Egypt, entered every day early, and retired late. He was beautiful and eloquent; Omar admired his wit and loved his docility. Tell me, said Caled, thou to whose voice nations have listened, and whose wisdom is known to the extremities of Asia, tell me how I may resemble Omar the prudent. The arts by which you have gained power and preserved it, are to you no longer necessary or useful; impart to me the secret of your conduct, and teach me the plan upon which your wisdom has built your fortune.

Young man, said Omar, it is of little use to form plans of life. When I took my first survey of the world, in my twentieth year, having considered the various conditions of mankind, in the hour of solitude I said thus to myself, leaning against a cedar which spread its branches over my head:—Seventy years are allowed to man; I have yet fifty remaining: ten years I will allot to the attainment of knowledge, and ten I will pass in foreign countries; I shall be learned, and therefore shall be honoured; every city will shout at my arrival, and every student will solicit my friendship. Twenty years thus passed will store my mind with images which I shall be busy through the rest of my life in combining and comparing. I shall revel in inexhaustible accumulations of intellectual riches; I shall find new pleasures for every moment, and shall never more be weary of myself. I will, however, not deviate too far from the beaten track of life, but will try what can be found in female delicacy. I will marry a wife beautiful as the Houries, and wise as Zobeide; with her I will live twenty years within the suburbs of Bagdat, in every pleasure that wealth can purchase, and fancy can invent. I will then retire to a rural dwelling, pass my last days in obscurity and contemplation, and lie silently down on the bed of death. Through my life it shall be my settled resolution, that I will never depend upon the smile of princes; that I will never stand exposed to the artifices of courts; I will never pant for public honours, nor disturb my quiet with the affairs of state. Such was my scheme of life, which I impressed indelibly upon my memory.

The first part of my ensuing time was to be spent in search of knowledge; and I know not how I was diverted from my design. I had no visible impediments without, nor any ungovernable passions within. I regarded knowledge as the highest honour and the most engaging pleasure; yet day stole upon day, and month glided after month, till I found that seven years of the first ten had vanished, and left nothing behind them. I now postponed my purpose of travelling; for why should I go abroad while so much remained to be learned at home? I immured myself for four years, and studied the laws of the empire. The fame of my skill reached the judges; I was found able to speak upon doubtful questions, and was commanded to stand at the footstool of the calif. I was heard with attention, I was consulted with confidence, and the love of praise fastened on my heart.

I still wished to see distant countries, listened with rapture to the relations of travellers, and resolved some time to ask my dismission, that I might feast my soul with novelty; but my presence was always necessary, and the stream of business hurried me along. Sometimes I was afraid lest I should be charged with ingratitude;

but I still proposed to travel, and therefore would not confine myself by marriage.

In my fiftieth year I began to suspect that the time of travelling was past, and thought it best to lay hold on the felicity yet in my power, and indulge myself in domestic pleasures. But at fifty no man easily finds a woman beautiful as the Houries, and wise as Zobeide. I inquired and rejected, consulted and deliberated, till the sixty-second year made me ashamed of gazing upon girls. I had now nothing left but retirement, and for retirement I never found a time, till disease forced me from public employment.

Such was my scheme, and such has been its consequence. With an insatiable thirst for knowledge, I trifled away the years of improvement; with a restless desire of seeing different countries, I have always resided in the same city; with the highest expectation of connubial felicity, I have lived unmarried; and with unalterable resolutions of contemplative retirement, I am going to die within the walls of Bagdat.

No. 102.] SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 1760.

IT very seldom happens to man that his business is his pleasure. What is done from necessity is so often to be done when against the present inclination, and so often fills the mind with anxiety, that an habitual dislike steals upon us, and we shrink involuntarily from the remembrance of our task. This is the reason why almost every one wishes to quit his employment; he does not like another state, but is disgusted with his own.

From this unwillingness to perform more than is required of that which is commonly performed with reluctance, it proceeds that few authors write their own lives. Statesmen, courtiers, ladies, generals, and seamen, have given to the world their own stories, and the events with which their different stations have made them acquainted. They retired to the closet as to a place of quiet and amusement, and pleased themselves with writing, because they could lay down the pen whenever they were weary. But the author, however conspicuous, or however important, either in the public eye or in his own, leaves his life to be related by his successors, for he cannot gratify his vanity but by sacrificing his ease.

It is commonly supposed, that the uniformity of a studious life affords no matter for narration: but the truth is, that of the most studious life a great part passes without study. An author partakes of the common condition of humanity; he is born and married like another man; he has hopes and fears, expectations and disappointments, griefs and joys, and friends and enemies, like a courtier or a statesman; nor can I conceive why his affairs should not excite curiosity as much as the whisper of a drawing-room, or the factions of a camp.

Nothing detains the reader's attention more powerfully than deep involutions of distress, or sudden vicissitudes of fortune; and these might be abundantly afforded by memoirs of the sons of literature. They are entangled by contracts which they know not how to fulfil, and obliged to write on subjects which they do not understand. Every publication is a new period of time, from which some increase or declension of fame is to be reckoned. The gradations of a hero's life are from battle to battle, and of an author's from book to book.

Success and miscarriage have the same effects in all conditions. The prosperous are feared, hated, and flattered; and the unfortunate avoided, pitied, and despised. No sooner is a book published than the writer may judge of the opinion of the world. If his acquaintance press round him in public places or salute him from the other side of the street; if invitations to dinner come thick upon him, and those with whom he dines keep him to supper; if the ladies turn to him when his coat is plain, and the footmen serve him with attention and alacrity; he may be sure that his work has been praised by some leader of literary fashions.

Of declining reputation the symptoms are not less easily observed. If the author enters a coffee-house, he has a box to himself; if he calls at a bookseller's, the boy turns his back; and, what is the most fatal of all prognostics, authors will visit him in a morning, and talk to him hour after hour of the malevolence of critics, the neglect of merit, the bad taste of the age, and the candour of posterity.

All this, modified and varied by accident and custom, would form very amusing scenes of biography, and might recreate many a mind which is very little delighted with conspiracies or battles, intrigues of a court, or debates of a parliament; to this might be added all the changes of the countenance of a patron, traced from the first glow which flattery raises in his cheek, through ardour of fondness, vehemence of promise, magnificence of praise, excuse of delay, and lamentation of inability, to the last chill look of final dismission, when the one grows weary of soliciting, and the other of hearing solicitation.

Thus copious are the materials which have been hitherto suffered to lie neglected, while the repositories of every family that has produced a soldier or a minister are ransacked, and libraries are crowded with useless folios of state

papers which will never be read, and which contribute nothing to valuable knowledge.

I hope the learned will be taught to know their own strength and their value, and, instead of devoting their lives to the honour of those who seldom thank them for their labours, resolve at last to do justice to themselves.

No. 103.] Saturday, April 5, 1760.

Respicere ad longæ jussit spatia ultima vitæ.

JUV.

Much of the pain and pleasure of mankind arises from the conjectures which every one makes of the thoughts of others; we all enjoy praise which we do not hear, and resent contempt which we do not see. The Idler may therefore be forgiven, if he suffers his imagination to represent to him what his readers will say or think when they are informed that they have now his last paper in their hands.

Value is more frequently raised by scarcity than by use. That which lay neglected when it was common, rises in estimation as its quantity becomes less. We seldom learn the true want of what we have, till it is discovered that we can have no more.

This essay will, perhaps, be read with care even by those who have not yet attended to any other; and he that finds this late attention recompensed, will not forbear to wish that he had bestowed it sooner.

Though the Idler and his readers have contracted no close friendship, they are perhaps both unwilling to part. There are few things not purely evil, of which we can say, without some emotion of uneasiness, "this is the last." Those who never could agree together, shed tears when mutual discontent has determined them to final separation; of a place which has been frequently visited, though without pleasure, the last look is taken with heaviness of heart; and the Idler, with all his chillness of tranquillity, is not wholly unaffected by the thought that his last essay is now before him.

This secret horror of the last is inseparable from a thinking being, whose life is limited, and to whom death is dreadful. We always make a secret comparison between a part and the whole; the termination of any period of life reminds us that life itself has likewise its termination; when we have done any thing for the last time, we involuntarily reflect that a part of the days allotted us is past, and that as more are past there are less remaining.

It is very happily and kindly provided, that in every life there are certain pauses and interruptions, which force consideration upon the careless, and seriousness upon the light; points of time where one course of action ends, and another begins; and by vicissitudes of fortune, or alteration of employment, by change of place or loss of friendship, we are forced to say of something, "this is the last."

An even and unvaried tenour of life always hides from our apprehension the approach of its end. Succession is not perceived but by variation; he that lives to day as he lived yesterday, and expects that as the present day is, such will be the morrow, easily conceives time as running in a circle and returning to itself. The uncertainty of our duration is impressed commonly by dissimilitude of condition; it is only by finding life changeable that we are reminded of its shortness.

This conviction, however forcible at every new impression, is every moment fading from the mind; and partly by the inevitable incursion of new images, and partly by voluntary exclusion of unwelcome thoughts, we are again exposed to the universal fallacy; and we must do another thing for the last time, before we consider that the time is nigh when we shall do no more.

As the last Idler is published in that solemn week which the Christian world has always set apart for the examination of the conscience, the review of life, the extinction of earthly desires, and the renovation of holy purposes; I hope that my readers are already disposed to view every incident with seriousness, and improve it by meditation; and that when they see this series of trifles brought to a conclusion, they will consider that, by outliving the Idler, they have passed weeks, months, and years, which are now no longer in their power; that an end must in time be put to every thing great, as to every thing little; that to life must come its last hour, and to this system of being its last day, the hour at which probation ceases and repentance will be vain; the day in which every work of the hand, and imagination of the heart, shall be brought to judgment, and an everlasting futurity shall be determined by the past.

No. XXII.*

Many naturalists are of opinion, that the animals which we commonly consider as mute,

* This was the original No. 22, but on the republication of the work in volumes, Dr. Johnson substituted what now stands under that head.

have the power of imparting their thoughts to one another. That they can express general sensations is very certain: every being that can utter sounds, has a different voice for pleasure and for pain. The hound informs his fellows when he scents his game; the hen calls her chickens to their food by her cluck, and drives them from danger by her scream.

Birds have the greatest variety of notes; they have indeed a variety, which seems almost sufficient to make a speech adequate to the purposes of a life which is regulated by instinct, and can admit little change or improvement. To the cries of birds curiosity or superstition has been always attentive; many have studied the language of the feathered tribes, and some have boasted that they understood it.

The most skilful or most confident interpreters of the sylvan dialogues, have been commonly found among the philosophers of the east, in a country where the calmness of the air, and the mildness of the seasons, allow the student to pass a great part of the year in groves and bowers. But what may be done in one place by peculiar opportunities, may be performed in another by peculiar diligence. A shepherd of Bohemia has, by long abode in the forests, enabled himself to understand the voice of birds; at least he relates with great confidence a story, of which the credibility is left to be considered by the learned.

As I was sitting (said he) within a hollow rock, and watching my sheep that fed in the valley, I heard two vultures interchangeably crying on the summit of a cliff. Both voices were earnest and deliberate. My curiosity prevailed over the care of the flock; I climbed slowly and silently from crag to crag, concealed among the shrubs, till I found a cavity where I might sit and listen without suffering, or giving disturbance.

I soon perceived that my labour would be well repaid, for an old vulture was sitting on a naked prominence, with her young about her, whom she was instructing in the arts of a vulture's life, and preparing, by the last lecture, for their final dismission to the mountains and the skies.

My children, said the old vulture, you will the less want my instructions, because you have had my practice before your eyes; you have seen me snatch from the farm the household fowl, you have seen me seize the leveret in the bush, and the kid in the pasturage; you know how to fix your talons, and how to balance your flight when you are laden with your prey. But you remember the taste of more delicious food. I have often regaled you with the flesh of man Tell us, said the young vultures, where man may be found, and how he may be known: his flesh is surely the natural food of a vulture. Why have you never brought a man in your talons to the nest? He is too bulky, said the mother; when we find a man we can only tear away his flesh, and leave his bones upon the ground. Since man is so big, said the young ones, how do you kill him? You are afraid of the wolf and of the bear, by what power are vultures superior to man? Is man more defenceless than a sheep? We have not the strength of man, returned the mother, and I am sometimes in doubt whether we have the subtilty; and the vultures would seldom feast upon his flesh, had not nature, that devoted him to our uses, infused into him a strange ferocity which I have never observed in any other being that feeds upon the earth. Two herds of men will often meet and shake the earth with noise and fill the earth with fire. When you hear noise, and see fire, with flashes along the ground, hasten to the place with your swiftest wing, for men are surely destroying one another; you will then find the ground smoking with blood and covered with carcases of which many are dismembered, and mangled for the convenience of the vulture. But when men have killed their prey, said the pupil, why do they not eat it? When the wolf has killed a sheep, he suffers not the vulture to touch it till he has satisfied himself. Is not man another kind of wolf? Man, said the mother, is the only beast who kills that which he does not devour, and this quality makes him so much a benefactor to our species. If men kill our prey, and lay it in our way, said the young one, what need shall we have of labouring for ourselves? Because man will sometimes, replied the mother, remain for a long time quiet in his den. The old vultures will tell you when you are to watch his motions. When you see men in great numbers moving close together, like a flight of storks, you may conclude that they are hunting, and that you will soon revel in human blood. But still, said the young one, I would gladly know the reason of this mutual slaughter. I could never kill what I could not eat. My child, said the mother, this is a question which I cannot answer, though I am reckoned the most subtile bird of the mountain. When I was young, I used frequently to visit the ayry of an old vulture, who dwelt upon the Carpathian rocks: he had made many observations; he knew the places that afforded prey round his habitation as far in every direction as the strongest wing can fly between the rising and setting of the summer sun; he had fed year after year on the entrails of men. His opinion was, that men had only the appearance of animal life, being really vegetables, with a power of motion; and that as the boughs of an oak are dashed together by the storm, that swine may fatten upon the

fallen acorns, so men are by some unaccountable power driven one against another, till they lose their motion, that vultures may be fed. Others think they have observed something of contrivance and policy among these mischievous beings: and those that hover more closely round them, pretend, that there is in every herd, one that gives directions to the rest, and seems to be more eminently delighted with a wide carnage. What it is that entitles him to such pre-eminence we know not; he is seldom the biggest or the swiftest, but he shows by his eagerness and diligence that he is, more than any of the others, a friend to the vultures.

THE END

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THE

LIVES

OF THE

ENGLISH POETS;

BY

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

LONDON.
PUBLISHED BY JONES AND CO.
TEMPLE OF THE MUSES *(Late Lackington's)* FINSBURY SQUARE;
AND MAY BE HAD OF ALL BOOKSELLERS.
1832.

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LIVES OF THE ENGLISH POETS.

COWLEY.

THE Life of Cowley, notwithstanding the penury of English biography, has been written by Dr. Sprat, an author whose pregnancy of imagination and elegance of language have deservedly set him high in the ranks of literature; but his zeal of friendship, or ambition of eloquence, has produced a funeral oration rather than a history: he has given the character, not the life, of Cowley; for he writes with so little detail, that scarcely any thing is distinctly known, but all is shown confused and enlarged through the mist of panegyric.

Abraham Cowley was born in the year one thousand six hundred and eighteen. His father was a grocer, whose condition Dr. Sprat conceals under the general appellation of a citizen; and, what would probably not have been less carefully suppressed, the omission of his name in the register of St. Dunstan's parish gives reason to suspect that his father was a sectary. Whoever he was, he died before the birth of his son, and consequently left him to the care of his mother; whom Wood represents as struggling earnestly to procure him a literary education, and who, as she lived to the age of eighty, had her solicitude rewarded by seeing her son eminent, and, I hope, by seeing him fortunate, and partaking his prosperity. We know, at least, from Sprat's account, that he always acknowledged her care, and justly paid the dues of filial gratitude.

In the window of his mother's apartment lay Spenser's Fairy Queen; in which he very early took delight to read, till, by feeling the charms of verse, he became, as he relates, irrecoverably a poet. Such are the accidents which, sometimes remembered, and perhaps sometimes forgotten, produce that particular designation of mind, and propensity for some certain science or employment, which is commonly called genius. The true genius is a mind of large general powers, accidentally determined to some particular direction. Sir Joshua Reynolds, the great painter of the present age, had the first fondness for his art excited by the perusal of Richardson's treatise.

By his mother's solicitation he was admitted into Westminster School, where he was soon distinguished. He was wont, says Sprat, to relate, "That he had this defect in his memory at that time, that his teachers never could bring it to retain the ordinary rules of grammar."

This is an instance of the natural desire of man to propagate a wonder. It is surely very difficult to tell any thing as it was heard, when Sprat could not refrain from amplifying a commodious incident, though the book to which he prefixed his narrative contained his confutation. A memory admitting some things, and rejecting others, an intellectual digestion that concocted the pulp of learning, but refused the husks, had the appearance of an instinctive elegance, of a particular provision made by Nature for literary politeness. But in the author's own honest relation, the marvel vanishes: he was, he says, such "an enemy to all constraint, that his master never could prevail on him to learn the rules without book." He does not tell that he could not learn the rules; but that, being able to perform his exercises without them, and being an "enemy to constraint," he spared himself the labour.

Among the English poets, Cowley, Milton, and Pope, might be said "to lisp in numbers;" and have given such early proofs, not only of powers of language, but of comprehension of things, as to more tardy minds seem scarcely credible. But of the learned puerilities of Cowley there is no doubt, since a volume of his poems was not only written, but printed in his thirteenth year;* containing, with other poeti-

* This volume was not published before 1633, when Cowley was fifteen years old. Dr. Johnson, as well as former biographers, seems to have been misled by the portrait of Cowley being by mistake marked with the age of thirteen years.—R.

cal compositions, "The tragical History of Pyramus and Thisbe," written when he was ten years old; and "Constantia and Philetus," written two years after.

While he was yet at school he produced a comedy called "Love's Riddle," though it was not published till he had been sometime at Cambridge. This comedy is of the pastoral kind, which requires no acquaintance with the living world, and therefore the time at which it was composed adds little to the wonders of Cowley's minority.

In 1636, he was removed to Cambridge,* where he continued his studies with great intenseness: for he is said to have written, while he was yet a young student, the greater part of his "Davideis;" a work, of which the materials could not have been collected without the study of many years, but by a mind of the greatest vigour and activity.

Two years after his settlement at Cambridge he published "Love's Riddle," with a poetical dedication to Sir Kenelm Digby; of whose acquaintance all his cotemporaries seem to have been ambitious; and "Naufragium Joculare," a comedy written in Latin, but without due attention to the ancient models; for it was not loose verse, but mere prose. It was printed, with a dedication in verse, to Dr. Comber, master of the college; but, having neither the facility of a popular nor the accuracy of a learned work, it seems to be now universally neglected.

At the beginning of the civil war, as the Prince passed through Cambridge in his way to York, he was entertained with a representation of the "Guardian," a comedy which Cowley says was neither written nor acted, but rough-drawn by him, and repeated by the scholars. That this comedy was printed during his absence from his country, he appears to have considered as injurious to his reputation; though during the suppression of the theatres, it was sometimes privately acted with sufficient approbation.

In 1643, being now master of arts, he was, by the prevalence of the parliament, ejected from Cambridge, and sheltered himself at St. John's College, in Oxford; where, as is said by Wood, he published a satire, called "The Puritan and Papist," which was only inserted in the last collection of his Works;† and so distinguished himself by the warmth of his loyalty and the elegance of his conversation, that he gained the kindness and confidence of those who attended the King, and amongst others of Lord Falkland, whose notice cast a lustre on all to whom it was extended.

About the time when Oxford was surrendered to the parliament, he followed the Queen to Paris, where he became secretary to the Lord Jermyn, afterwards Earl of St. Alban's, and was employed in such correspondence as the royal cause required, and particularly in cyphering and decyphering the letters that passed between the King and Queen; an employment of the highest confidence and honour. So wide was his province of intelligence, that, for several years, it filled all his days and two or three nights in the week.

In the year 1647, his "Mistress" was published; for he imagined, as he declared in his preface to a subsequent edition, that "poets are scarcely thought freemen of their company without paying some duties, or obliging themselves to be true to Love."

This obligation to amorous ditties owes, I believe, its original to the fame of Petrarch, who, in an age rude and uncultivated, by his tuneful homage to his Laura, refined the manners of the lettered world, and filled Europe with love and poetry. But the basis of all excellence is truth: he that professes love ought to feel its power. Petrarch was a real lover, and Laura doubtless deserved his tenderness. Of Cowley, we are told by Barnes,* who had means enough of information, that, whatever he may talk of his own inflammability, and the variety of characters by which his heart was divided, he in reality was in love but once, and then never had resolution to tell his passion.

This consideration cannot but abate, in some measure, the reader's esteem for the work and the author. To love excellence, is natural; it is natural likewise for the lover to solicit reciprocal regard by an elaborate display of his own qualifications. The desire of pleasing has in different men produced actions of heroism, and effusions of wit; but it seems as reasonable to appear the champion as the poet of an "airy nothing," and to quarrel as to write for what Cowley might have learned from his master Pindar to call "the dream of a shadow."

It is surely not difficult in the solitude of a college, or in the bustle of the world, to find useful studies and serious employment. No man needs to be so burdened with life as to squander it in voluntary dreams of fictitious occurrences. The man that sits down to suppose himself charged with treason or peculation, and heats his mind to an elaborate purgation of his character from crimes which he was never within the possibility of committing, differs only

* He was a candidate this year at Westminster School for election to Trinity College, but proved unsuccessful.—N.

† In the first edition of this Life, Dr. Johnson wrote, "which was never inserted in any collection of his works;" but he altered the expression when the Lives were collected into volumes. The satire was added to Cowley's Works by the particular direction of Dr. Johnson.—N.

* Barnesii Anacreontem.—Dr. J.

by the infrequency of his folly from him who praises beauty which he never saw; complains of jealousy which he never felt; supposes himself sometimes invited, and sometimes forsaken; fatigues his fancy, and ransacks his memory, for images which may exhibit the gayety of hope, or the gloominess of despair; and dresses his imaginary Chloris or Phyllis, sometimes in flowers fading as her beauty, and sometimes in gems lasting as her virtues.

At Paris, as secretary to Lord Jermyn, he was engaged in transacting things of real importance with real men and real women, and at that time did not much employ his thoughts upon phantoms of gallantry. Some of his letters to Mr. Bennett, afterwards Earl of Arlington, from April to December, in 1650, are preserved in "Miscellanea Aulica," a collection of papers published by Brown. These letters, being written like those of other men whose minds are more on things than words, contribute no otherwise to his reputation than as they show him to have been above the affectation of unseasonable elegance, and to have known that the business of a statesman can be little forwarded by flowers of rhetoric.

One passage, however, seems not unworthy of some notice. Speaking of the Scotch treaty then in agitation:

"The Scotch treaty," says he, "is the only thing now in which we are vitally concerned: I am one of the last hopers, and yet cannot now abstain from believing, that an agreement will be made; all people upon the place incline to that of union. The Scotch will moderate something of the rigour of their demands; the mutual necessity of an accord is visible, the King is persuaded of it. And to tell you the truth (which I take to be an argument above all the rest,) Virgil has told the same thing to that purpose."

This expression from a secretary of the present time would be considered as merely ludicrous, or at most as an ostentatious display of scholarship; but the manners of that time were so tinged with superstition, that I cannot but suspect Cowley of having consulted on this great occasion the Virgilian Lots,* and to have given some credit to the answer of his oracle.

Some years afterwards, "business," says Sprat, "passed of course into other hands; and Cowley, being no longer useful at Paris, was in 1656, sent back into England, that "under pretence of privacy and retirement, he might take occasion of giving notice of the posture of things in this nation."

Soon after his return to London, he was seized by some messengers of the usurping powers who were sent out in quest of another man; and, being examined, was put into confinement, from which he was not dismissed without the security of a thousand pounds given by Dr. Scarborough.

This year he published his poems, with a preface, in which he seems to have inserted something suppressed in subsequent editions, which was interpreted to denote some relaxation of his loyalty. In this preface he declares, that

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Funera: nec, cum se sub leges pacis iniquæ
Tradiderit, regno aut optata luce fruatur:
Sed cadat ante diem, mediaque inhumatus arena.

Æneid iv. 615.

Yet let a race untamed, and haughty foes,
His peaceful entrance with dire arms oppose,
Oppress'd with numbers in th' unequal field,
His men discouraged, and himself expell'd;
Let him for succour sue from place to place,
Torn from his subjects and his son's embrace.
First let him see his friends in battle slain,
And their untimely fate lament in vain:
And when, at length, the cruel war shall cease,
On hard conditions may he buy his peace;
Nor let him then enjoy supreme command,
But fall untimely by some hostile hand,
And lie unbury'd on the barren sand.

DRYDEN.

LORD FALKLAND'S:

Non hæc, O Pálla, dederas promissa parenti,
Cautius ut sævo velles te credere Marti.
Haud ignarus eram, quantum nova gloria in armis,
Et prædulce decus primo certamine posset.
Primitiæ juvenis miseræ, bellíque propinqui
Dura rudimenta, et nulla exaudita Deorum
Vota, precesque meæ!

Æneid xi. 152.

O Pallas, thou hast fail'd thy plighted word,
To fight with caution, not to tempt the sword;
I warn'd thee, but in vain, for well I knew
What perils youthful ardour would pursue;
That boiling blood would carry thee too far,
Young as thou wert to dangers, raw to war.
O curs'd essay of arms, disastrous doom,
Prelude of bloody fields and fights to come!
Hard elements of unauspicious war,
Vain vows to Heaven, and unavailing care!

DRYDEN.

Hoffman, in his Lexicon, gives a very satisfactory account of this practice of seeking fates in books; and says, that it was used by the Pagans, the Jewish Rabbins, and even the early Christians; the latter taking the New Testament for their oracle.—H.

* Consulting the Virgilian Lots, Sortes Virgilianæ, is a method of divination by the opening of Virgil, and applying to the circumstances of the peruser the first passage in either of the two pages that he accidentally fixes his eye on. It is said that King Charles I. and Lord Falkland being in the Bodleian Library, made this experiment of their future fortunes, and met with passages equally ominous to each. That of the King was the following:

At bello audacis populi vexatus et armis,
Finibus extorris, complexu avulsus Iuli,
Auxilium imploret, videatque indigna suorum

"his desire had been for some days past, and did still very vehemently continue, to retire himself to some of the American plantations, and to forsake this world for ever."

From the obloquy which the appearance of submission to the usurpers brought upon him, his biographer has been very diligent to clear him; and indeed it does not seem to have lessened his reputation. His wish for retirement we can easily believe to be undissembled; a man harassed in one kingdom, and persecuted in another, who, after a course of business that employed all his days and half his nights, in cyphering and decyphering, comes to his own country, and steps into a prison, will be willing enough to retire to some place of quiet and of safety. Yet let neither our reverence for a genius, nor our pity for a sufferer, dispose us to forget that, if his activity was virtue, his retreat was cowardice.

He then took upon himself the character of physician, still, according to Sprat, with intention "to dissemble the main design of his coming over;" and, as Mr. Wood relates, "complying with the men then in power (which was much taken notice of by the royal party,) he obtained an order to be created doctor of physic; which being done to his mind (whereby he gained the ill-will of some of his friends) he went into France again, having made a copy of verses on Oliver's death."

This is no favourable representation, yet even in this not much wrong can be discovered. How far he complied with the men in power, is to be inquired before he can be blamed. It is not said that he told them any secrets, or assisted them by intelligence or any other act. If he only promised to be quiet, that they in whose hands he was, might free him from confinement, he did what no law of society prohibits.

The man whose miscarriage in a just cause has put him in the power of his enemy may, without any violation of his integrity, regain his liberty, or preserve his life, by a promise of neutrality: for, the stipulation gives the enemy nothing which he had not before; the neutrality of a captive may be always secured by his imprisonment or death. He that is at the disposal of another may not promise to aid him in any injurious act, because no power can compel active obedience. He may engage to do nothing, but not to do ill.

There is reason to think that Cowley promised little. It does not appear that his compliance gained him confidence enough to be trusted without security, for the bond of his bail was never cancelled: nor that it made him think himself secure; for at that dissolution of government which followed the death of Oliver, he returned into France, where he resumed his former station, and staid till the Restoration.

"He continued," says his biographer, "under these bonds till the general deliverance;" it i therefore to be supposed, that he did not go t France, and act again for the King, without th consent of his bondsman; that he did not sho his loyalty at the hazard of his friend, but by hi friend's permission.

Of the verses on Oliver's death, in whic Wood's narrative seems to imply something en comiastic, there has been no appearance. Ther is a discourse concerning his government, indeed with verses intermixed, but such as certainl gained its author no friends among the abettor of usurpation.

A doctor of physic however he was made a Oxford in December, 1657; and in the com mencement of the Royal Society, of which a account has been given by Dr. Birch, he appear busy among the experimental philosophers wit the title of Dr. Cowley.

There is no reason for supposing that he eve attempted practice; but his preparatory studie have contributed something to the honour of hi country. Considering botany as necessary to physician, he retired into Kent to gather plants and as the predominance of a favourite stud affects all subordinate operations of the intellec botany in the mind of Cowley turned into poe try. He composed in Latin several books o plants, of which the first and second display th qualities of herbs, in elegiac verse; the third an fourth, the beauties of flowers in various mea sures; and the fifth and sixth, the uses of tree in heroic numbers.

At the same time were produced, from th same university, the two great poets, Cowle and Milton, of dissimilar genius, of opposit principles; but concurring in the cultivation o Latin poetry, in which the English, till thei works and May's poem appeared,* seemed un able to contest the palm with any other of th lettered nations.

If the Latin performances of Cowley an Milton be compared (for May I hold to be su perior to both,) the advantage seems to lie o the side of Cowley. Milton is generally conten to express the thoughts of the ancients in thei language; Cowley, without much loss of purit or elegance, accommodates the diction of Rom to his own conceptions.

At the Restoration, after all the diligence o his long service, and with consciousness not onl of the merit of fidelity, but of the dignity o great abilities, he naturally expected ample pre ferments; and, that he might not be forgotte by his own fault, wrote a Song of Triumph But this was a time of such general hope, tha

* By May's poem we are here to understand continuation of Lucan's Pharsalia to the death Julius Cæsar, by Thomas May, an eminent poet an historian, who flourished in the reigns of James an Charles I. and of whom a life is given in the Bi graphia Britannica.—H.

great numbers were inevitably disappointed; and Cowley found his reward very tediously delayed. He had been promised by both Charles the First and Second, the mastership of the Savoy; "but he lost it," says Wood, "by certain persons, enemies to the muses."

The neglect of the court was not his only mortification; having, by such alteration as he thought proper, fitted his old comedy of "The Guardian" for the stage, he produced it* under the title of "The Cutter of Coleman street."† It was treated on the stage with great severity, and was afterward censured as a satire on the King's party.

Mr. Dryden, who went with Mr. Sprat to the first exhibition, related to Mr. Dennis, "That, when they told Cowley how little favour had been shown him, he received the news of his ill-success, not with so much firmness as might have been expected from so great a man."

What firmness they expected, or what weakness Cowley discovered, cannot be known. He that misses his end will never be as much pleased as he that attains it, even when he can impute no part of his failure to himself; and, when the end is to please the multitude, no man, perhaps, has a right, in things admitting of gradation and comparison, to throw the whole blame upon his judges, and totally to exclude diffidence and shame by a haughty consciousness of his own excellence.

For the rejection of this play it is difficult now to find the reason; it certainly has, in a very great degree, the power of fixing attention and exciting merriment. From the charge of disaffection he exculpates himself in his preface, by observing how unlikely it is that, having followed the royal family through all their distresses, "he should choose the time of their restoration to begin a quarrel with them." It appears, however, from the Theatrical Register of Downes, the prompter, to have been popularly considered as a satire on the royalists.

That he might shorten this tedious suspense, he published his pretensions and his discontent, in an ode called "The Complaint;" in which he styles himself the *melancholy* Cowley. This met with the usual fortune of complaints, and seems to have excited more contempt than pity.

These unlucky incidents are brought, maliciously enough, together in some stanzas, written about that time, on the choice of a laureat; a mode of satire, by which, since it was first introduced by Suckling, perhaps every generation of poets has been teased.

> Savoy-missing Cowley came into the court,
> Making apologies for his bad play;
> Every one gave him so good a report,
> That Apollo gave heed to all he could say:
> Nor would he have had, 'tis thought, a rebuke,
> Unless he had done some notable folly:
> Writ verses unjustly in praise of Sam Tuke,
> Or printed his pitiful Melancholy."

His vehement desire of retirement now came again upon him. "Not finding," says the morose Wood, "that preferment conferred upon him which he expected, while others for their money carried away most places, he retired discontented into Surry."

"He was now," says the courtly Sprat, "weary of the vexations and formalities of an active condition. He had been perplexed with a long compliance to foreign manners. He was satiated with the arts of a court; which sort of life, though his virtue made it innocent to him, yet nothing could make it quiet. Those were the reasons that made him to follow the violent inclination of his own mind, which, in the greatest throng of his former business, had still called upon him, and represented to him the true delights of solitary studies, of temperate pleasures, and a moderate revenue below the malice and flatteries of fortune."

So differently are things seen! and so differently are they shown! but actions are visible, though motives are secret. Cowley certainly retired: first to Barn-elms, and afterwards to Chertsey, in Surry. He seems, however, to have lost part of his dread of the *hum of men.** He thought himself now safe enough from intrusion, without the defence of mountains and oceans; and, instead of seeking shelter in America, wisely went only so far from the bustle of life as that he might easily find his way back, when solitude should grow tedious. His retreat was at first but slenderly accommodated; yet he soon obtained, by the interest of the Earl of St. Alban's and the Duke of Buckingham, such a lease of the Queen's lands as afforded him an ample income.

By the lovers of virtue and of wit it will be solicitously asked, if he now was happy. Let them peruse one of his letters accidentally preserved by Peck, which I recommend to the consideration of all that may hereafter pant for solitude.

"To Dr. Thomas Sprat.

"Chertsey, May 21, 1665.

"The first night that I came hither, I caught so great a cold with a defluxion of rheum, as made me keep my chamber ten days. And, two after, had such a bruise on my ribs with a

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* 1663.

† Here is an error in the designation of this Comedy, which our author copied from the title page of the later editions of Cowley's Works: the title of the play itself is without the article "Cutter of Coleman street," although a merry sharking fellow about the town, named Cutter, is a principal character in it.—H.

* L'Allegro of Milton.—Dr. J

fall, that I am yet unable to move or turn myself in my bed. This is my personal fortune here to begin with. And, besides, I can get no money from my tenants, and have my meadows eaten up every night by cattle put in by my neighbours. What this signifies, or may come to in time, God knows; if it be ominous, it can end in nothing else than hanging. Another misfortune has been, and stranger than all the rest, that you have broke your word with me, and failed to come, even though you told Mr. Bois that you would. This is what they call *monstri simile*. I do hope to recover my late hurt so far within five or six days (though it be uncertain yet whether I shall ever recover it,) as to walk about again. And then, methinks, you and I and the Dean might be very merry upon St. Ann's Hill. You might very conveniently come hither the way of Hampton Town, lying there one night. I write this in pain, and can say no more: *Verbum Sapienti.*"

He did not long enjoy the pleasure, or suffer the uneasiness of solitude; for he died at the Porch-house * in Chertsey, 1667, in the 49th year of his age.

He was buried with great pomp near Chaucer and Spenser, and King Charles pronounced, "That Mr. Cowley had not left behind him a better man in England." He is represented by Dr. Sprat as the most amiable of mankind; and this posthumous praise may safely be credited, as it has never been contradicted by envy or by faction.

Such are the remarks and memorials which I have been able to add to the narrative of Dr. Sprat; who, writing when the feuds of the civil war were yet recent, and the minds of either party were easily irritated, was obliged to pass over many transactions in general expressions, and to leave curiosity often unsatisfied. What he did not tell, cannot however now be known; I must therefore recommend the perusal of his work, to which my narration can be considered only as a slender supplement.

Cowley, like other poets who have written with narrow views, and, instead of tracing intellectual pleasures in the minds of men, paid their court to temporary prejudices, has been at one time too much praised, and too much neglected at another.

Wit, like all other things subject by their nature to the choice of man, has its changes and fashions, and at different times takes different forms. About the beginning of the seventeenth century, appeared a race of writers that may be termed the metaphysical poets: of whom, in a criticism on the works of Cowley, it is not improper to give some account.

The metaphysical poets were men of learning and to show their learning was their whole endeavour: but, unluckily resolving to show it in rhyme, instead of writing poetry they only wrote verses, and very often such verses as stood the trial of the finger better than of the ear for the modulation was so imperfect that they were only found to be verses by counting the syllables.

If the father of criticism has rightly denominated poetry τέχνη μιμητικὴ, *an imitative art*, these writers will, without great wrong, lose their right to the name of poets; for they cannot be said to have imitated any thing: they neither copied nature nor life; neither painted the forms of matter, nor represented the operations of intellect.

Those however who deny them to be poets allow them to be wits. Dryden confesses of himself and his contemporaries, that they fall below Donne in wit; but maintains, that they surpass him in poetry.

If wit be well described by Pope, as being "that which has been often thought, but was never before so well expressed," they certainly never attained, nor ever sought it; for they endeavoured to be singular in their thoughts, and were careless of their diction. But Pope's account of wit is undoubtedly erroneous: it depresses it below its natural dignity, and reduces it from strength of thought to happiness of language.

If by a more noble and more adequate conception that be considered as wit which is at once natural and new, that which, though not obvious, is, upon its first production, acknowledged to be just; if it be that which he that never found it wonders how he missed; to wit of this kind the metaphysical poets have seldom risen. Their thoughts are often new, but seldom natural; they are not obvious, but neither are they just; and the reader, far from wondering that he missed them, wonders more frequently by what perverseness of industry they were ever found.

But wit, abstracted from its effects upon the hearer, may be more rigorously and philosophically considered as a kind of *discordia concors*; a combination of dissimilar images, or discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike. Of wit, thus defined, they have more than enough. The most heterogeneous ideas are yoked by violence together; nature and art are ransacked for illustrations, comparisons, and allusions; their learning instructs, and their subtlety surprises; but the reader commonly thinks his improvement dearly bought, and though he sometimes admires, is seldom pleased.

From this account of their compositions it will be readily inferred, that they were not

* Now in the possession of Mr. Clark, Alderman of London. Dr. J.—Mr. Clark was in 1708 elected to the important office of Chamberlain of London; and has every year since been unanimously re-elected.—N

successful in representing or moving the affections. As they were wholly employed on something unexpected and surprising, they had no regard to that uniformity of sentiment which enables us to conceive and to excite the pains and the pleasure of other minds: they never inquired what, on any occasion, they should have said or done; but wrote rather as beholders than partakers of human nature; as beings looking upon good and evil, impassive and at leisure; as Epicurean deities, making remarks on the actions of men, and the vicissitudes of life, without interest and without emotion. Their courtship was void of fondness, and their lamentation of sorrow. Their wish was only to say what they hoped had never been said before.

Nor was the sublime more within their reach than the pathetic, for they never attempted that comprehension and expanse of thought which at once fills the whole mind, and of which the first effect is sudden astonishment, and the second rational admiration. Sublimity is produced by aggregation, and littleness by dispersion. Great thoughts are always general, and consist in positions not limited by exceptions, and in descriptions not descending to minuteness. It is with great propriety that subtlety, which in its original import means exility of particles, is taken in its metaphorical meaning for nicety of distinction. Those writers who lay on the watch for novelty, could have little hope of greatness; for great things cannot have escaped former observation. Their attempts were always analytic; they broke every image into fragments; and could no more represent, by their slender conceits and laboured particularities, the prospects of nature, or the scenes of life, than he, who dissects a sun-beam with a prism, can exhibit the wide effulgence of a summer noon. What they wanted, however, of the sublime, they endeavoured to supply by hyperbole; their amplification had no limits; they left not only reason but fancy behind them; and produced combinations, of confused magnificence, that not only could not be credited, but could not be imagined.

Yet great labour, directed by great abilities, is never wholly lost; if they frequently threw away their wit upon false conceits, they likewise sometimes struck out unexpected truth: if their conceits were far-fetched, they were often worth the carriage. To write on their plan it was at least necessary to read and think. No man could be born a metaphysical poet, nor assume the dignity of a writer, by descriptions copied from descriptions, by imitations borrowed from imitations, by traditional imagery, and hereditary similes, by readiness of rhyme, and volubility of syllables.

In perusing the works of this race of authors, the mind is exercised either by recollection or inquiry; either something already learned is to be retrieved, or something new is to be examined. If their greatness seldom elevates, their acuteness often surprises; if the imagination is not always gratified, at least the powers of reflection and comparison are employed; and, in the mass of materials which ingenious absurdity has thrown together, genuine wit and useful knowledge may be sometimes found buried perhaps in grossness of expression, but useful to those who know their value; and such as, when they are expanded to perspicuity, and polished to elegance, may give lustre to works which have more propriety, though less copiousness of sentiment.

This kind of writing, which was, I believe, borrowed from Marino and his followers, had been recommended by the example of Donne, a man of very extensive and various knowledge; and by Jonson, whose manner resembled that of Donne more in the ruggedness of his lines than in the cast of his sentiments.

When their reputation was high, they had undoubtedly more imitators than time has left behind. Their immediate successors, of whom any remembrance can be said to remain, were Suckling, Waller, Denham, Cowley, Cleiveland, and Milton. Denham and Waller sought another way to fame, by improving the harmony of our numbers. Milton tried the metaphysic style only in his lines upon Hobson the Carrier. Cowley adopted it, and excelled his predecessors, having as much sentiment and more music. Suckling neither improved versification, nor abounded in conceits. The fashionable style remained chiefly with Cowley; Suckling could not reach it, and Milton disdained it.

Critical Remarks are not easily understood without examples; and I have therefore collected instances of the modes of writing by which this species of poets (for poets they were called by themselves and their admirers) was eminently distinguished.

As the authors of this race were perhaps more desirous of being admired than understood, they sometimes drew their conceits from recesses of learning not very much frequented by common readers of poetry. Thus Cowley on Knowledge:

The sacred tree 'midst the fair orchard grew;
The phœnix Truth did on it rest,
And built his perfum'd nest, [shew.
That right Porphyrian tree which did true logic
Each leaf did learned notions give,
And th' apples were demonstrative:
So clear their colour and divine,
The very shade they cast did other lights outshine.

ON ANACREON CONTINUING A LOVER IN HIS OLD AGE.

Love was with thy life entwin'd,
Close as heat with fire is join'd;

A powerful brand prescribed the date
Of thine, like Meleager's fate.
Th' antiperistasis of age
More enflamed thy amorous rage.

In the following verses we have an allusion to a Rabbinical opinion concerning manna:

Variety I ask not: give me on
To live perpetually upon.
The person Love does to us fit,
Like manna, has the taste of all in it.

Thus Donne shows his medicinal knowledge in some encomiastic verses:

In every thing there naturally grows
A balsamum to keep it fresh and new,
If 'twere not injured by extrinsic blows;
Your youth and beauty are this balm in yo
But you, of learning and religion,
And virtue and such ingredients, have made
A mithridate, whose operation
Keeps off, or cures what can be done or said.

Though the following lines of Donne, on the last night of the year, have something in them too scholastic, they are not inelegant:

This twilight of two years, not past nor next,
Some emblem is of me, or I of this,
Who, meteor-like, of stuff and form perplext,
Whose what and where in disputation is,
If I should call me any thing, should miss.
I sum the years and me, and find me not
Debtor to th' old, nor creditor to th' new.
That cannot say, my thanks I have forgot,
Nor trust I this with hopes; and yet scarce true
This bravery is, since these times show'd me you.
DONNE.

Yet more abstruse and profound is Donne's reflection upon Man as a Microcosm:

If men be worlds, there is in every one
Something to answer in some proportion;
All the world's riches: and in good men, this
Virtue, our form's form, and our soul's soul, is.

Of thoughts so far-fetched, as to be not only unexpected, but unnatural, all their books are full.

TO A LADY, WHO WROTE POESIES FOR RIN

They, who above do various circles find,
Say, like a ring, th' equator heaven does bind
When heaven shall be adorn'd by thee,
(Which then more heav'n than 'tis will be)
'Tis thou must write the poesy there,
For it wanteth one as yet,
Then the sun pass through't twice a year,
The sun, which is esteem'd the god of wit.
COWLEY.

The difficulties which have been raised about identity in philosophy, are by Cowley with still more perplexity applied to Love:

Five years ago (says story) I lov'd you,
For which you call me most inconstant now;
Pardon me, Madam, you mistake the man;
For I am not the same that I was then;
No flesh is now the same 'twas then in me,
And that my mind is changed yourself may see.
The same thoughts to retain still, and intents,
Were more inconstant far: for accidents
Must of all things most strangely inconstant prove,
If from one subject they t' another move;
My members then the father members were,
From whence these take their birth which now are here.
If then this body love what th' other did,
'Twere incest, which by nature is forbid.

The love of different women is, in geographical poetry, compared to travels through different countries:

Hast thou not found each woman's breast
(The land where thou hast travelled)
Either by savages possest,
Or wild, and uninhabited?
What joy could'st take, or what repose,
In countries so uncivilized as those?
Lust, the scorching dog-star, here
Rages with immoderate heat;
Whilst Pride, the rugged northern bear,
In others makes the cold too great.
And where these are temperate known,
The soil's all barren sand, or rocky stone.
COWLEY.

A lover, burnt up by his affection, is compared to Egypt:

The fate of Egypt I sustain,
And never feel the dew of rain
From clouds which in the head appear;
But all my too much moisture owe
To overflowings of the heart below.
COWLEY.

The Lover supposes his Lady acquainted with the ancient laws of augury and rites of sacrifice:

And yet this death of mine, I fear,
Will ominous to her appear:
When sound in every other part,
Her sacrifice is found without an heart.
For the last tempest of my death
Shall sigh out that too with my breath.

That the chaos was harmonized, has been recited of old; but whence the different sounds arose remained for a modern to discover:

Th' ungovern'd parts no correspondence knew;
An artless war from thwarting motions grew;
Till they to number and fixt rules were brought.
Water and air he for the Tenor chose,
Earth made the Base; the Treble, flame arose.
COWLEY.

The tears of lovers are always of great poetical account; but Donne has extended them into worlds. If the lines are not easily understood, they may be read again.

On a round ball
A workman, that hath copies by, can lay
An Europe, Afric, and an Asia,
And quickly make that which was nothing all.

So doth each tear,
Which thee doth wear,
A globe, yea world, by that impression grow,
Till thy tears mixt with mine do overflow
This world, by waters sent from thee my heaven dissolved so.

On reading the following lines, the reader may perhaps cry out—"Confusion worse confounded:"

Here lies a she sun, and a he moon here,
She gives the best light to his sphere,
Or each is both, and all, and so
They unto one another nothing owe.

DONNE.

Who but Donne would have thought that a good man is a telescope?

Though God be our true glass through which we see
All, since the being of all things is he;
Yet are the trunks, which do to us derive
Things in proportion fit, by perspective
Deeds of good men; for by their living here,
Virtues, indeed remote, seem to be near.

Who would imagine it possible that in a very few lines so many remote ideas could be brought together?

Since 'tis my doom, Love's undershrieve,
Why this reprieve?
Why doth my she advowson fly
Incumbency?
To sell thyself dost thou intend
By candle's end,
And hold the contrast thus in doubt,
Life's taper out?
Think but how soon the market fails,
Your sex lives faster than the males,
And if to measure age's span,
The sober Julian were th' account of man,
Whilst you live by the fleet Gregorian.

CLEIVELAND.

Of enormous and disgusting hyperboles, these may be examples:

By every wind that comes this way,
Send me at least a sigh or two,
Such and so many I'll repay
As shall themselves make wings to get to you.

COWLEY.

In tears I'll waste these eyes,
By love so vainly fed;
So lust of old the Deluge punished.

COWLEY.

All arm'd in brass, the richest dress of war,
(A dismal glorious sight!) he shone afar.
The sun himself started with sudden fright,
To see his beams return so dismal bright.

COWLEY.

A universal consternation:

His bloody eyes he hurls round, his sharp paws
Tear up the ground: then runs he wild about,
Lashing his angry tail, and roaring out.
Beasts creep into their dens, and tremble there;
Trees, though no wind is stirring, shake with fear;
Silence and horror fill the place around;
Echo itself dares scarce repeat the sound.

COWLEY.

Their fictions were often violent and unnatural.

OF HIS MISTRESS BATHING.

The fish around her crowded, as they do
To the false light that treacherous fishers show,
And all with as much ease might taken be,
As she at first took me:
For ne'er did light so clear
Among the waves appear,
Though every night the sun himself set there.

COWLEY.

THE POETICAL EFFECTS OF A LOVER'S NAME UPON GLASS.

My name engraved herein
Doth contribute my firmness to this glass;
Which, ever since that charm, hath been
As hard as that which graved it was.

DONNE.

Their conceits were sentiments slight and trifling.

ON AN INCONSTANT WOMAN.

He enjoys the calmy sunshine now,
And no breath stirring hears,
In the clear heaven of thy brow,
No smallest cloud appears.
He sees thee gentle, fair, and gay,
And trusts the faithless April of thy May.

COWLEY.

UPON A PAPER WRITTEN WITH THE JUICE OF LEMON, AND READ BY THE FIRE.

Nothing yet in thee is seen,
But when a genial heat warms thee within,
A new-born wood of various lines there grows;
Here buds an L, and there a B,
Here spouts a V, and there a T,
And all the flourishing letters stand in rows.

COWLEY.

As they sought only for novelty, they did not much inquire whether their allusions were to things high or low, elegant or gross: whether they compared the little to the great, or the great to the little.

PHYSIC AND CHIRURGERY FOR A LOVER.

Gently, ah gently, madam, touch
The wound, which you yourself have made;
That pain must needs be very much,
Which makes me of your hand afraid.
Cordials of pity give me now,
For I too weak of purgings grow.

COWLEY.

THE WORLD AND A CLOCK.

Mahol th' inferior world's fantastic face
Through all the turns of matter's maze did trace;

Great Nature's well-set clock in pieces took;
On all the springs and smallest wheels did look
Of life and motion, and with equal art
Made up the whole again of every part.
COWLEY.

A coal-pit has not often found its poet; but, that it may not want its due honour, Cleiveland has paralleled it with the sun:

The moderate value of our guiltless ore
Makes no man atheist, and no woman whore;
Yet why should hallow'd vestal's sacred shrine
Deserve more honour than a flaming mine?
These pregnant wombs of heat would fitter be,
Than a few embers, for a deity.
Had he our pits, the Persian would admire
No sun, but warm 's devotion at our fire;
He'd leave the trotting whipster, and prefer
Our profound Vulcan 'bove that waggoner.
For wants he heat, or light? or would have store,
Of both? 'tis here: and what can suns give more?
Nay, what's the sun, but in a different name,
A coal-pit rampant, or a mine on flame!
Then let this truth reciprocally run,
The sun's heaven's coalery, and coal's our sun.

DEATH, A VOYAGE.

No family
E'er rigg'd a soul for heaven's discovery,
With whom more venturers might boldly dare
Venture their stakes, with him in joy to share.
DONNE.

Their thoughts and expressions were sometimes grossly absurd, and such as no figures or license can reconcile to the understanding.

A LOVER NEITHER DEAD NOR ALIVE.

Then down I laid my head
Down on cold earth; and for a while was dead,
And my freed soul to a strange somewhere fled;
Ah, sottish soul, said I,
When back to its cage again I saw it fly;
Fool to resume her broken chain,
And row her galley here again!
Fool, to that body to return
Where it condemn'd and destin'd is to burn!
Once dead, how can it be,
Death should a thing so pleasant seem to thee,
That thou should'st come to live it o'er again in me?

A LOVER'S HEART, A HAND GRENADO.

Wo to her stubborn heart, if once mine come
Into the self-same room;
'Twill tear and blow up all within,
Like a grenado shot into a magazin.
Then shall love keep the ashes, and torn parts,
Of both our broken hearts:
Shall out of both one new one make:
From hers th' allay, from mine the metal take.
COWLEY.

THE POETICAL PROPAGATION OF LIGHT.

The prince's favour is diffus'd o'er all,
From which all fortunes, names, and natures fall:
Then from those wombs of stars, the bride's bright eyes
At every glance a constellation flies
And sows the court with stars, and doth prevent,
In light and power, the all-eyed firmament:
First her eye kindles other ladies' eyes,
Then from their beams their jewels' lustres rise:
And from their jewels torches do take fire,
And all is warmth, and light, and good desire.
DONNE.

They were in very little care to clothe their notions with elegance of dress, and therefore miss the notice and the praise which are often gained by those who think less, but are more diligent to adorn their thoughts.

That a mistress beloved is fairer in idea than in reality, is by Cowley thus expressed:

Thou in my fancy dost much higher stand,
Than woman can be placed by Nature's hand:
And I must needs, I'm sure, a loser be,
To change thee as thou'rt there, for very thee.

That prayer and labour should co-operate, are thus taught by Donne:

In none but us are such mix'd engines found,
As hands of double office; for the ground
We till with them; and them to heaven we raise;
Who prayerless labours, or, without this, prays,
Doth but one half, that's none.

By the same author, a common topic, the danger of procrastination, is thus illustrated:

———That which I should have begun
In my youth's morning, now late must be done;
And I, as giddy travellers must do,
Which stray or sleep all day, and having lost
Light and strength, dark and tired, must then ride post.

All that man has to do is to live and die; the sum of humanity is comprehended by Donne in the following lines:

Think in how poor a prison thou didst lie,
After enabled but to suck and cry.
Think, when 'twas grown to most, 'twas a poor inn
A province pack'd up in two yards of skin,
And that usurp'd, or threaten'd with a rage
Of sicknesses, or their true mother, age.
But think that death hath now enfranchis'd thee;
Thou hast thy expansion now, and liberty;
Think, that a rusty piece discharg'd is flown
In pieces, and the bullet is his own,
And freely flies; this to thy soul allow,
Think thy shell broke, think thy soul hatch'd but now.

They were sometimes indelicate and disgusting. Cowley thus apostrophises beauty:

———Thou tyrant, which leav'st no man free!
Thou subtle thief, from whom nought safe can be!
Thou murtherer, which hast kill'd; and devil, which wouldst damn me!

Thus he addresses his mistress:

Thou who, in many a propriety,
So truly art the sun to me,

Add one more likeness, which I'm sure you can,
And let me and my sun beget a man.

Thus he represents the meditations of a lover:

Though in my thoughts scarce any tracts have been
So much as of original sin,
Such charms thy beauty wears, as might
Desires in dying confest saints excite.
Thou with strange adultery
Dost in each breast a brothel keep;
Awake all men do lust for thee,
And some enjoy thee when they sleep.

THE TRUE TASTE OF TEARS.

Hither with crystal vials, lovers, come,
And take my tears, which are love's wine,
And try your mistress' tears at home;
For all are false, that taste not just like mine.
DONNE.

This is yet more indelicate:

As the sweet sweat of roses in a still,
As that which from chaf'd musk-cats' pores doth trill,
As the almighty balm of the early East;
Such are the sweet drops of my mistress' breast.
And on her neck her skin such lustre sets,
They seem no sweat-drops, but pearl coronets:
Rank, sweaty froth thy mistress' brow defiles
DONNE.

Their expressions sometimes raises horror, when they intend perhaps to be pathetic:

As men in hell are from diseases free,
So from all other ills am I,
Free from their known formality:
But all pains eminently lie in thee.
COWLEY.

They were not always strictly curious, whether the opinions from which they drew their illustrations were true; it was enough that they were popular. Bacon remarks, that some falsehoods are continued by tradition, because they supply commodious allusions.

It gave a piteous groan, and so it broke
In vain it something would have spoke;
The love within too strong for't was,
Like poison put into a Venice-glass.
COWLEY.

In forming descriptions, they looked out, not for images, but for conceits. Night has been a common subject, which poets have contended to adorn. Dryden's Night is well known; Donne's is as follows:

Thou seest me here at midnight, now all rest:
Time's dead low-water; when all minds divest
To-morrow's business; when the labourers have
Such rest in bed, that their last church-yard grave,
Subject to change, will scarce be a type of this;
Now when the client, whose last hearing is
To-morrow, sleeps; when the condemned man,
Who, when he opes his eyes, may shut them then
Again by death, although sad watch he keep,
Doth practise dying by a little sleep;
Thou at this midnight seest me.

It must be however confessed of these writers, that if they are upon uncommon subjects often unnecessarily and unpoetically subtle; yet, where scholastic speculation can be properly admitted, their copiousness and acuteness may justly be admired. What Cowley has written upon Hope shows an unequalled fertility of invention:

Hope, whose weak being ruin'd is,
Alike if it succeed and if it miss;
Whom good or ill does equally confound,
And both the horns of Fate's dilemma wound;
Vain shadow! which dost vanish quite
Both at full noon and perfect night!
The stars have not a possibility
Of blessing thee!
If things then from their end we happy call,
'Tis Hope is the most hopeless thing of all.
Hope, thou bold taster of delight,
Who, whilst thou should'st but taste, devour'st it
Thou bring'st us an estate, yet leav'st us poor,
By clogging it with legacies before!
The joys which we entire should wed,
Come deflower'd virgins to our bed:
Good fortunes without gain imported be,
Such mighty custom's paid to thee:
For joy, like wine kept close, does better taste,
If it take air before its spirits waste.

To the following comparison of a man that travels and his wife that stays at home, with a pair of compasses, it may be doubted whether absurdity or ingenuity has better claim:

Our two souls, therefore, which are one,
Though I must go, endure not yet
A breach, but an expansion,
Like gold to airy thinness beat.
If they be two, they are two so
As stiff twin compasses are two;
Thy soul, the fix'd foot, makes no show
To move, but doth if th' other do.
And though it in the centre sit,
Yet, when the other far doth roam
It leans and hearkens after it,
And grows erect as that comes home.
Such wilt thou be to me, who must,
Like th' other foot obliquely run.
Thy firmness makes my circle just,
And makes me end where I begun.
DONNE.

In all these examples it is apparent, that whatever is improper or vicious is produced by a voluntary deviation from nature in pursuit of something new and strange; and that the writers fail to give delight by their desire of exciting admiration.

HAVING thus endeavoured to exhibit a general representation of the style and sentiments of the metaphysical poets, it is now proper to examine particularly the works of Cowley, who was almost the last of that race, and undoubtedly the best.

His Miscellanies contain a collection of short compositions, written, some as they were dictated by a mind at leisure, and some as they were called forth by different occasions, with great variety of style and sentiment, from burlesque levity to awful grandeur. Such an assemblage of diversified excellence no other poet has hitherto afforded. To choose the best, among many good, is one of the most hazardous attempts of criticism. I know not whether Scaliger himself has persuaded many readers to join with him in his preference of the two favourite odes, which he estimates in his raptures at the value of a kingdom. I will, however, venture to recommend Cowley's first piece, which ought to be inscribed "To my Muse," for want of which the second couplet is without reference. When the title is added, there will still remain a defect; for every piece ought to contain in itself whatever is necessary to make it intelligible. Pope has some epitaphs without names; which are therefore epitaphs to be let, occupied indeed for the present, but hardly appropriated.

The Ode on Wit is almost without a rival. It was about the time of Cowley that *wit*, which had been till then used for *intellection*, in contradistinction to *will*, took the meaning, whatever it be, which it now bears.

Of all the passages in which poets have exemplified their own precepts, none will easily be found of greater excellence than that in which Cowley condemns exuberance of wit:

Yet 'tis not to adorn and gild each part,
That shows more cost than art.
Jewels at nose and lips but ill appear;
Rather than all things wit, let none be there.
Several lights will not be seen,
If there be nothing else between.
Men doubt, because they stand so thick i' the sky,
If those be stars which paint the galaxy.

In his verses to Lord Falkland, whom every man of his time was proud to praise, there are, as there must be in all Cowley's compositions, some striking thoughts, but they are not well wrought. His elegy on Sir Henry Wotton is vigorous and happy; the series of thoughts is easy and natural; and the conclusion, though a little weakened by the intrusion of Alexander, is elegant and forcible.

It may be remarked, that in this Elegy, and in most of his encomiastic poems, he has forgotten or neglected to name his heroes.

In his poem on the death of Hervey, there is much praise, but little passion; a very just and ample delineation of such virtues as a studious privacy admits, and such intellectual excellence as a mind not yet called forth to action can display. He knew how to distinguish, and how to commend, the qualities of his companion; but, when he wishes to make us weep, he forgets to weep himself, and diverts his sorrow by imagining how his crown of bays, if he had it, would *crackle* in the fire. It is the odd fate of this thought to be the worse for being true. The bay leaf crackles remarkably as it burns as therefore this property was not assigned it by chance, the mind must be thought sufficiently at ease that could attend to such minuteness of physiology. But the power of Cowley is not so much to move the affections, as to exercise the understanding.

The Chronicle is a composition unrivalled and alone: such gayety of fancy, such facility of expression, such varied similitude, such a succession of images, and such a dance of words, it is in vain to expect except from Cowley. His strength always appears in his agility; his volatility is not the flutter of a light, but the bound of an elastic mind. His levity never leaves his learning behind it; the moralist, the politician, and the critic, mingle their influence even in this airy frolic of genius. To such a performance, Suckling could have brought the gayety but not the knowledge: Dryden could have supplied the knowledge, but not the gayety.

The verses to Davenant, which are vigorously begun, and happily concluded, contain some hints of criticism very justly conceived and happily expressed. Cowley's critical abilities have not been sufficiently observed; the few decisions and remarks, which his prefaces and his notes on the Davideis supply, were at that time accessions to English literature, and show such skill as raises our wish for more examples.

The lines from Jersey are a very curious and pleasing specimen of the familiar descending to the burlesque.

His two metrical disquisitions *for* and *against* Reason, are no mean specimens of metaphysical poetry. The stanzas against knowledge produce little conviction. In those which are intended to exalt the human faculties, reason has its proper task assigned it; that of judging, not of things revealed, but of the reality of revelation. In the verses *for* Reason, is a passage which Bentley, in the only English verses which he is known to have written, seems to have copied, though with the inferiority of an imitator.

The Holy Book like the eighth sphere doth shine
With thousand lights of truth divine,
So numberless the stars, that to our eye
It makes all but one galaxy.
Yet reason must assist too; for, in seas
So vast and dangerous as these,
Our course by stars above we cannot know
Without the compass too below.

After this says Bentley:*

Who travels in religious jars,
Truth mix'd with error, shade with rays,

* Dodsley's Collection of Poems, vol. v.—R.

Like Whiston wanting pyx or stars,
In ocean wide or sinks or strays.

Cowley seems to have had what Milton is believed to have wanted, the skill to rate his own performances by their just value, and has therefore closed his Miscellanies with the verses upon Crashaw, which apparently excel all that have gone before them, and in which there are beauties which common authors may justly think not only above their attainment, but above their ambition.

To the Miscellanies succeed the Anacreontics, or paraphrastical translations of some little poems, which pass, however justly, under the name of Anacreon. Of these songs dedicated to festivity and gayety, in which, even the morality is voluptuous, and which teach nothing but the enjoyment of the present day, he has given rather a pleasing, than a faithful, representation, having retained their sprightliness, but lost their simplicity. The Anacreon of Cowley, like the Homer of Pope, has admitted the decoration of some modern graces, by which he is undoubtedly more amiable to common readers, and perhaps, if they would honestly declare their own perceptions, to far the greater part of those whom courtesy and ignorance are content to style the learned.

These little pieces will be found more finished in their kind than any other of Cowley's works. The diction shows nothing of the mould of time, and the sentiments are at no great distance from our present habitudes of thought. Real mirth must always be natural, and nature is uniform. Men have been wise in very different modes; but they have always laughed the same way.

Levity of thought naturally produced familiarity of language, and the familiar part of language continues long the same: the dialogue of comedy, when it is transcribed from popular manners and real life, is read from age to age with equal pleasure. The artifices of inversion, by which the established order of words is changed, or of innovation, by which new words or meanings of words are introduced, is practised, not by those who talk to be understood, but by those who write to be admired.

The Anacreontics therefore of Cowley give now all the pleasure which they ever gave. If he was formed by nature for one kind of writing more than for another, his power seems to have been greatest in the familiar and the festive.

The next class of his poems is called *The Mistress*, of which it is not necessary to select any particular pieces for praise or censure. They have all the same beauties and faults, and nearly in the same proportion. They are written with exuberance of wit, and with copiousness of learning; and it is truly asserted by Sprat, that the plenitude of the writer's knowledge flows in upon his page, so that the reader is commonly surprised into some improvement. But, considered as the verses of a lover, no man that has ever loved, will much commend them. They are neither courtly nor pathetic, have neither gallantry nor fondness. His praises are too far sought, and too hyperbolical, either to express love or to excite it; every stanza is crowded with darts and flames, with wounds and death, with mingled souls and with broken hearts.

The principal artifice by which *The Mistress* is filled with conceits, is very copiously displayed by Addison. Love is by Cowley, as by other poets, expressed metaphorically by flame and fire; and that which is true of real fire, is said of love, or figurative fire; the same word in the same sentence retaining both significations. Thus, "observing the cold regard of his mistress's eyes, and at the same time their power of producing love in him, he considers them as burning glasses made of ice. Finding himself able to live in the greatest extremities of love, he concludes the torrid zone to be habitable. Upon the dying of a tree on which he had cut his loves, he observes that his flames had burnt up and withered the tree."

These conceits Addison calls mixed wit; that is, wit which consists of thoughts true in one sense of the expression, and false in the other. Addison's representation is sufficiently indulgent: that confusion of images may entertain for a moment; but, being unnatural, it soon grows wearisome. Cowley delighted in it, as much as if he had invented it; but, not to mention the ancients, he might have found it full-blown in modern Italy. Thus Sannazaro:

Aspice quam variis distringar Lesbia curis!
Uror, et heu! nostro manat ab igne liquor:
Sum Nilus, sumque Ætna simul; restringite flamma
O lacrimæ, aut lacrimas ebibe flamma meas.

One of the severe theologians of that time censured him as having published *a book of profane and lascivious verses.* From the charge of profaneness, the constant tenor of his life, which seems to have been eminently virtuous, and the general tendency of his opinions, which discover no irreverence of religion, must defend him; but that the accusation of lasciviousness is unjust, the perusal of his work will sufficiently evince.

Cowley's *Mistress* has no power of seduction: she "plays round the head; but reaches not the heart." Her beauty and absence, her kindness and cruelty, her disdain and inconstancy, produce no correspondence of emotion. His poetical account of the virtues of plants and colours of flowers, is not perused with more sluggish frigidity. The compositions are such as might have been written for penance by a hermit, or for hire by a philosophical rhymer who had only

neard of another sex; for they turn the mind only on the writer, whom, without thinking on a woman but as the subject for his task, we sometimes esteem as learned, and sometimes despise as trifling, always admire as ingenious, and always condemn as unnatural.

The Pindaric Odes are now to be considered; a species of composition, which Cowley thinks Pancirolus might have counted in "his list of the lost inventions of antiquity," and which he has made a bold and vigorous attempt to recover.

The purpose for which he has paraphrased an Olympic and Nemæan Ode is by himself sufficiently explained. His endeavour was, not to "show precisely what Pindar spoke, but his manner of speaking". He was therefore not at all restrained to his expressions, nor much to his sentiments; nothing was required of him, but not to write as Pindar would not have written.

Of the Olympic Ode, the beginning is, I think, above the original in elegance, and the conclusion below it in strength. The connexion is supplied with great perspicuity; and thoughts, which to a reader of less skill seem thrown together by chance, are concatenated without any abruption. Though the English Ode cannot be called a translation, it may be very properly consulted as a commentary.

The spirit of Pindar is indeed not every where equally preserved. The following pretty lines are not such as his *deep mouth* was used to pour!

> Great Rhea's son,
> If in Olympus top, where thou
> Sitt'st to behold thy sacred show,
> If in Alpheus' silver flight,
> If in my verse thou take delight,
> My verse, great Rhea's son, which is,
> Lofty as that and smooth as this.

In the Nemæan Ode the reader must, in mere justice to Pindar, observe, that whatever is said of "the original new moon, her tender forehead and her horns," is superadded by his paraphrast, who has many other plays of words and fancy unsuitable to the original, as—

> The table, free for every guest,
> No doubt will thee admit,
> And feast more upon thee, than thou on it.

He sometimes extends his author's thoughts without improving them. In the Olympionic, an oath is mentioned in a single word, and Cowley spends three lines in swearing by the *Castalian stream*. We are told of Theron's bounty, with a hint that he had enemies, which Cowley thus enlarges in rhyming prose:

> But in this thankless world the giver
> Is envied even by the receiver;
> 'Tis now the cheap and frugal fashion
> Rather to hide then own the obligation;
> Nay, 'tis much worse than so;
> It now an artifice does grow
> Wrongs and injuries to do,
> Lest men should think we owe.

It is hard to conceive that a man of the first rank in learning and wit, when he was dealing out such minute morality in such feeble diction, could imagine, either waking or dreaming, that he imitated Pindar.

In the following odes, where Cowley chooses his own subjects, he sometimes rises to dignity truly Pindaric; and, if some deficiencies of language be forgiven, his strains are such as those of the Theban Bard were to his contemporaries:

> Begin the song, and strike the living lyre:
> Lo how the years to come, a numerous and well-fitted quire,
> All hand in hand do decently advance,
> And to my song with smooth and equal measure dance;
> While the dance lasts, how long soe'er it be,
> My music's voice shall bear it company;
> Till all gentle notes be drown'd
> In the last trumpet's dreadful sound.

After such enthusiasm, who will not lament to find the poet conclude with lines like these:

> But stop, my Muse—
> Hold thy Pindaric Pegasus closely in,
> Which does to rage begin—
> —'Tis an unruly and a hard mouth'd horse—
> 'Twill no unskilful touch endure,
> But flings writer and reader too that sits not sure.

The fault of Cowley, and perhaps of all the writers of the metaphysical race, is that of pursuing his thoughts to the last ramifications, by which he loses the grandeur of generality; for of the greatest things the parts are little; what is little can be but pretty, and by claiming dignity, becomes ridiculous. Thus all the power of description is destroyed by a scrupulous enumeration; and the force of metaphors is lost, when the mind by the mention of particulars is turned more upon the original than the secondary sense, more upon that from which the illustration is drawn than that to which it is applied.

Of this we have a very eminent example in the ode, entitled *The Muse*, who goes to *take the air*, in an intellectual chariot, to which he harnesses Fancy and Judgment, Wit and Eloquence, Memory and Invention. How he distinguished Wit from Fancy, or how Memory could properly contribute to Motion, he has not explained; we are however content to suppose that he could have justified his own fiction, and wish to see the Muse begin her career; but there is yet more to be done.

> Let the *postilion* Nature mount, and let
> The *coachman* Art be set;

And let the airy *footmen*, running all beside,
Make a long row of goodly pride;
Figures, conceits, raptures, and sentences,
In a well-worded dress,
And innocent loves, and pleasant truths, and useful lies,
In all their gaudy *liveries*.

Every mind is now disgusted with this cumber of magnificence; yet I cannot refuse myself the four next lines:

Mount, glorious queen, thy travelling throne,
And bid it to put on;
For long though cheerful is the way,
And life, alas! allows but one ill winter's day.

In the same ode, celebrating the power of the Muse, he gives her prescience, or, in poetical language, the foresight of events hatching in futurity; but, having once an egg in his mind, he cannot forbear to show us that he knows what an egg contains:

Thou into the close nests of Time dost peep,
And there with piercing eye
Through the firm shell and the thick white dost spy
Years to come a-forming-lie,
Close in their sacred secundine asleep.

The same thought is more generally, and therefore more poetically expressed by Casimir, a writer who has many of the beauties and faults of Cowley.

Omnibus Mundi Dominator horis
Aptat urgendas per inane pennas,
Pars adhuc nido latet, et futuros
Crescit in annos.

Cowley, whatever was his subject, seems to have been carried, by a kind of destiny, to the light and the familiar, or to conceits which require still more ignoble epithets. A slaughter in the Red Sea *new dies the water's name;* and England, during the civil war, was *Albion no more, nor to be named from white.* It is surely by some fascination not easily surmounted, that a writer, professing to revive *the noblest and highest, writing in verse,* makes this address to the new year:

Nay, if thou lov'st me, gentle year,
Let not so much as love be there,
Vain fruitless love I mean; for, gentle year,
Although I fear
There's of this caution little need,
Yet, gentle year, take heed
How thou dost make
Such a mistake;
Such love I mean alone
As by thy cruel predecessors has been shown;
For though I have too much cause to doubt it,
I fain would try for once, if life can live without it.

The reader of this will be inclined to cry out with Prior,

"Ye critics, say,
How poor to this was Pindar's style!"

Even those who cannot perhaps find in the Isthmian or Nemæan songs what antiquity has disposed them to expect, will at least see that they are ill-represented by such puny poetry; and all will determine that if this be the old Theban strain, it is not worthy of revival.

To the disproportion and incongruity of Cowley's sentiments must be added the uncertainty and looseness of his measures. He takes the liberty of using in any place a verse of any length, from two syllables to twelve. The verses of Pindar have, as he observes, very little harmony to a modern ear; yet by examining the syllables, we perceive them to be regular, and have reason enough for supposing that the ancient audiences were delighted with the sound. The imitator ought therefore to have adopted what he found, and to have added what was wanting; to have preserved a constant return of the same numbers, and to have supplied smoothness of transition and continuity of thought.

It is urged by Dr. Sprat, that the "irregularity of numbers is the very thing which makes that kind of poesy fit for all manner of subjects." But he should have remembered, that what is fit for every thing can fit nothing well. The great pleasure of verse arises from the known measure of the lines, and uniform structure of the stanzas, by which the voice is regulated, and the memory relieved.

If the Pindaric style be, what Cowley thinks it, "the highest and noblest kind of writing in verse," it can be adapted only to high and noble subjects; and it will not be easy to reconcile the poet with the critic, or to conceive how that can be the highest kind of writing in verse, which, according to Sprat, "is chiefly to be preferred for its near affinity to prose."

This lax and lawless versification so much concealed the deficiencies of the barren, and flattered the laziness of the idle, that it immediately overspread our books of poetry; all the boys and girls caught the pleasing fashion, and they that could do nothing else, could write like Pindar. The rights of antiquity were invaded, and disorder tried to break into the Latin; a poem* on the Sheldonian Theatre, in which all kinds of verse are shaken together, is unhappily inserted in the "Musæ Anglicanæ." Pindarism

* First published in quarto, 1669, under the title of "Carmen Pindaricum in Theatrum Sheldonianum in solennibus magnifici Operis Encæniis. Recitatum Julii die 9, Anno 1669, a Crobetto Owen, A. B. Æd. Chr. Alumno Authore."—R.

prevailed about half a century; but at last died gradually away, and other imitations supply its place.

The Pindaric Odes have so long enjoyed the highest degree of poetical reputation, that I am not willing to dismiss them with unabated censure; and surely, though the mode of their composition be erroneous, yet many parts deserve at least that admiration which is due to great comprehension of knowledge, and great fertility of fancy. The thoughts are often new, and often striking; but the greatness of one part is disgraced by the littleness of another; and total negligence of language gives the noblest conceptions the appearance of a fabric august in the plan, but mean in the materials. Yet surely those verses are not without a just claim to praise; of which it may be said with truth, no man but Cowley could have written them.

The Davideis now remains to be considered; a poem which the author designed to have extended to twelve books, merely, as he makes no scruple of declaring, because the Æneid had that number: but he had leisure or perseverance only to write the third part. Epic poems have been left unfinished by Virgil, Statius, Spenser, and Cowley. That we have not the whole Davideis is, however, not much to be regretted; for in this undertaking, Cowley is, tacitly at least, confessed to have miscarried. There are not many examples of so great a work, produced by an author generally read, and generally praised, that has crept through a century with so little regard. Whatever is said of Cowley, is meant of his other works. Of the Davideis, no mention is made; it never appears in books, nor emerges in conversation. By the Spectator it has been once quoted; by Rymer it has once been praised; and by Dryden, in "Mack Flecknoe," it has once been imitated; nor do I recollect much other notice from its publication till now in the whole succession of English literature.

Of this silence and neglect, if the reason be inquired, it will be found partly in the choice of the subject, and partly in the performance of the work.

Sacred History has been always read with submissive reverence, and an imagination overawed and controlled. We have been accustomed to acquiesce in the nakedness and simplicity of the authentic narrative, and to repose on its veracity with such humble confidence as suppresses curiosity. We go with the historian as he goes, and stop with him when he stops. All amplification is frivolous and vain: all addition to that which is already sufficient for the purposes of religion, seems not only useless but in some degree profane.

Such events as were produced by the visible interposition of Divine power are above the power of human genius to dignify. The miracle of creation, however it may teem with images, is best described with little diffusion of language; "He spake the word, and they were made."

We are told that Saul was troubled with an evil spirit; from this, Cowley takes an oportunity of describing hell, and telling the history of Lucifer, who was, he says,

> Once general of a gilded host of sprites,
> Like Hesper leading forth the spangled nights;
> But down like lightning, which him struck, he came,
> And roar'd at his first plunge into the flame.

Lucifer makes a speech to the inferior agents of mischief, in which there is something of heathenism, and therefore of impropriety; and, to give efficacy to his words, concludes by lashing his breast with his long tail. Envy, after a pause, steps out, and among other declarations of her zeal utters these lines.

> Do thou but threat, loud storms shall make reply,
> And thunder echo to the trembling sky:
> Whilst raging seas swell to so bold an height,
> As shall the fire's proud element affright.
> Th' old drudging sun, from his long beaten way
> Shall at thy voice start, and misguide the day.
> The jocund orbs shall break their measured pace,
> And stubborn poles change their allotted place.
> Heaven's gilded troops shall flutter here and there,
> Leaving their boasting songs tuned to a sphere.

Every reader feels himself weary with this useless talk of an allegorical being.

It is not only when the events are confessedly miraculous, that fancy and fiction lose their effect; the whole system of life, while the theocracy was yet visible, has an appearance so different from all other scenes of human action, that the reader of the Sacred Volume habitually considers it as the peculiar mode of existence of a distinct species of mankind, that lived and acted with manners uncommunicable; so that it is difficult even for imagination to place us in the state of them whose story is related, and by consequence their joys and griefs are not easily adopted, nor can the attention be often interested in any thing that befalls them.

To the subject thus originally indisposed to the reception of poetical embellishments, the writer brought little that could reconcile impatience, or attract curiosity. Nothing can be more disgusting than a narrative spangled with conceits; and conceits are all that the Davideis supplies.

One of the great sources of poetical delight is description,* or the power of presenting pictures

* Dr. Warton discovers some contrariety of opinion between this and what is said of description in p. 14.—C.

to the mind. Cowley gives inferences instead of images, and shows not what may be supposed to have been seen, but what thoughts the sight might have suggested. When Virgil describes the stone which Turnus lifted against Æneas, he fixes the attention on its bulk and weight:

Saxum circumspicit ingens,
Saxum antiquum, ingens, campo quod forte jacebat
Limes agro positus, litem ut discerneret arvis.

Cowley says of the stone with which Cain slew his brother,

I saw him fling the stone, as if he meant
At once his murther and his monument.

Of the sword taken from Goliah, he says,

A sword so great, that it was only fit
To cut off his great head that came with it.

Other poets describe death by some of its common appearances. Cowley says, with a learned allusion to sepulchral lamps, real or fabulous,

'Twixt his right ribs deep pierc'd the furious blade,
And open'd wide those secret vessels where
Life's light goes out, when first they let in air.

But he has allusions vulgar as well as learned. In a visionary succession of kings,

Joas at first does bright and glorious show,
In life's fresh morn his fame does early crow.

Describing an undisciplined army, after having said with elegance,

His forces seem'd no army, but a crowd
Heartless, unarm'd, disorderly, and loud—

he gives them a fit of the ague.

The allusions, however, are not always to vulgar things; he offends by exaggeration as much as by diminution:

The king was plac'd alone, and o'er his head
A well-wrought heaven of silk and gold was spread.

Whatever he writes is always polluted with some conceit:

Where the sun's fruitful beams give metals birth,
Where he the growth of fatal gold does see,
Gold, which alone more influence has than he.

In one passage he starts a sudden question to the confusion of philosophy:

Ye learned heads, whom ivy garlands grace,
Why does that twining plant the oak embrace:
The oak for courtship most of all unfit,
And rough as are the winds that fight with it?

His expressions have sometimes a degree of meanness that surpasses expectation:

Nay, gentle guests, he cries, since now you're in,
The story of your gallant friend begin.

In a simile descriptive of the Morning:

As glimmering stars just at th' approach of day,
Cashier'd by troops, at last all drop away.

The dress of Gabriel deserves attention:

He took for skin a cloud most soft and bright,
That e'er the mid-day sun pierc'd through with light;
Upon his cheeks a lively blush he spread,
Wash'd from the morning beauties' deepest red:
An harmless flatt'ring meteor shone for hair,
And fell adown his shoulders with loose care;
He cuts out a silk mantle from the skies,
Where the most sprightly azure pleas'd the eyes
This he with starry vapours sprinkles all,
Took in their prime ere they grow ripe and fall;
Of a new rainbow ere it fret or fade,
The choicest piece cut out, a scarf is made.

This is a just specimen of Cowley's imagery: what might in general expressions be great and forcible, he weakens and makes ridiculous by branching it into small parts. That Gabriel was invested with the softest or brightest colours of the sky, we might have been told, and been dismissed to improve the idea in our different proportions of conception; but Cowley could not let us go till he had related where Gabriel got first his skin, and then his mantle, then his lace, and then his scarf, and related it in the terms of the mercer and tailor.

Sometimes he indulges himself in a digression, always conceived with his natural exuberance, and commonly, even where it is not long, continued till it is tedious:

I' th' library a few choice authors stood,
Yet 'twas well stor'd, for that small store was good:
Writing, man's spiritual physic, was not then
Itself, as now, grown a disease of men.
Learning (young virgin) but few suitors knew;
The common prostitute she lately grew,
And with the spurious brood loads now the press;
Laborious effects of idleness.

As the Davideis affords only four books, though intended to consist of twelve, there is no opportunity for such criticism as epic poems commonly supply. The plan of the whole work is very imperfectly shown by the third part. The duration of an unfinished action cannot be known. Of characters either not yet introduced, or shown but upon few occasions, the full extent and the nice discriminations cannot be ascertained. The fable is plainly implex, formed rather from the Odyssey than the Iliad: and many artifices of diversification are employed, with the skill of a man acquainted with the best models. The past is recalled by narration, and the future anticipated by vision: but he has been so lavish of his poetical art, that it is difficult to imagine how he could fill eight books more without practising again the same modes of disposing his matter: and perhaps the perception of this growing incumbrance inclined

him to stop. By this abruption, posterity lost more instruction than delight. If the continuation of the Davideis can be missed, it is for the learning that had been diffused over it, and the notes in which it had been explained.

Had not his characters been depraved like every other part by improper decorations, they would have deserved uncommon praise. He gives Saul both the body and mind of a hero:

> His way once chose, he forward thrust outright,
> Nor turn'd aside for danger or delight.

And the different beauties of the lofty Merah and the gentle Michol are very justly conceived and strongly painted.

Rymer has declared the Davideis superior to the Jerusalem of Tasso, "which," says he, "the poet, with all his care, has not totally purged from pedantry." If by pedantry is meant that minute knowledge which is derived from particular sciences and studies, in opposition to the general notions supplied by a wide survey of life and nature, Cowley certainly errs, by introducing pedantry far more frequently than Tasso. I know not, indeed, why they should be compared; for the resemblance of Cowley's work to Tasso's is only that they both exhibit the agency of celestial and infernal spirits, in which however they differ widely; for Cowley supposes them commonly to operate upon the mind by suggestion; Tasso represents them as promoting or obstructing events by external agency.

Of particular passages that can be properly compared, I remember only the description of heaven, in which the different manner of the two writers is sufficiently discernible. Cowley's is scarcely description, unless it be possible to describe by negatives: for he tells us only what there is not in heaven. Tasso endeavours to represent the splendours and pleasures of the regions of happiness. Tasso affords images, and Cowley sentiments. It happens, however, that Tasso's description affords some reason for Rymer's censure. He says of the Supreme Being,

> Hà sotto i piedi fato e la natura
> Ministri humili, e'l moto, e ch'il misura.

The second line has in it more of pedantry than perhaps can be found in any other stanza of the poem.

In the perusal of the Davideis, as of all Cowley's works, we find wit and learning unprofitably squandered. Attention has no relief; the affections are never moved; we are sometimes surprised, but never delighted, and find much to admire, but little to approve. Still however it is the work of Cowley, of a mind capacious by nature, and replenished by study.

In the general review of Cowley's poetry, it will be found that he wrote with abundant fertility, but negligent or unskilful selection; with much thought, but with little imagery; that he is never pathetic, and rarely sublime; but always either ingenious or learned, either acute or profound.

It is said by Denham in his elegy,

> To him no author was unknown,
> Yet what he writ was all his own.

This wide position requires less limitation, when it is affirmed of Cowley, than perhaps of any other poet.—He read much, and yet borrowed little.

His character of writing was indeed not his own: he unhappily adopted that which was predominant. He saw a certain way to present praise; and, not sufficiently inquiring by what means the ancients have continued to delight through all the changes of human manners, he contented himself with a deciduous laurel, of which the verdure in its spring was bright and gay, but which time has been continually stealing from his brows.

He was in his own time considered as of unrivalled excellence. Clarendon represents him as having taken a flight beyond all that went before him; and Milton is said to have declared, that the three greatest English poets were Spenser, Shakspeare, and Cowley.

His manner he had in common with others; but his sentiments were his own. Upon every subject he thought for himself; and such was his copiousness of knowledge, that something at once remote and applicable rushed into his mind; yet it is not likely that he always rejected a commodious idea merely because another had used it: his known wealth was so great that he might have borrowed without loss of credit.

In his elegy on Sir Henry Wotton, the last lines have such resemblance to the noble epigram of Grotius on the death of Scaliger, that I cannot but think them copied from it, though they are copied by no servile hand.

One passage in his Mistress is so apparently borrowed from Donne, that he probably would not have written it, had it not mingled with his own thoughts, so as that he did not perceive himself taking it from another:

> Although I think thou never found wilt be
> Yet I'm resolv'd to search for thee;
> The search itself rewards the pains.
> So, though the chymic his great secret miss
> (For neither it in art or nature is,)
> Yet things well worth his toil he gains:
> And does his charge and labour pay
> With good unsought experiments by the way.
> COWLEY.

> Some that have deeper digg'd Love's mine than I,
> Say, where his centric happiness doth lie:
> I have lov'd, and got, and told;
> But should I love, get, tell, till I were old,

I should not find that hidden mystery;
Oh, 'tis imposture all!
And as no chymic yet th' elixir got,
But glorifies his pregnant pot,
If by the way to him befal
Some odoriferous thing, or medicinal,
So lovers dream a rich and long delight,
But get a winter-seeming summer's night.

Jonson and Donne, as Dr. Hurd remarks, were then in the highest esteem.

It is related by Clarendon that Cowley always acknowledges his obligation to the learning and industry of Jonson; but I have found no traces of Jonson in his works: to emulate Donne appears to have been his purpose; and from Donne he may have learned that familiarity with religious images, and that light allusion to sacred things, by which readers far short of sanctity are frequently offended; and which would not be borne in the present age, when devotion, perhaps not more fervent, is more delicate.

Having produced one passage taken by Cowley from Donne, I will recompense him by another which Milton seems to have borrowed from him. He says of Goliah,

His spear, the trunk was of a lofty tree,
Which nature meant some tall ship's mast should be.

Milton of Satan:

His spear, to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
Of some great admiral, were but a wand,
He walked with.

His diction was in his own time censured as negligent. He seems not to have known, or not to have considered, that words being arbitrary must owe their power to association, and have the influence, and that only, which custom has given them. Language is the dress of thought: and as the noblest mien, or most graceful action, would be degraded and obscured by a garb appropriated to the gross employments of rustics or mechanics; so the most heroic sentiments will lose their efficacy, and the most splendid ideas drop their magnificence, if they are conveyed by words used commonly upon low and trivial occasions, debased by vulgar mouths, and contaminated by inelegant applications.

Truth indeed is always truth, and reason is always reason; they have an intrinsic and unalterable value, and constitute that intellectual gold which defies destruction; but gold may be so concealed in baser matter, that only a chymist can recover it; sense may be so hidden in unrefined and plebeian words, that none but philosophers can distinguish it; and both may be so buried in impurities, as not to pay the cost of their extraction.

The diction, being the vehicle of the thoughts, first presents itself to the intellectual eye: and if the first appearance offends, a further knowlege is not often sought. Whatever professes to benefit by pleasing, must please at once. The pleasures of the mind imply something sudden and unexpected; that which elevates must always surprise. What is perceived by slow degrees may gratify us with consciousness of improvement, but will never strike with the sense of pleasure.

Of all this Cowley appears to have been without knowledge, or without care. He makes no selection of words, nor seeks any neatness of phrase: he has no elegances, either lucky or elaborate: as his endeavours were rather to impress sentences upon the understanding than images on the fancy; he has few epithets, and those scattered without peculiar propriety of nice adaptation. It seems to follow from the necessity of the subject, rather than the care of the writer, that the diction of his heroic poem is less familiar than that of his slightest writings. He has given not the same numbers, but the same diction, to the gentle Anacreon and the tempestuous Pindar.

His versification seems to have had very little of his care; and if what he thinks be true, that his numbers are unmusical only when they are ill-read, the art of reading them is at present lost; for they are commonly harsh to modern ears. He has indeed many noble lines, such as the feeble care of Waller never could produce. The bulk of his thoughts sometimes swelled his verse to unexpected and inevitable grandeur; but his excellence of this kind is merely fortuitous: he sinks willingly down to his general carelessness, and avoids with very little care either meanness or asperity.

His contractions are often rugged and harsh:

One flings a mountain, and its rivers too
Torn up with't.

His rhymes are very often made by pronouns, or particles, or the like unimportant words, which disappoint the ear, and destroy the energy of the line.

His combination of different measures is sometimes dissonant and unpleasing; he joins verses together, of which the former does not slide easily into the latter.

The words *do* and *did*, which so much degrade in present estimation the line that admits them, were, in the time of Cowley, little censured or avoided: how often he used them, and with how bad an effect, at least to our ears, will appear by a passage in which every reader will lament to see just and noble thoughts defrauded of their praise by inelegance of language:

Where honour or where conscience *does* not bind,
No other law shall shackle me;
Slave to myself I ne'er will be;
Nor shall my future actions be confin'd
By my own present mind.

Who by resolves and vows engaged *does* stand,
For days that yet belong to fate,
Does, like an unthrift, mortgage his estate
Before it falls into his hand;
The bondman of the cloister so,
All that he *does* receive *does* always owe.
And still as time comes in, it goes away,
Not to enjoy but debts to pay!
Unhappy slave, and pupil to a bell!
Which his hour's work as well as hours *does* tell:
Unhappy till the last, the kind releasing knell.

His heroic lines are often formed of monosyllables; but yet they are sometimes sweet and sonorous.

He says of the Messiah,

Round the whole earth his dreadcd name shall sound,
And reach to worlds that must not yet be found.

In another place, of David,

Yet bid him go securely when he sends;
'Tis Saul that is his foe, and we his friends.
The man who has his God, no aid can lack;
And we who bid him go, will bring him back.

Yet amidst his negligence he sometimes attempted an improved and scientific versification; of which it will be best to give his own account subjoined to this line:

Nor can the glory contain itself in the endless space.

"I am sorry that it is necessary to admonish the most part of readers, that it is not by negligence that this verse is so loose, long, and as it were, vast; it is to paint in the number the nature of the thing which it describes, which I would have observed in divers other places of this poem, that else will pass for very careless verses: as before,

'And over-runs the neighbouring fields with violent course.'

"In the second book;

'Down a precipice deep, down he casts them all,—'

"And,

'And fell adown his shoulders with loose care.'

"In the third,

'Brass was his helmet, his boots brass, and o'er
His breast a thick plate of strong brass he wore.'

"In the fourth,

'Like some fair Pine o'er-looking all the ignobler wood.'

"And,

'Some from the rocks cast themselves down headlong.'

"And many more: but it is enough to instance in a few. The thing is, that the disposition of words and numbers should be such, as that, out of the order and sound of them, the things themselves may be represented. This the Greeks were not so accurate as to bind themselves to: neither have our English poets observed it, f aught I can find. The Latins *(qui Musas colu severiores)* sometimes did it; and their princ Virgil, always: in whom the examples are i numerable, and taken notice of by all judicio men, so that it is superfluous to collect them."

I know not whether he has, in many of thes instances, attained the representation or resem blance that he purposes. Verse can imitate onl sound and motion. A *boundless* verse, a *heav long* verse, and a verse of *brass* or of *strong bras* seem to comprise very incongruous and unsoc able ideas. What there is peculiar in the soun of the line expressing *loose care*, I cannot di cover; nor why the *pine* is *taller* in an Alexan drine than in ten syllables.

But, not to defraud him of his due praise, h has given one example of representative versifi cation, which perhaps no other English line ca equal:

Begin, be bold, and venture to be wise:
He, who defers this work from day to day,
Does on a river's bank expecting stay
Till the whole stream that stopp'd him shall be gon
Which runs, and as it runs, for ever shall run on.

Cowley was, I believe, the first poet th mingled Alexandrines at pleasure with the com mon heroic of ten syllables; and from him Dry den borrowed the practice, whether ornament or licentious. He considered the verse of twelv syllables as elevated and majestic, and has there fore deviated into that measure when he sup poses the voice heard of the Supreme Being.

The author of the Davideis is commended b Dryden for having written it in couplets, be cause he discovered that any staff was too lyric for an heroic poem; but this seems to have bee known before by May and Sandys, the translator of the Pharsalia and the Metamorphoses.

In the Davideis are some hemistichs, or verse left imperfect by the author, in imitation of Vir gil, whom he supposes not to have intended t complete them; that this opinion is erroneou may be probably concluded, because his trunca tion is imitated by no subsequent Roman poet because Virgil himself filled up one broken lin in the heat of recitation; because in one th sense is now unfinished; and because all tha can be done by a broken verse, a line intersecte by a *cæsura*, and a full stop, will equally effect

Of triplets in his Davideis he makes no use and perhaps did not at first think them allow able; but he appears afterwards to have change his mind, for, in the verses on the governmen of Cromwell, he inserts them liberally wit great happiness.

After so much criticism on his Poems, th Essays which accompany them must not be for gotten. What is said by Sprat of his conversa tion, that no man could draw from it any sus picion of his excellence in poetry, may be applie

to these compositions. No author ever kept his verse and his prose at a greater distance from each other. His thoughts are natural, and his style has a smooth and placid equability, which has never yet obtained its due commendation. Nothing is far sought, or hard-laboured; but all is easy without feebleness, and familiar without grossness.

It has been observed by Felton, in his Essay on the Classics, that Cowley was beloved by every muse that he courted; and that he has rivalled the ancients in every kind of poetry but tragedy.

It may be affirmed, without any encomiastic fervour, that he brought to his poetic labours a mind replete with learning, and that his pages are embellished with all the ornaments which books could supply; that he was the first who imparted to English numbers the enthusiasm of the greater ode, and the gayety of the less; that he was equally qualified for sprightly sallies, and for lofty flights; that he was among those who freed translation from servility, and instead of following his author at a distance, walked by his side; and that if he left versification yet improvable, he left likewise from time to time such specimens of excellence as enabled succeeding poets to improve it.

DENHAM.

Of Sir John Denham very little is known but what is related of him by Wood, or by himself.

He was born at Dublin in 1615;* the only son of Sir John Denham, of Little Horseley, in Essex, then chief baron of the Exchequer in Ireland, and of Eleanor, daughter of Sir Garret More, baron of Mellefont.

Two years afterwards, his father, being made one of the barons of the Exchequer in England, brought him away from his native country, and educated him in London.

In 1631 he was sent to Oxford, where he was considered "as a dreaming young man, given more to dice and cards than study:" and therefore gave no prognostics of his future eminence; nor was suspected to conceal, under sluggishness and laxity, a genius born to improve the literature of his country.

When he was, three years afterwards, removed to Lincoln's Inn, he prosecuted the common law with sufficient appearance of application; yet did not lose his propensity to cards and dice; but was very often plundered by gamesters.

Being severely reproved for this folly, he professed, and perhaps believed, himself reclaimed; and, to testify the sincerity of his repentance, wrote and published "An Essay upon Gaming."

He seems to have divided his studies between law and poetry: for, in 1636, he translated the second book of the Æneid.

Two years after, his father died; and then, notwithstanding his resolutions and professions, he returned again to the vice of gaming, and lost several thousand pounds that had been left him.

In 1642, he published "The Sophy." This seems to have given him his first hold of the public attention; for Waller remarked, "That he broke out like the Irish rebellion, threescore thousand strong, when nobody was aware, or in the least suspected it; an observation which could have had no propriety, had his poetical abilities been known before.

He was after that pricked for sheriff of Surry, and made governor of Farnham Castle for the King; but he soon resigned that charge, and retreated to Oxford, where, in 1643, he published "Cooper's Hill."

This poem had such reputation as to excite the common artifice by which envy degrades excellence.—A report was spread, that the performance was not his own, but that he had bought it of a vicar for forty pounds. The same attempt was made to rob Addison of Cato, and Pope of his Essay on Criticism.

In 1647, the distresses of the royal family required him to engage in more dangerous employments. He was entrusted by the Queen with a message to the King; and, by whatever means, so far softened the ferocity of Hugh Peters, that by his intercession admission was

* In Hamilton's Memoirs of Count Grammont, Sir John Denham is said to have been 79 when he married Miss Brook, about the year 1664: according to which statement he was born in 1585. But Dr. Johnson, who has followed Wood, is right. He entered Trinity College, Oxford, at the age of 16, in 1631, as appears by the following entry, which I copied from the matriculation book:

Trin. Coll. "1631. Nov. 18. Johannes Denham, Essex, filius J. Denham, de Horsley parvâ in com. prædict. militis annos natus 16."—Malone.

procured. Of the King's condescension he has given an account in the dedication of his works.

He was afterwards employed in carrying on the King's correspondence; and, as he says, discharged this office with great safety to the royalists: and, being accidentally discovered by the adverse party's knowledge of Mr. Cowley's hand, he escaped happily both for himself and his friends.

He was yet engaged in a greater undertaking. In April, 1648, he conveyed James the duke of York from London into France, and delivered him there to the queen and prince of Wales. This year he published his translation of "Cato Major."

He now resided in France as one of the followers of the exiled king; and to divert the melancholy of their condition, was sometimes enjoined by his master to write occasional verses; one of which amusements was probably his ode or song upon the Embassy to Poland, by which he and Lord Crofts procured a contribution of ten thousand pounds from the Scotch that wandered over that kingdom. Poland was at that time very much frequented by itinerant traders, who, in a country of very little commerce and of great extent, where every man resided on his own estate, contributed very much to the accommodation of life, by bringing to every man's house those little necessaries which it was very inconvenient to want, and very troublesome to fetch. I have formerly read, without much reflection, of the multitude of Scotchmen that travelled with their wares in Poland; and that their numbers were not small, the success of this negotiation gives sufficient evidence.

About this time, what estate the war and the gamesters had left him, was sold, by order of the parliament; and when, in 1652, he returned to England, he was entertained by the earl of Pembroke.

Of the next years of his life there is no account. At the restoration he obtained that which many missed—the reward of his loyalty; being made surveyor of the king's buildings, and dignified with the order of the Bath. He seems now to have learned some attention to money; for Wood says, that he got by this place seven thousand pounds.

After the restoration, he wrote the poem on Prudence and Justice, and perhaps some of his other pieces: and, as he appears, whenever any serious question comes before him, to have been a man of piety, he consecrated his poetical powers to religion, and, made a metrical version of the Psalms of David. In this attempt he has failed; but in sacred poetry who has succeeded?

It might be hoped that the favour of his master, and esteem of the public, would now make him happy. But human felicity is short and uncertain; a second marriage brought upon him so much disquiet, as for a time disordered his understanding; and Butler lampooned him for his lunacy. I know not whether the malignant lines were then made public, nor what provocation incited Butler to do that which no provocation can excuse.

His frenzy lasted not long;* and he seems to have regained his full force of mind; for he wrote afterwards his excellent poem upon the death of Cowley, whom he was not long to survive; for on the 19th of March, 1668, he was buried by his side.

Denham is deservedly considered as one of the fathers of English poetry. "Denham and Waller," says Prior, "improved our versification, and Dryden perfected it." He has given specimens of various composition, descriptive, ludicrous, didactic, and sublime.

He appears to have had, in common with almost all mankind, the ambition of being upon proper occasion "a merry fellow," and in common with most of them to have been by nature, or by early habits, debarred from it. Nothing is less exhilarating than the ludicrousness of Denham; he does not fail for want of efforts; he is familiar, he is gross; but he is never merry, unless the "Speech against Peace in the close Committee" be excepted. For grave burlesque, however, his imitation of Davenant shows him to be well qualified.

Of his more elevated occasional poems, there is perhaps none that does not deserve commendation. In the verses to Fletcher, we have an image that has since been often adopted:†

> But whither am I stray'd? I need not raise
> Trophies to thee, from other men's dispraise;
> Nor is thy fame on lesser ruins built,
> Nor need thy juster title the foul guilt
> Of Eastern kings, who, to secure their reign,
> Must have their brothers, sons, and kindred slain.

After Denham, Orrery, in one of his prologues,

> Poets are sultans, if they had their will;
> For every author would his brother kill.

And Pope,

> Should such a man too fond to rule alone,
> Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne.

But this is not the best of his little pieces: it is excelled by his poem to Fanshaw, and his Elegy on Cowley.

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* In Grammont's Memoirs, many circumstances are related, both of his marriage and his frenzy, very little favourable to his character.—R.

† It is remarkable that Johnson should not have recollected, that this image is to be found in Bacon. Aristoteles more othomannoram, regna: re se haud tuto posse putabat, nisi fratres suos, omnes contra udasset.—De augment. scient. lib. iii.

His praise of Fanshaw's version of Guarini contains a very sprightly and judicious character of a good translator:

That servile path thou nobly dost decline,
Of tracing word by word and line by line.
Those are the labour'd birth of slavish brains,
Not the effect of poetry, but pains;
Cheap vulgar arts, whose narrowness affords
No flight for thoughts, but poorly stick at words.
A new and nobler way thou dost pursue,
To make translations and translators too.
They but preserve the ashes; thou the flame,
True to his sense, but truer to his fame.

The excellence of these lines is greater, as the truth which they contain was not at that time generally known.

His poem on the death of Cowley was his last, and, among his shorter works, his best performance: the numbers are musical, and the thoughts are just.

"Cooper's Hill" is the work that confers upon him the rank and dignity of an original author. He seems to have been, at least among us, the author of a species of composition that may be denominated *local poetry*, of which the fundamental subject is some particular landscape, to be poetically described, with the addition of such embellishments as may be supplied by historical retrospection or incidental meditation.

To trace a new scheme of poetry, has in itself a very high claim to praise, and its praise is yet more when it is apparently copied by Garth and Pope;* after whose names little will be gained by an enumeration of smaller poets, that have left scarcely a corner of the island not dignified either by rhyme or blank verse.

"Cooper's Hill," if it be maliciously inspected, will not be found without its faults. The digressions are too long, the morality too frequent, and the sentiments sometimes such as will not bear a rigorous inquiry.

The four verses, which, since Dryden has commended them, almost every writer for a century past has imitated, are generally known:

O could I flow like thee, and make thy stream
My great example, as it is my theme!
Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull;
Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full.

The lines are in themselves not perfect: for most of the words, thus artfully opposed, are to be understood simply on one side of the comparison, and metaphorically on the other; and if there be any language that does not express intellectual operations by material images into that language they cannot be translated. But so much meaning is comprised in so few words; the particulars of resemblances are so perspicaciously collected, and every mode of excellence separated from its adjacent fault by so nice a line of limitation; the different parts of the sentence are so accurately adjusted; and the flow of the last couplet is so smooth and sweet; that the passage, however celebrated, has not been praised above its merit. It has beauty peculiar to itself, and must be numbered among those felicities which cannot be produced at will by wit and labour, but must arise unexpectedly in some hour propitious to poetry.

He appears to have been one of the first that understood the necessity of emancipating translation from the drudgery of counting lines and interpreting single words. How much this servile practice obscured the clearest and deformed the most beautiful parts of the ancient authors, may be discovered by a perusal of our earlier versions; some of them are the works of men well qualified, not only by critical knowledge, but by poetical genius, who yet, by a mistaken ambition of exactness, degraded at once their originals and themselves.

Denham saw the better way, but has not pursued it with great success. His versions of Virgil are not pleasing; but they taught Dryden to please better. His poetical imitation of Tully on "Old Age" has neither the clearness of prose, nor the sprightliness of poetry.

The "strength of Denham," which Pope so emphatically mentions, is to be found in many lines and couplets, which convey much meaning in few words, and exhibit the sentiment with more weight than bulk.

ON THE THAMES.

Though with those streams he no resemblance hold,
Whose foam is amber, and their gravel gold;
His genuine and less guilty wealth t'explore,
Search not his bottom, but survey his shore.

ON STRAFFORD.

His wisdom such, at once it did appear
Three kingdoms' wonder, and three kingdoms' fear
While single he stood forth, and seem'd, although
Each had an army, as an equal foe,
Such was his force of eloquence, to make
The hearers more concern'd than he that spake:
Each seem'd to act that part he came to see,
And none was more a looker-on than he;
So did he move our passions, some were known
To wish, for the defence, the crime their own.
Now private pity strove with public hate,
Reason with rage, and eloquence with fate.

ON COWLEY.

To him no author was unknown,
Yet what he wrote was all his own,
Horace's wit, and Virgil's state,
He did not steal, but emulate!
And when he would like them appear,
Their garb, but not their clothes, did wear.

As one of Denham's principal claims to the regard of posterity arises from his improve-

* By Garth, in his "Poem on Claremont;" and by Pope, in his "Windsor Forest."

ment of our numbers, his versification ought to be considered. It will afford that pleasure which arises from the observation of a man of judgment, naturally right, forsaking bad copies by degrees, and advancing towards a better practice as he gains more confidence in himself.

In his translation of Virgil, written when he was about twenty-one years old, may be still found the old manner of continuing the sense ungracefully from verse to verse:

——Then all those
Who in the dark our fury did escape,
Returning, know our borrow'd arms, and shape,
And differing dialect; then their numbers swell
And grow upon us; first Chorœbeus fell
Before Minerva's altar: next did bleed
Just Ripheus, whom no Trojan did exceed
In virtue, yet the gods his fate decreed.
Then Hypanis and Dymas, wounded by
Their friends; nor thee, Pantheus, thy piety,
Nor consecrated mitre, from the same
Ill fate could save, my country's funeral flame
And Troy's cold ashes I attest, and call
To witness for myself, that in their fall
No foes, no death, nor danger, I declin'd,
Did, and deserved no less, my fate to find.

From this kind of concatenated metre he afterwards refrained, and taught his followers the art of concluding their sense in couplets; which has perhaps been with rather too much constancy pursued.

This passage exhibits one of those triplets which are not unfrequent in this first essay, but which it is to be supposed his maturer judgment disapproved, since in his latter works he has totally forborn them.

His rhymes are such as seem found without difficulty, by following the sense; and are for the most part as exact at least as those of other poets, though now and then the reader is shifted off with what he can get:

O how *transform'd!*
How much unlike that Hector, who *return'd*
Clad in Achilles' spoils!

And again:

From thence a thousand lesser poets *sprung*
Like petty princes from the fall of *Rome*.

Sometimes the weight of rhyme is laid upon a word too feeble to sustain it.

——Troy confounded falls
From all her glories: if it might have stood
By any power, by this right hand it *shou'd*.
—And though my outward state misfortune *hath*
Deprest thus low, it cannot reach my faith.
—Thus, by his fraud and our own faith o'ercome,
A feigned tear destroys us, against *whom*
Tydides nor Achilles could prevail,
Nor ten years conflict, nor a thousand sail."

He is not very careful to vary the ends of his verses; in one passage the word *die* rhymes three couplets in six.

Most of these petty faults are in his first productions, where he was less skilful, or at least less dexterous in the use of words; and though they had been more frequent, they could only have lessened the grace, not the strength, of his composition. He is one of the writers that improved our taste, and advanced our language; and whom we ought therefore to read with gratitude, though, having done much, he left much to do.

MILTON.

The life of Milton has been already written in so many forms, and with such minute inquiry, that I might perhaps more properly have contented myself with the addition of a few notes on Mr. Fenton's elegant Abridgment, but that a new narrative was thought necessary to the uniformity of this addition.

John Milton was by birth a gentleman, descended from the proprietors of Milton, near Thame, in Oxfordshire, one of whom forfeited his estate in the times of York and Lancaster. Which side he took I know not; his descendant inherited no veneration for the White Rose.

His grandfather, John, was keeper of the forest of Shotover, a zealous papist, who disinherited his son because he had forsaken the religion of his ancestors.

His father, John, who was the son disinherited, had recourse for his support to the profession of a scrivener. He was a man eminent for his skill in music, many of his compositions being still to be found; and his reputation in his profession was such, that he grew rich, and retired to an estate. He had probably more than common literature, as his son addresses him in one of his most elaborate Latin poems. He

married a gentlewoman of the name of Caston, a Welch family, by whom he had two sons, John, the poet, and Christopher, who studied the law, and adhered, as the law taught him, to the King's party, for which he was a while persecuted; but having, by his brother's interest, obtained permission to live in quiet, he supported himself so honourably by chamber-practice, that, soon after the accession of King James, he was knighted, and made a judge; but, his constitution being too weak for business, he retired before any disreputable compliances became necessary.

He had likewise a daughter, Anne, whom he married with considerable fortune to Edward Philips, who came from Shrewsbury, and rose in the Crown-office to be secondary: by him she had two sons, John and Edward, who were educated by the poet, and from whom is derived the only authentic account of his domestic manners.

John, the poet, was born in his father's house, at the Spread Eagle, in Bread-street, Dec. 9, 1608, between six and seven in the morning. His father appears to have been very solicitous about his education; for he was instructed at first by private tuition, under the care of Thomas Young, who was afterwards chaplain to the English merchants at Hamburgh, and of whom we have reason to think well, since his scholar considered him as worthy of an epistolary elegy.

He was then sent to St. Paul's School, under the care of Mr. Gill; and removed, in the beginning of his sixteenth year, to Christ's College, in Cambridge, where he entered a sizar,* Feb. 12, 1624.

He was at this time eminently skilled in the Latin tongue; and he himself, by annexing the dates to his first compositions, a boast of which the learned Politian had given him an example, seems to commend the earliness of his own proficiency to the notice of posterity. But the products of his vernal fertility have been surpassed by many, and particularly by his contemporary Cowley. Of the powers of the mind it is difficult to form an estimate: many have excelled Milton in their first essays, who never rose to works like Paradise Lost.

At fifteen, a date which he uses till he is sixteen, he translated or versified two Psalms, 114 and 136, which he thought worthy of the public eye; but they raise no great expectations; they would in any numerous school have obtained praise, but not excited wonder.

Many of his elegies appear to have been written in his eighteenth year, by which it appears that he had then read the Roman authors with very nice discernment. I once heard Mr. Hampton, the translator of Polybius, remark, what I think is true, that Milton was the first Englishman who, after the revival of letters, wrote Latin verses with classic elegance. If any exceptions can be made, they are very few: Haddon and Ascham, the pride of Elizabeth's reign, however they have succeeded in prose, no sooner attempt verse than they provoke derision. If we produced any thing worthy of notice before the elegies of Milton, it was perhaps Alabaster's Roxana.*

Of the exercises which the rules of the University required, some were published by him in his maturer years. They had been undoubtedly applauded, for they were such as few can perform; yet there is reason to suspect that he was regarded in his college with no great fondness. That he obtained no fellowship is certain; but the unkindness with which he was treated was not merely negative. I am ashamed to relate, what I fear is true, that Milton was one of the last students in either University that suffered the public indignity of corporal correction.

It was, in the violence of controversial hostility, objected to him, that he was expelled: this he steadily denies, and it was apparently not true; but it seems plain, from his own verses to Diodati, that he had incurred *rustication*, a temporary dismission into the country, with perhaps the loss of a term:

Me tenet urbs refti quam Thamesis alluit undâ,
Meque nec invitum patria dulcis habet.
Jam nec arundiferum mihi cura revisere Camum,
Nec dudum *vetiti* me *laris* angit amor.—
Nec duri libet usque minas perferre magistri,
Cæteraque ingenio non subeunda meo.
Si sit hoc *exilium* patrios addise penates,
Et vacuum curis otia grata sequi,
Non ego vel *profugi* nomen sortemve recuso
Lætus et *exilii* condi.ione fruor.

I cannot find any meaning but this, which even kindness and reverence can give the term *vetiti laris*, "a habitation from which he is excluded;" or how exile can be otherwise interpreted. He declares yet more, that he is weary of enduring *the threats of a rigorous master, and something else, which a temper like his cannot undergo.* What was more than threat was probably punishment. This poem, which mentions his *exile*, proves likewise that it was not perpetual; for it concludes with a resolution of returning some

* In this assertion Dr. Johnson was mistaken. Milton was admitted a pensioner, and not a sizar, as will appear by the following extract from the College Register: "Johannes Milton Londinensis, filius Johannis, institutus fuit in literarum elementis sub Mag'ro Gill Gymnasii Paulini, præfecto; admissus est *Pensionarius Minor* Feb. 12°, 1624, sub M'ro Chappell, solvitq. pro Ingr. 0*l*. 10*s*. 0*d*."—R.

* Published 1632.—R.

time to Cambridge. And it may be conjectured from the willingness with which he has perpetuated the memory of his exile, that its cause was such as gave him no shame.

He took both the usual degrees; that of bachelor in 1628, and that of master in 1632; but he left the University with no kindness for its institution, alienated either by the injudicious severity of his governors, or his own captious perverseness. The cause cannot now be known but the effect appears in his writings. His scheme of education, inscribed to Hartlib, supersedes all academical instruction, being intended to comprise the whole time which men usually spend in literature, from their entrance upon grammar, "till they proceed, as it is called, masters of arts." And in his discourse "on the likeliest way to remove hirelings out of the church," he ingeniously proposes, that "the profits of the lands forfeited by the act for superstitious uses should be applied to such academies all over the land, where languages and arts may be taught together; so that youth may be at once brought up to a competency of learning and an honest trade, by which means, such of them as had the gift, being enabled to support themselves (without tithes) by the latter, may, by the help of the former, become worthy preachers."

One of his objections to academical education, as it was then conducted, is, that men designed for orders in the church were permitted to act plays, "writhing and unboning their clergy limbs to all the antic and dishonest gestures of Trincalos,* buffoons, and bawds, prostituting the shame of that ministry which they had, or were near having, to the eyes of the courtiers and court ladies, their grooms and mademoiselles."

This is sufficiently peevish in a man who, when he mentions his exile from the college, relates, with great luxuriance, the compensation which the pleasures of the theatre afford him. Plays were therefore only criminal when they were acted by academics.

He went to the University with a design of entering into the church, but in time altered his mind; for he declared, that whoever became a clergyman must "subscribe slave, and take an oath withal, which, unless he took with a conscience that could not retch, he must straight perjure himself. He thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before the office of speaking, bought and begun with servitude and forswearing."

These expressions are, I find, applied, to the subscription of the Articles; but it seems more probable that they relate to canonical obedience. I know not any of the Articles which seem to thwart his opinions: but the thoughts of obedience, whether canonical or civil, raised his indignation.

His unwillingness to engage in the ministry, perhaps not yet advanced to a settled resolution of declining it, appears in a letter to one of his friends, who had reproved his suspended and dilatory life, which he seems to have imputed to an insatiable curiosity, and fantastic luxury of various knowledge. To this he writes a cool and plausible answer, in which he endeavours to persuade him, that the delay proceeds not from the delights of desultory study, but from the desire of obtaining more fitness for his task; and that he goes on, "not taking thought of being late, so it gives advantage to be more fit."

When he left the University, he returned to his father, then residing at Horton, in Buckinghamshire, with whom he lived five years, in which time he is said to have read all the Greek and Latin writers. With what limitations this universality is to be understood, who shall inform us?

It might be supposed, that he who read so much should have done nothing else; but Milton found time to write the mask of "Comus," which was presented at Ludlow, then the residence of the Lord President of Wales, in 1634; and had the honour of being acted by the Earl of Bridgewater's sons and daughter. The fiction is derived from Homer's Circe;* but

* By the mention of this name, he evidently refers to Albemazor, acted at Cambridge in 1614. Ignoramus and other plays were performed at the same time. The practice was then very frequent. The last dramatic performance at either University was "The Grateful Fair," written by Christopher Smart, and represented at Pembroke College, Cambridge, about 1747.—R.

* It has, nevertheless, its foundation in reality. The Earl of Bridgewater being President of Wales in the year 1634, had his residence at Ludlow Castle, in Shropshire, at which time Lord Brackly and Mr. Egerton, his sons, and Lady Alice Egerton, his daughter, passing through a place called the Haywood forest, or Haywood, in Herefordshire, were benighted, and the lady for a short time lost: this accident being related to their father, upon their arrival at his castle, Milton, at the request of his friend, Henry Lawes, who taught music in the family, wrote this mask. Lawes set it to music, and it was acted on Michaelmas night; the two brothers, the young lady, and Lawes himself bearing each a part in the representation.

The Lady Alice Egerton, became afterwards the wife of the Earl of Carbury, who, at his seat called Golden-grove, in Caernarthenshire, harboured Dr. Jeremy Taylor in the time of the usurpation. Among the Doctor's sermons is one on her death in which her character is finely portrayed. Her sister, Lady Mary, was given in marriage to Lord Herbert, of Cherbury.

Notwithstanding Dr. Johnson's assertion, that the fiction is derived from Homer's Circe, it may be

we never can refuse to any modern the liberty of borrowing from Homer:

——a quo ceu fonte perenni
Vatum Pieriis ora rigantur aquis.

His next production was "Lycidas," an elegy, written in 1637, on the death of Mr. King, the son of Sir John King, secretary for Ireland in the time of Elizabeth, James, and Charles. King was much a favourite at Cambridge, and many of the wits joined to do honour to his memory. Milton's acquaintance with the Italian writers may be discovered by a mixture of longer and shorter verses, according to the rules of Tuscan poetry, and his malignity to the church, by some lines which are interpreted as threatening its extermination.

He is supposed about this time to have written his "Arcades; for, while he lived at Horton, he used sometimes to steal from his studies a few days, which he spent at Harefield, the house of the Countess Dowager of Derby, where the "Arcades" made part of a dramatic entertainment.

He began now to grow weary of the country, and had some purpose of taking chambers in the Inns of Court, when the death of his mother set him at liberty to travel, for which he obtained his father's consent, and Sir Henry Wotton's directions; with the celebrated precept of prudence, *i vensieri stretti, ed il viso, sciolto*; "thoughts close, and looks loose."

In 1638 he left England, and went first to Paris; where, by the favour of Lord Scudamore, he had the opportunity of visiting Grotius, then residing at the French court as ambassador from Christiana of Sweden. From Paris he hasted into Italy, of which he had with particular diligence studied the language and literature; and though he seems to have intended a very quick perambulation of the country, stayed two months at Florence; where he found his way into the academies, and produced his compositions with such applause as appears to have exalted him in his own opinion, and confirmed him in the hope, that, "by labour and intense study, which," says he, "I take to be my portion in this life, joined with a strong propensity of nature," he might "leave something so written to aftertimes, as they should not willingly let it die."

It appears in all his writings that he had the usual concomitant of great abilities, a lofty and steady confidence in himself, perhaps not without some contempt of others; for scarcely any man ever wrote so much, and praised so few. Of his praise he was very frugal; as he set its value high, and considered his mention of a name as a security against the waste of time, and a certain preservative from oblivion.

At Florence he could not, indeed, complain that his merit wanted distinction. Carlo Dati presented him with an encomiastic inscription, in the tumid lapidary style; and Francini wrote him an ode, of which the first stanza is only empty noise; the rest are perhaps too diffuse on common topics: but the last is natural and beautiful.

From Florence he went to Sienna, and from Sienna to Rome, where he was again received with kindness by the learned and the great. Holstenius, the keeper of the Vatican Library, who had resided three years at Oxford, introduced him to Cardinal Barberini: and he, at a musical entertainment, waited for him at the door, and led him by the hand into the assembly. Here Selvaggi praised him in a distich, and Salsilli in a tetrastic; neither of them of much value. The Italians were gainers by this literary commerce; for the encomiums with which Milton repaid Salsilli, though not secure against a stern grammarian, turn the balance indisputably in Milton's favour.

Of these Italian testimonies, poor as they are, he was proud enough to publish them before his poems; though he says, he cannot be suspected but to have known that they were said *non tam de se, quam supra se*.

At Rome, as at Florence, he stayed only two months; a time indeed sufficient, if he desired only to ramble with an explainer of its antiquities, or to view palaces and count pictures; but certainly too short for the contemplation of learning, policy, or manners.

From Rome he passed on to Naples, in company of a hermit, a companion from whom little could be expected; yet to him Milton owed his introduction to Manso, Marquis of Villa, who had been before the patron of Tasso. Manso was enough delighted with his accomplishments to honour him with a sorry distich, in which he commends him for every thing but his religion: and Milton, in return, addressed him in a Latin poem, which must have raised a high opinion of English elegance and literature.

His purpose was now to have visited Sicily and Greece; but, hearing of the differences between the King and parliament, he thought it proper to hasten home, rather than pass his life in foreign amusements while his countrymen were contending for their rights. He therefore came back to Rome, though the merchants informed him of plots laid against him by the

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conjectured, that it was rather taken from the Comus of Erycius Puteanus, in which, under the fiction of a dream, the characters of Comus and his attendants are delineated, and the delights of sensualists exposed and reprobated. This little tract was published at Louvain in 1611, and afterwards at Oxford in 1634, the very year in which Milton's "Comus" was written.—H.

Milton evidently was indebted to the "Old Wives tale" of George Peele for the plan of "Comus."—R.

Jesuits, for the liberty of his conversations on religion. He had sense enough to judge that there was no danger, and therefore kept on his way, and acted as before, neither obtruding nor shunning controversy. He had perhaps given some offence by visiting Galileo, then a prisoner in the Inquisition for philosophical heresy; and at Naples he was told by Manso, that, by his declarations on religious questions, he had excluded himself from some distinctions which he should otherwise have paid him. But such conduct, though it did not please, was yet sufficiently safe; and Milton stayed two months more at Rome, and went on to Florence without molestation.

From Florence he visited Lucca. He afterwards went to Venice; and, having sent away a collection of music and other books, travelled to Geneva, which he probably considered as the metropolis of orthodoxy.

Here he reposed as in a congenial element, and became acquainted with John Diodati and Frederick Spanheim, two learned professors of divinity. From Geneva, he passed through France; and came home, after an absence of a year and three months.

At his return he heard of the death of his friend Charles Diodati; a man whom it is reasonable to suppose of great merit, since he was thought by Milton worthy of a poem, entitled "Epitaphium Damonis," written with the common but childish imitation of pastoral life.

He now hired a lodging at the house of one Russel, a tailor in St. Bride's church-yard, and undertook the education of John and Edward Philips, his sister's sons. Finding his rooms too little, he took a house and garden in Aldersgate-street,* which was not then so much out of the world as it is now; and chose his dwelling at the upper end of a passage, that he might avoid the noise of the street. Here he received more boys to be boarded and instructed.

Let not our veneration for Milton forbid us to look with some degree of merriment on great promises and small performance, on the man who hastens home, because his countrymen are contending for their liberty, and, when he reaches the scene of action, vapours away his patriotism in a private boarding school. This is the period of his life from which all his biographers seem inclined to shrink. They are unwilling that Milton should be degraded to a school-master; but, since it cannot be denied that he taught boys, one finds out that he taught for nothing, and another that his motive was only zeal for the propagation of learning and virtue; and all tell what they do not know to be true only to excuse an act which no wise man will consider as in itself disgraceful. His father was alive; his allowance was not ample; and he supplied its deficiencies by an honest and useful employment.

It is told that in the art of education he performed wonders; and a formidable list is given of the authors, Greek and Latin, that were read in Aldersgate-street by youth between ten and fifteen or sixteen years of age. Those who tell or receive these stories should consider, that nobody can be taught faster than he can learn. The speed of the horseman must be limited by the power of the horse. Every man that has ever undertaken to instruct others can tell what slow advances he has been able to make, and how much patience it requires to recal vagrant inattention, to stimulate sluggish indifference, and to rectify absurd misapprehension.

The purpose of Milton, as it seems, was to teach something more solid than the common literature of schools, by reading those authors that treat of physical subjects; such as the Georgic and astronomical treatises of the ancients. This was a scheme of improvement which seems to have busied many literature projectors of that age. Cowley, who had more means than Milton of knowing what was wanting to the embellishments of life, formed the same plan of education in his imaginary college.

But the truth is, that the knowledge of external nature, and the sciences which that knowledge requires or includes, are not the great or the frequent business of the human mind. Whether we provide for action or conversation, whether we wish to be useful or pleasing, the first requisite is the religious and moral knowledge of right and wrong; the next is an acquaintance with the history of mankind, and with those examples which may be said to embody truth, and prove by events the reasonableness of opinions. Prudence and justice are virtues and excellences of all times and of all places; we are perpetually moralists, but we are geometricians only by chance. Our intercourse with intellectual nature is necessary; our speculations upon matter are voluntary, and at leisure. Physiological learning is of such rare emergence, that one may know another half his life, without being able to estimate his skill in hydrostatics or astronomy; but his moral and prudential character immediately appears.

Those authors, therefore, are to be read at

* This is inaccurately expressed: Philips, and Dr. Newton after him, say a garden-house, i. e. a house situated in a garden, and of which there were, especially in the north suburbs of London, very many, if not few else. The term is technical, and frequently occurs in the Athen. and Fast. Oxon. The meaning thereof may be collected from the article, Thomas Farnaby, the famous schoolmaster, of whom the author says, that he taught in Goldsmith's-rents, in Cripplegate parish, behind Redcross-street, where were large gardens and handsome houses. Milton's house in Jewin-street was also a garden-house, as were indeed most of his dwellings after his settlement in London.—H.

schools that supply most axioms of prudence, most principles of moral truth, and most materials for conversation; and these purposes are best served by poets, orators, and historians.

Let me not be censured for this digression as pedantic or paradoxical; for, if I have Milton against me, I have Socrates on my side. It was his labour to turn philosophy from the study of nature to speculations upon life; but the innovators whom I oppose are turning off attention from life to nature. They seem to think that we are placed here to watch the growth of plants, or the motions of the stars: Socrates was rather of opinion, that what we had to learn was, how to do good, and avoid evil.

Ὅττι τοι ἐν μέγαροισι κακόντ' αγαθόντε τέτυκται.

Of institutions we may judge by their effects. From this wonder working academy, I do not know that there ever proceeded any man very eminent for knowledge: its only genuine product, I believe, is a small history of poetry, written in Latin by his nephew Philips, of which perhaps none of my readers has ever heard.*

That in his school, as in every thing else which he undertook, he laboured with great diligence, there is no reason for doubting. One part of his method deserves general imitation. He was careful to instruct his scholars in religion. Every Sunday was spent upon theology; of which he dictated a short system, gathered from the writers that were then fashionable in the Dutch universities.

He set his pupils an example of hard study and spare diet: only now and then he allowed himself to pass a day of festivity and indulgence with some gay gentlemen of Gray's Inn.

He now began to engage in the controversies of the times, and lent his breath to blow the flames of contention. In 1641 he published a treatise of Reformation, in two books, against the established church; being willing to help the puritans, who were, he says, "inferior to the prelates in learning."

Hall, bishop of Norwich, had published an Humble Remonstrance, in defence of episcopacy; to which, in 1641, five ministers,† of whose names the first letters made the celebrated word *Smectymnuus*, gave their Answer. Of this Answer a Confutation was attempted by the learned Usher; and to the Confutation Milton published a reply, entitled, "Of Prelatical Episcopacy, and whether it may be deduced from the Apostolical Times, by virtue of those Testimonies which are alleged to that purpose in some late Treatises, one whereof goes under the Name of James, Lord Bishop of Armagh."

I have transcribed this title to show, by his contemptuous mention of Usher, that he had now adopted the puritanical savageness of manners. His next work was, "The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelacy, by Mr. John Milton, 1642." In this book he discovers, not with ostentatious exultation, but with calm confidence, his high opinion of his own powers; and promises to undertake something, he yet knows not what, that may be of use and honour to his country. "This," says he, "is not to be obtained but by devout prayer to that eternal Spirit that can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases. To this must be added, industrious and select reading, steady observation, and insight into all seemly and generous arts and affairs; till which in some measure be compassed, I refuse not to sustain this expectation." From a promise like this, at once fervid, pious, and rational, might be expected the "Paradise Lost."

He published the same year two more pamphlets, upon the same question. To one of his antagonists, who affirms that he was "vomited out of the University," he answers in general terms. "The fellows of the college wherein I spent some years, at my parting, after I had taken two degrees, as the manner is, signified many times how much better it would content them that I should stay.—As for the common approbation or dislike of that place as now it is, that I should esteem or disesteem myself the more for that, too simple is the answerer, if he think to obtain with me. Of small practice were the physician who could not judge, by what she and her sister have of long time vomited, that the worser stuff she strongly keeps in her stomach, but the better she is ever kecking at, and is queasy; she vomits now out of sickness; but before it will be well with her, she must vomit by strong physic. The University, in the time of her better health, and my younger judgment, I never greatly admired, but now much less."

This is surely the language of a man who thinks that he has been injured. He proceeds to describe the course of his conduct, and the train of his thoughts; and, because he has been suspected of incontinence, gives an account of his own purity: "that if I be justly charged," says he, "with this crime, it may come upon me with tenfold shame."

The style of his piece is rough, and such per-

* Johnson did not here allude to Philips's "Theatrum Poetarum," as has been ignorantly supposed, but (as he himself informed Mr. Malone) to another work by the same author, entitled, "Tractatulus de Carmine dramatis Poetarum Veterum præsertim in Choris tragicis et veteris Comœdiæ. Cui subjungitur compendiose enumeratio poetarum (saltem quorum fame maxim emituit) qui a tempore Dantis Atigini usquead hunc ætatem claruerunt," &c. —J. B.

† Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, William Spurstow.—R.

haps was that of his antagonist. This roughness he justifies by great examples in a long digression. Sometimes he tries to be humorous: "Lest I should take him for some chaplain in hand, some squire of the body to his prelate, one who serves not at the altar only, but at the court-cupboard, he will bestow on us a pretty model of himself; and sets me out half a dozen phthisical mottoes, wherever he had them, hopping short in the measure of convulsion fits; in which labour the agony of his wit having escaped narrowly, instead of well-sized periods, he greets us with a quantity of thumbring poesies. And thus ends this section, or rather dissection, of himself." Such is the controversial merriment of Milton; his gloomy seriousness is yet more offensive. Such is his malignity, that hell grows darker at his frown.

His father, after Reading was taken by Essex, came to reside in his house; and his school increased. At Whitsuntide, in his thirty-fifth year, he married Mary, the daughter of Mr. Powell, a justice of the peace in Oxfordshire. He brought her to town with him, and expected all the advantages of a conjugal life. The lady, however, seems not much to have delighted in the pleasures of spare diet and hard study; for, as Philips relates, "having for a month led a philosophic life, after having been used at home to a great house, and much company and joviality, her friends, possibly by her own desire, made earnest suit to have her company the remaining part of the summer; which was granted upon a promise of her return at Michaelmas."

Milton was too busy to much miss his wife; he pursued his studies; and now and then visited the Lady Margaret Leigh, whom he has mentioned in one of his sonnets. At last Michaelmas arrived; but the lady had no inclination to return to the sullen gloom of her husband's habitation, and therefore very willingly forgot her promise. He sent her a letter, but had no answer: he sent more with the same success. It could be alleged that letters miscarry; he therefore despatched a messenger, being by this time too angry to go himself. His messenger was sent back with some contempt. The family of the Lady were cavaliers.

In a man, whose opinion of his own merit was like Milton's, less provocation than this might have raised violent resentment. Milton soon determined to repudiate her for disobedience; and, being one of those who could easily find arguments to justify inclination, published (in 1644) "The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce;" which was followed by "The Judgment of Martin Bucer, concerning Divorce;" and the next year, his Tetrachordon, "Expositions upon the four chief Places of Scripture which treat of Marriage."

This innovation was opposed, as might be expected, by the clergy, who, then holding their famous assembly at Westminster, procured that the author should be called before the Lords; "but that House," says Wood, "whether approving the doctrine, or not favouring his accusers, did soon dismiss him."

There seems not to have been much written against him, nor any thing by any writer of eminence.* The antagonist that appeared is styled by him, *A serving man turned solicitor.* Howel, in his Letters, mentions the new doctrine with contempt;† and it was, I suppose, thought more worthy of derision than of confutation. He complains of this neglect in two sonnets, of which the first is contemptible, and the second not excellent.

From this time it is observed, that he became an enemy to the presbyterians, whom he had favoured before. He that changes his party by his humour, is not more virtuous than he that changes it by his interest; he loves himself rather than truth.

His wife and her relations now found that Milton was not an unresisting sufferer of injuries; and perceiving that he had begun to put his doctrine in practice, by courting a young woman of great accomplishments, the daughter of one Doctor Davis, who was however not ready to comply, they resolved to endeavour a re-union. He went sometimes to the house of one Blackborough, his relation, in the lane of St. Martin's le-Grand, and at one of his usual visits was surprised to see his wife come from another room, and implore forgiveness on her knees. He resisted her intreaties for a while: "but partly," says Philips, "his own generous nature, more inclinable to reconciliation than to perseverance in anger or revenge, and partly the strong intercession of friends on both sides, soon brought him to an act of oblivion and a firm league of peace." It were injurious to omit, that Milton afterwards received her father and her brothers in his own house, when they were distressed, with other royalists.

He published about the same time his *Areopagitica, a Speech of* Mr. John Milton *for the Liberty of unlicensed Printing.* The danger of such unbounded liberty, and the danger of bounding it, have produced a problem in the science of government, which human understanding seems hitherto unable to solve. If nothing may be published but what civil authority shall have previously approved, power must always be the standard of truth: if every dreamer of innovations may propagate his projects, there can be

* It was animadverted upon, but without any mention of Milton's name, by Bishop Hall, in his Cases of Conscience Decide, 4, Case 2.—J. B.

† He terms the author of it a shallow brain'd puppy; and thus refers to it in his index, "Of a noddy who wrote a book about winning."—J. B.

no settlement; if every murmurer at government may diffuse discontent, there can be no peace; and if every sceptic in theology may teach his follies, there can be no religion. The remedy against these evils is to punish the authors; for it is yet allowed that every society may punish, though not prevent, the publication of opinions which that society shall think pernicious; but this punishment, though it may crush the author, promotes the book; and it seems not more reasonable to leave the right of printing unrestrained because writers may be afterwards censured, than it would be to sleep with doors unbolted because by our laws we can hang a thief.

But, whatever were his engagements, civil or domestic, poetry was never long out of his thoughts.

About this time (1645) a collection of his Latin and English poems appeared, in which the "Allegro" and "Penseroso," with some others, were first published.

He had taken a larger house in Barbican for the reception of scholars; but the numerous relations of his wife, to whom he generously granted refuge for a while, occupied his rooms. In time however, they went away: "and the house again," says Philips, "now looked like a house of the muses only, though the accession of scholars was not great. Possibly his having proceeded so far in the education of youth may have been the occasion of his adversaries calling him pedagogue and schoolmaster; whereas it is well known he never set up for a public school, to teach all the young fry of a parish; but only was willing to impart his learning and knowledge to his relations, and the sons of gentlemen who were his intimate friends, and that neither his writings nor his way of teaching ever savoured in the least of pedantry."

Thus laboriously does his nephew extenuate what cannot be denied, and what might be confessed without disgrace. Milton was not a man who could become mean by a mean employment. This, however, his warmest friends seem not to have found; they therefore shift and palliate. He did not sell literature to all comers at an open shop; he was a chamber-milliner, and measured his commodities only to his friends.

Philips, evidently impatient of viewing him in this state of degradation, tells us that it was not long continued: and, to raise his character again, has a mind to invest him with military splendour: "He is much mistaken," he says, "if there was not about this time a design of making him an adjutant-general in Sir William Waller's army. But the new-modelling of the army proved an obstruction to the design." An event cannot be set at a much greater distance than by having been only *designed about some time*, if a man *be not much mistaken*. Milton h all be a pedagogue no longer: for, if Philips be not much mistaken, somebody at some time designed him for a soldier.

About the time that the army was new-modelled, (1645,) he removed to a smaller house in Holborn, which opened backward into Lincoln's Inn Fields. He is not known to have published any thing afterwards till the King's death, when, finding his murderers condemned by the presbyterians, he wrote a treatise to justify it, and *to compose the minds of the people.*

He made some "Remarks on the Articles of Peace between Ormond and the Irish Rebels." While he contented himself to write, he perhaps did only what his conscience dictated; and if he did not very vigilantly watch the influence of his own passions, and the gradual prevalence of opinions, first willingly admitted, and then habitually indulged; if objections, by being overlooked, were forgotten, and desire superinduced conviction; he yet shared only the common weakness of mankind, and might be no less sincere than his opponents. But as faction seldom leaves a man honest, however it might find him, Milton is suspected of having interpolated the book called "Icon Basilike," which the council of state, to whom he was now made Latin secretary, employed him to censure, by inserting a prayer taken from Sidney's "Arcadia," and imputing it to the King; whom he charges, in his "Iconoclastes," with the use of this prayer, as with a heavy crime, in the indecent language with which prosperity had emboldened the advocates for rebellion to insult all that is venerable or great: "Who would have imagined so little fear in him of the true all-seeing Deity—as, immediately before his death, to pop into the hands of the grave bishop that attended him, as a special relic of his saintly exercises, a prayer stolen word for word from the mouth of a heathen woman praying to a heathen god?"

The papers which the King gave to Dr. Juxon on the scaffold the regicides took away, so that they were at least the publishers of this prayer; and Dr. Birch, who had examined the question with great care, was inclined to think them the forgers. The use of it by adaptation was innocent; and they who could so noisily censure it, with a little extension of their malice, could contrive what they wanted to accuse.

King Charles the Second, being now sheltered in Holland, employed Salmasius, professor of polite learning at Leyden, to write a defence of his father and of monarchy; and, to excite his industry, gave him, as was reported, a hundred Jacobuses. Salmasius was a man of skill in languages, knowledge of antiquity, and sagacity of emendatory criticism, almost exceeding all hope of human attainment; and having, by excessive praises, been confirmed in great confidence of himself, though he probably had not

much considered the principles of society, or the rights of government, undertook the employment without distrust of his own qualifications; and, as his expedition in writing was wonderful, in 1649 published "Defensio Regis."

To this Milton was required to write a sufficient answer; which he performed (1651) in such a manner, that Hobbes declared himself unable to decide whose language was best, or whose arguments were worst. In my opinion, Milton's periods are smoother, neater, and more pointed; but he delights himself with teasing his adversary as much as with confuting him. He makes a foolish allusion of Salmasius, whose doctrine he considers as servile and unmanly, to the stream of Salmasius, which, whoever entered, left half his virility behind him. Salmasius was a Frenchman, and was unhappily married to a scold. *Tu es Gallus*, says Milton, *et, ut aiunt, nimium gallinaceus.* But his supreme pleasure is to tax his adversary, so renowned for criticisms, with vicious Latin. He opens his book with telling that he has used *persona*, which according to Milton, signifies only a mask, in a sense not known to the Romans, by applying it as we apply *person*. But as Nemesis is always on the watch, it is memorable that he has enforced the charge of a solecism by an expression in itself grossly solecistical, when for one of those supposed blunders, he says, as Ker, and I think some one before him, has remarked, *propino te grammatistis tuis* vapuladum.* From *vapulo*, which has a passive sense, *vapulandus* can never be derived. No man forgets his original trade; the rights of nations, and of kings, sink into questions of grammar, if grammarians discuss them.

Milton, when he undertook this answer, was weak of body and dim of sight; but his will was forward, and what was wanting of health was supplied by zeal. He was rewarded with a thousand pounds, and his book was much read; for paradox, recommended by spirit and elegance, easily gains attention; and he, who told every man that he was equal to his King, could hardly want an audience.

That the performance of Salmasius was not dispersed with equal rapidity, or read with equal eagerness, is very credible. He taught only the stale doctrine of authority, and the unpleasing duty of submission, and he had been so long not only the monarch but the tyrant of literature, that almost all mankind were delighted to find him defied and insulted by a new name, not yet considered as any one's rival. If Christiana, as is said, commended the *Defence of the People*, her purpose must be to torment Salmasius, who was then at court; for neither her civil station, nor her natural character, could dispose her to favour the doctrine, who was by birth a queen, and by temper despotic.

That Salmasius was, from the appearance of Milton's book, treated with neglect, there is not much proof; but to a man so long accustomed to admiration, a little praise of his antagonist would be sufficiently offensive, and might incline him to leave Sweden, from which however he was dismissed, not with any mark of contempt, but with a train of attendance scarcely less than regal.

He prepared a reply, which, left as it was imperfect, was published by his son in the year of the Restoration. In the beginning, being probably most in pain for his Latinity, he endeavours to defend his use of the word *persona*; but, if I remember right, he misses a better authority than any that he has found, that of Juvenal in his fourth satire:

> —Quid agas, cum dira et fœdior omni
> Crimine *persona* est?

As Salmasius reproached Milton with losing his eyes in the quarrel, Milton delighted himself with the belief that he had shortened Salmasius's life, and both perhaps with more malignity than reason. Salmasius died at the Spa, Sept. 3, 1653; and as controvertists are commonly said to be killed by their last dispute, Milton was flattered with the credit of destroying him.

Cromwell had now dismissed the parliament by the authority of which he had destroyed monarchy, and commenced monarch himself, under the title of Protector, but with kingly and more than kingly power. That his authority was lawful, never was pretended; he himself founded his right only in necessity; but Milton, having now tasted the honey of public employment, would not return to hunger and philosophy; but, continuing to exercise his office under a manifest usurpation, betrayed to his power that liberty which he had defended. Nothing can be more just than that rebellion should end in slavery; that he who had justified the murder of his king, for some acts which seemed to him unlawful, should now sell his services and his flatteries, to a tyrant, of whom it was evident that he could do nothing lawful.

He had now been blind for some years; but his vigour of intellect was such, that he was not disabled to discharge his office of Latin secretary, or continue his controversies. His mind was too eager to be diverted, and too strong to be subdued.

About this time his first wife died in childbed, having left him three daughters. As he probably did not much love her, he did not long

* The work here referred to, is "Selectarum de linguâ Latinâ observationum libri duo. Ductu et curâ Joannis Ker. 1719." Ker, observes, that vapulandum is "pinguis solecismus;" and quotes Varasser and Ursinus. J. B.

continue the appearance of lamenting her; but after a short time married Catharine, the daughter of one Captain Woodcock, of Hackney; a woman doubtless educated in opinions like his own. She died, within a year, of child-birth, or some distemper that followed it; and her husband honoured her memory with a poor sonnet.

The first reply to Milton's "Defensio Populi" was published in 1651, called "Apologia pro Rege et Populo Anglicano, contra Johannis Polypragmatici (alias Miltoni) defensionem destructivam Regis et Populi." Of this the author was not known; but Milton, and his nephew Philips, under whose name he published an answer so much corrected by him that it might be called his own, imputed it to Bramhal; and, knowing him no friend to regicides, thought themselves at liberty to treat him as if they had known what they only suspected.

Next year appeared "Regii Sanguinis clamor ad Cœlum." Of this the author was Peter du Moulin, who was afterwards prebendary of Canterbury; but Morus, or More, a French minister, having the care of its publication, was treated as the writer by Milton in his "Defensio Secunda," and overwhelmed by such violence of invective, that he began to shrink under the tempest, and gave his persecutors the means of knowing the true author. Du Moulin was now in great danger; but Milton's pride operated against his malignity; and both he and his friends were more willing that Du Moulin should escape than that he should be convicted of mistake.

In this second defence he shows that his eloquence is not merely satirical; the rudeness of his invective is equalled by the grossness of his flattery. "Deserimer, Cromuelle, tu solus superes, ad te summa nostrarum rerum rediit, in te solo consistit, insuperabili tuæ virtuti cedimus cuncti, nemine vel obloquente, nisi qui a quales inæqualis ipse honores sibi quærit, aut digniori concessos invidet, aut non intelligit nihil esse in societate hominum magis vel Deo gratum, vel rationi consentaneum, esse in civitate nihil æquius, nihil utilius, quam potiri rerum dignissimum. Eum te agnoscunt omnes, Cromuelle, ea tu civis maximus et gloriosissimus,* dux publici consilii, exercituum fortissimorum imperator, pater patriæ gessisti. Sic tu spontanea bonorum omnium et animitus missa voce salutaris."

Cæsar when he assumed the perpetual dictatorship, had not more servile or more elegant flattery. A translation may show its servility; but its elegance is less attainable. Having exposed the unskilfulness or selfishness of the former government, "We were left," says Milton, "to ourselves: the whole national interest fell into your hands, and subsists only in your abilities. To your virtue, overpowering and resistless, every man gives way, except some who, without equal qualifications, aspire to equal honours, who envy the distinctions of merit greater than their own, or who have yet to learn, that in the coalition of human society nothing is more pleasing to God, or more agreeable to reason, than that the highest mind should have the sovereign power. Such, Sir, are you by general confession; such are the things achieved by you, the greatest and most glorious of our countrymen, the director of our public councils, the leader of unconquered armies, the father of your country; for by that title does every good man hail you with sincere and voluntary praise."

Next year, having defended all that wanted defence, he found leisure to defend himself. He undertook his own vindication against More, whom he declares in his title to be justly called the author of the "Regii Sanguinis Clamor." In this there is no want of vehemence or eloquence, nor does he forget his wonted wit. "Morus es? an Momus? an uterque idem est?" He then remembers that Morus is Latin for a mulberry-tree, and hints at the known transformation:

——Poma alba ferebat
Quæ post nigra tulit Morus.

With this piece ended his controversies; and he from this time gave himself up to his private studies and his civil employment.

As secretary to the Protector, he is supposed to have written the declaration of the reasons for a war with Spain. His agency was considered as of great importance; for, when a treaty with Sweden was artfully suspended, the delay was publicly imputed to Mr. Milton's indisposition; and the Swedish agent was provoked to express his wonder, that only one man in England could write Latin, and that man blind.

Being now forty-seven years old, and seeing himself disencumbered from external interruptions, he seems to have recollected his former purposes, and to have resumed three great works which he had planned for his future employment; an epic poem, the history of his country, and a dictionary of the Latin tongue.

To collect a dictionary, seems a work of all others least practicable in a state of blindness, because it depends upon perpetual and minute inspection and collation. Nor would Milton probably have begun it after he had lost his eyes; but, having had it always before him, he continued it, says Philips, "almost to his dying day; but the papers were so discomposed and deficient, that they could not be fitted for the

* It may be doubted whether *gloriosissimus* be here used with Milton's boasted purity. *Res gloriosa* is an *illustrious thing*; *ut vir gloriosus* is commonly a *braggart*, as in *miles gloriosus*.—Dr. J.

press." The compilers of the Latin dictionary printed at Cambridge, had the use of those collections in three folios; but what was their fate afterwards is not known.*

To compile a history from various authors, when they can only be consulted by other eyes, is not easy, nor possible, but with more skilful and attentive help than can be commonly obtained; and it was probably the difficulty of consulting and comparing that stopped Milton's narrative at the Conquest; a period at which affairs were not very intricate, nor authors very numerous.

For the subject of his epic poem, after much deliberation, long choosing, and beginning late, he fixed upon "Paradise Lost;" a design so comprehensive, that it could be justified only by success. He had once designed to celebrate King Arthur, as he hints in his verses to Mansus; but "Arthur was reserved," says Fenton, "to another destiny."†

It appears, by some sketches of poetical projects left in manuscript, and to be seen in a library‡ at Cambridge, that he had digested his thoughts on this subject into one of those wild dramas which were anciently called Mysteries:§ and Philips had seen what he terms part of a tragedy, beginning with the first ten lines of Satan's address to the sun. These mysteries consist of allegorical persons; such as Justice, Mercy, Faith. Of the tragedy or mystery of "Paradise Lost" there are two plans:

The Persons.	The Persons.
Michael.	Moses.
Chorus of Angels,	Divine Justice, Wisdom.
Heavenly Love.	Heavenly Love.
Lucifer.	The Evening Star, Hesperus.
Adam, Eve, } with the Serpent.	Chorus of Angels.
Conscience.	Lucifer.
Death.	Adam.
Labour, Sickness, Discontent. Ignorance, with others; } Mutes.	Eve.
Faith.	Conscience.
Hope.	Labour, Sickness, Discontent, Ignorance, Fear, Death. } Mutes.
Charity.	Faith, Hope, Charity.

PARADISE LOST.

The Persons.

Moses προλογίζει, recounting how he assumed his true body; that it corrupts not, because it is with God in the mount; declares the like with Enoch and Elijah: besides the purity of the place, that certain pure winds, dews, and clouds preserve it from corruption; whence exhorts to the sight of God; tells they cannot see Adam in the state of innocence, by reason of their sin.

Justice, Mercy, Wisdom, } debating what should become of man, if he fall.
Chorus of Angels singing a hymn of the Creation.

ACT II.

Heavenly Love.
Evening Star.
Chorus sings the marriage-song, and describes Paradise.

ACT III.

Lucifer contriving Adam's ruin.
Chorus fears for Adam, and relates Lucifer's rebellion and fall.

ACT IV.

Adam, Eve, } fallen.
Conscience cites them to God's examination.
Chorus bewails, and tells the good Adam has lost.

ACT. V.

Adam and Eve driven out of Paradise.
- - - - - presented by an angel with
Labour, Grief, Hatred, Envy, War, Famine, Pestilence, Sickness, Discontent, Ignorance, Fear, Death, } Mutes.
To whom he gives their names. Likewise Winter, Heat, Tempest, &c.
Faith, Hope, Charity, } comfort him and instruct him.
Chorus briefly concludes.

Such was his first design, which could have produced only an allegory, or mystery. The following sketch seems to have attained more maturity.

* The "Cambridge Dictionary," published in 4to. 1693, is no other than a copy, with some small additions, of that of Dr. Adam Littleton in 1685, by sundry persons, of whom, though their names are concealed, there is great reason to conjecture that Milton's nephew, Edward Philips, is one; for it is expressly said by Wood, Fasti, vol. I. p. 266, that "Milton's Thesaurus" came to his hands; and it is asserted, in the preface thereto, that the editors thereof had the use of three large folios in manuscript, collected and digested into alphabetical order by Mr. John Milton.

It has been remarked, that the additions, together with the preface abovementioned, and a large part of the title of the "Cambridge Dictionary," have been incorporated and printed with the subsequent editions of "Littleton's Dictionary," till that of 1735. Vid. Biog. Brit. 2985, in not.—So that, for aught that appears to the contrary, Philips was the last possessor of Milton's MS.—H.

† *Id est*, to be the subject of an heroic poem, written by Sir Richard Blackmore.—H.

‡ Trinity College.—R.

§ The dramas in which Justice, Mercy, Faith, &c. were introduced, were Moralities, not Mysteries.—MALONE.

Adam unparadised :

The angel Gabriel, either descending or enter-
ing; showing, since this globe was created, his fre-
quency as much on earth as in heaven : describes
Paradise. Next the Chorus, showing the reason
of his coming to keep his watch in Paradise,
after Lucifer's rebellion, by command from God:
and withal expressing his desire to see and know
more concerning this excellent new creature,
man. The angel Gabriel, as by his name sig-
nifying a prince of power, tracing Paradise with
a more free office, passes by the station of the
Chorus, and, desired by them, relates what he
knew of man : as the creation of Eve, with their
love and marriage. After this, Lucifer appears ;
after his overthrow, bemoans himself, seeks re-
venge on man. The Chorus prepare resistance
on his first approach. At last, after discourse
of enmity on either side, he departs : whereat
the Chorus sings of the battle and victory in
heaven, against him and his accomplices : as be-
fore, after the first act, was sung a hymn of the
creation. Here again may appear Lucifer, re-
ating and exulting in what he had done to the
destruction of man. Man next, and Eve, hav-
ng by this time been seduced by the Serpent,
appears confusedly covered with leaves. Con-
science in a shape accuses him ; Justice cites
him to a place whither Jehovah called for him.
In the meanwhile, the Chorus entertains the
stage, and is informed by some angel the man-
ner of the fall. Here the Chorus bewails Adam's
fall. Adam then and Eve return : accuse one
another ; but especially Adam lays the blame to
his wife ; is stubborn in his offence. Justice
appears, reasons with him, convinces him.
The Chorus admonisheth Adam, and bids him
beware Lucifer's example of impenitence. The
angel is sent to banish them out of paradise : but
before causes to pass before his eyes, in shapes,
a mask of all the evils of this life and world. He
is humble, relents, despairs ; at last appears
Mercy, comforts him, promises the Messiah ;
then calls in Faith, Hope, and Charity ; instructs
him ; he repents, gives God the glory, submits
to his penalty. The Chorus briefly concludes.
Compare this with the former draught.

These are very imperfect rudiments of " Paradise Lost ;" but it is pleasant to see great works in their seminal state, pregnant with latent possibilities of excellence ; nor could there be any more delightful entertainment than to trace their gradual growth and expansion, and to observe how they are sometimes suddenly improved by accidental hints, and sometimes slowly improved by steady meditation.

Invention is almost the only literary labour which blindness cannot obstruct, and therefore he naturally solaced his solitude by the indulgence of his fancy, and the melody of his numbers. He had done what he knew to be necessarily previous to poetical excellence ; he had made himself acquainted with *seemly arts and affairs :* his comprehension was extended by various knowledge, and his memory stored with intellectual treasures. He was skilful in many languages, and had by reading and composition attained the full mastery of his own. He would have wanted little help from books, had he retained the power of perusing them.

But while his greater designs were advancing, having now, like many other authors, caught the love of publication, he amused himself, as he could, with little productions. He sent to the press (1658) a manuscript of Raleigh, called " The Cabinet Council ;" and next year gratified his malevolence to the clergy, by a " Treatise of Civil power in Ecclesiastical Cases, and the Means of removing Hirelings out of the Church."

Oliver was now dead, Richard was constrained to resign : the system of extemporary government, which had been held together only by force, naturally fell into fragments when that force was taken away ; and Milton saw himself and his cause in equal danger. But he had still hope of doing something. He wrote letters, which Toland has published, to such men as he thought friends to the new commonwealth ; and even in the year of the Restoration he bated no jot of heart or hope, but was fantastical enough to think that the nation, agitated as it was, might be settled by a pamphlet, called, " A ready and easy Way to establish a free Commonwealth ;" which was, however, enough considered to be both seriously and ludicrously answered.

The obstinate enthusiasm of the commonwealth-men was very remarkable. When the King was apparently returning, Harrington, with a few associates as fanatical as himself, used to meet, with all the gravity of political importance, to settle an equal government by rotation ; and Milton, kicking when he could strike no longer, was foolish enough to publish, a few weeks before the Restoration, " *Notes* upon a sermon preached by one Griffiths, entitled ' The Fear of God and the King." To these notes an answer was written by L'Estrange, in a pamphlet petulantly called " No Blind Guides."

But whatever Milton could write, or men of greater activity could do, the King was now about to be restored, with the irresistible approbation of the people. He was therefore no longer secretary, and was consequently obliged to quit the house, which he held by his office ; and, proportioning his sense of danger to his opinion of the importance of his writings, thought it convenient to seek some shelter, and hid himself for a time in Bartholomew-close, by West Smithfield.

I cannot but remark a kind of respect, perhaps unconsciously, paid to this great man by his biographers : every house in which he resided is historically mentioned, as if it were an injury to

neglect naming any place that he honoured by his presence.

The King, with lenity of which the world has had perhaps no other example, declined to be the judge or avenger of his own or his father's wrongs; and promised to admit into the Act of Oblivion all, except those whom the parliament should except; and the parliament doomed none to capital punishment but the wretches who had immediately co-operated in the murder of the King. Milton was certainly not one of them; he had only justified what they had done.

This justification was indeed sufficiently offensive; and (June 16) an order was issued to seize Milton's "Defence," and Goodwin's "Obstructors of Justice," another book of the same tendency, and burn them by the common hangman. The attorney-general was ordered to prosecute the authors; but Milton was not seized, nor perhaps very diligently pursued.

Not long after (August 19) the flutter of innumerable bosoms was stilled by an act, which the King, that his mercy might want no recommendation of elegance, rather called an Act of Oblivion than of Grace. Goodwin was named, with nineteen more, as incapacitated for any public trust; but of Milton there was no exception.*

Of this tenderness shown to Milton, the curiosity of mankind has not forborn to inquire the reason. Burnet thinks he was forgotten; but this is another instance which may confirm Dalrymple's observation, who says, that "whenever Burnet's narrations are examined, he appears to be mistaken."

Forgotten he was not; for his prosecution was ordered; it must be therefore by design that he was included in the general oblivion. He is said to have had friends in the House, such as Marvel, Morrice, and Sir Thomas Clarges: and, undoubtedly, a man like him must have had influence. A very particular story of his escape is told by Richardson† in his Memoirs, which he received from Pope, as delivered by Betterton, who might have heard it from Davenant. In the war between the King and parliament, Davenant was made prisoner, and condemned to die; but was spared at the request of Milton. When the turn of success brought Milton into the like danger, Davenant repaid the benefit by appearing in his favour. Here is a recipro tion of generosity and gratitude so pleasing, t the tale makes its own way to credit. But, help were wanted, I know not where to find The danger of Davenant is certain from his o relation; but of his escape there is no accoun Betterton's narration can be traced no higher is not known that he had it from Davena We are told that the benefit exchanged was for life; but it seems not certain that Milto life ever was in danger. Goodwin, who committed the same kind of crime, escaped w incapacitation; and, as exclusion from pub trust is a punishment which the power of vernment can commonly inflict without the h of a particular law, it required no great inter to exempt Milton from a censure little more th verbal. Something may be reasonably ascrib to veneration and compassion—to veneration his abilities, and compassion for his distress which made it fit to forgive his malice for learning. He was now poor and blind: a who would pursue with violence an illustri enemy, depressed by fortune, and disarmed nature?†

The publication of the Act of Oblivion him in the same condition with his fellow-s jects. He was, however, upon some prete now not known, in the custody of the serge in December; and when he was released, up his refusal of the fees demanded, he and the s geant were called before the House. He w now safe within the shade of oblivion, and kn himself to be as much out of the power o griping officer as any other man. How question was determined is not known. M ton would hardly have contended, but that knew himself to have right on his side.

He then removed to Jewin-street, near A dersgate-street; and, being blind and by means wealthy, wanted a domestic compani and attendant; and therefore, by the reco mendation of Dr. Paget, married Elizab Minshul, of a gentleman's family in Cheshi probably without a fortune. All his wi were virgins; for he has declared that he thou it gross and indelicate to be a second husban upon what other principles his choice was m

* Philips says expressly, that Milton was excepted and disqualified from bearing any office: but Toland says, he was not excepted at all, and consequently excluded in the General Pardon, or Act of Indemnity passed the 29th of August, 1660. Toland is right; for I find Goodwin and Ph. Nye the minister excepted in the Act, but Milton not named. However, he obtained a special pardon in December, 660, which passed the privy-seal, but not the great-seal.—MALONE.

† It was told before by A. Wood in Ath. Oxon, vol. ii. p. 412, 2d edit.—C.

* That Milton saved Davenant is attested by A brey and by Wood from him; but none of them that Davenant saved Milton. This is Richardso assertion merely.—MALONE.

† A different account of the means by which M ton secured himself is given by an historian lat brought to light. "Milton, Latin secretary to Cr well, distinguished by his writings in favour of rights and liberties of the people, pretended to dead, and had a public funeral procession. T King applauded his policy in escaping the puni ment of death, by a seasonable show of dying. Cunningham's History of Great Britain, vol. i. p. —R.

cannot now be known; but marriage afforded not much of his happiness. The first wife left him in disgust, and was brought back only by terror; the second, indeed, seems to have been more a favourite, but her life was short. The third, as Philips relates, oppressed his children in his lifetime, and cheated them at his death.

Soon after his marriage, according to an obscure story, he was offered the continuance of his employment, and, being pressed by his wife to accept it, answered, "You, like other women, want to ride in your coach; my wish is to live and die an honest man." If he considered the Latin secretary as exercising any of the powers of government, he that had shared authority, either with the parliament or Cromwell, might have forborn to talk very loudly of his honesty; and if he thought the office purely ministerial, he certainly might have honestly retained it under the King. But this tale has too little evidence to deserve a disquisition; large offers and sturdy rejections are among the most common topics of falsehood.

He had so much either of prudence or gratitude, that he forbore to disturb the new settlement with any of his political or ecclesiastical opinions, and from this time devoted himself to poetry and literature. Of his zeal for learning in all its parts, he gave a proof by publishing, the next year (1661), "Accidence commenced Grammar;" a little book which has nothing remarkable, but that its author, who had been lately defending the supreme powers of his country, and was then writing "Paradise Lost," could descend from his elevation to rescue children from the perplexity of grammatical confusion, and the trouble of lessons unnecessarily repeated.*

About this time, Elwood, the quaker, being recommended to him as one who would read Latin to him for the advantage of his conversation, attended him every afternoon except on Sundays. Milton, who, in his letter to Hartlib, had declared, that "to read Latin with an English mouth is as ill a hearing as Law French," required that Elwood should learn and practise the Italian pronunciation, which, he said, was necessary, if he would talk with foreigners. This seems to have been a task troublesome without use. There is little reason for preferring the Italian pronunciation to our own, except that it is more general; and to teach it to an Englishman is only to make him a foreigner at home. He who travels, if he speaks Latin, may so soon learn the sounds which every native gives it, that he need make no provision before his journey; and if strangers visit us, it is their business to practise such conformity to our modes as they expect from us in their own countries. Elwood complied with the directions, and improved himself by his attendance for he relates, that Milton, having a curious ear, knew by his voice when he read what he did not understand, and would stop him, "and open the most difficult passages."

In a short time he took a house in the Artillery-walk, leading to Bunhill-fields; the mention of which concludes the register of Milton's removals and habitations. He lived longer in this place than any other.

He was now busied by "Paradise Lost." Whence he drew the original design has been variously conjectured by men who cannot bear to think themselves ignorant of that which, at last, neither diligence nor sagacity can discover. Some find the hint in an Italian tragedy. Voltaire tells a wild and unauthorized story of a farce seen by Milton in Italy, which opened thus: *Let the rainbow be the fiddle-stick of the fiddle of Heaven.** It has been already shown, that the first conception was a tragedy or mystery, not of a narrative, but a dramatic work, which he is supposed to have begun to reduce to its present form about the time (1655) when he finished his dispute with the defenders of the King.

He long before had promised to adorn his native country by some great performance, while he had yet, perhaps, no settled design, and was stimulated only by such expectations as naturally arose from the survey of his attainments, and the consciousness of his powers. What he should undertake, it was difficult to determine. He was "long choosing, and began late."

While he was obliged to divide his time between his private studies and affairs of state, his poetical labour must have been often interrupted; and perhaps he did little more in that busy time than construct the narrative, adjust the episodes, proportion the parts, accumulate images and sentiments, and treasure in his memory, or preserve in writing, such hints as books or meditations would supply. Nothing particular is known of his intellectual operations while he was a statesman; for, having every help and accommodation at hand, he had no need of uncommon expedients.

Being driven from all public stations, he is yet too great not to be traced by curiosity to his retirement: where he has been found by Mr. Richardson, the fondest of his admirers, sit-

* Yelden in his continuation of Langbaine's account of the Dramatic Poets, 8vo. 1693, says, that he had been told that Milton, after the Restoration, kept a school at or near Greenwich. The publication of an Accidence at that period gives some countenance to this tradition.—MALONE

* It is scarcely necessary to inform the reader, that this relation of Voltaire's was perfectly true, as far as relates to the existence of the play which he speaks of, namely, the Adams of Andraini; but it is still a question whether Milton ever saw it.—J. B.

ting "before his door in a gray coat of coarse cloth, in warm sultry weather, to enjoy the fresh air; and so, as in his own room, receiving the visits of the people of distinguished parts as well as quality." His visitors of high quality must now be imagined to be few; but men of parts might reasonably court the conversation of a man so generally illustrious, that foreigners are reported, by Wood, to have visited the house in Bread-street, where he was born.

According to another account, he was seen in a small house, "neatly enough dressed in black clothes, sitting in a room hung with rusty green; pale but not cadaverous, with chalk-stones in his hands. He said, that, if it were not for the gout, his blindness would be tolerable."

In the intervals of his pain, being made unable to use the common exercises, he used to swing in a chair, and sometimes played upon an organ.

He was now confessedly and visibly employed upon his poem, of which the progress might be noted by those with whom he was familiar; for he was obliged, when he had composed as many lines as his memory would conveniently retain, to employ some friend in writing them, having, at least for part of the time, no regular attendant. This gave opportunity to observations and reports.

Mr. Philips observes, that there was a very remarkable circumstance in the composure of "Paradise Lost, which I have a particular reason," says he, "to remember; for whereas I had the perusal of it from the very beginning, for some years, as I went from time to time to visit him, in parcels of ten, twenty, or thirty verses at a time (which, being written by whatever hand came next, might possibly want correction as to the orthography and pointing,) having, as the summer came on, not being showed any for a considerable while, and desiring the reason thereof, was answered, that his vein never happily flowed but from the Autumnal Equinox to the Vernal; and that whatever he attempted at other times was never to his satisfaction, though he courted his fancy never so much; so that, in all the years he was about this poem, he may be said to have spent half his time therein."

Upon this relation Toland remarks, that in his opinion Philips has mistaken the time of the year; for Milton, in his elegies, declares, that with the advance of the spring he feels the increase of his poetical force, *redeunt in carmina vires*. To this it is answered, that Philips could hardly mistake time so well marked; and it may be added, that Milton might find different times of the year favourable to different parts of life. Mr. Richardson conceives it impossible that such a work should be suspended for six months, or for one. It may go on faster or slower, but it must go on. By what necessity it must continually go on, or why it might not be laid aside and resumed, it is not easy to discover.

This dependance of the soul upon the seasons, those temporary and periodical ebbs and flows of intellect, may, I suppose, justly be derided as the fumes of vain imagination. *Sapiens dominabitur astris*. The author that thinks himself weather-bound will find, with a little help from hellebore, that he is only idle or exhausted. But while this notion has possession of the head, it produces the inability which it supposes. Our powers owe much of their energy to our hopes; *possunt quia posse videntur*. When success seems attainable, diligence is enforced; but when it is admitted that the faculties are suppressed by a cross wind, or a cloudy sky, the day is given up without resistance, for who can contend with the course of nature?

From such prepossessions Milton seems not to have been free. There prevailed in his time an opinion, that the world was in its decay, and that we have had the misfortune to be produced in the decrepitude of Nature. It was suspected that the whole creation languished, that neither trees nor animals had the height or bulk of their predecessors, and that every thing was daily sinking by gradual diminution.* Milton appears to suspect that souls partake of the general degeneracy, and is not without some fear that his book is to be written in "an age too late" for heroic poesy.†

Another opinion wanders about the world, and sometimes finds reception among wise men, an opinion that restrains the operations of the mind to particular regions, and supposes that a luckless mortal may be born in a degree of latitude too high or too low for wisdom or for wit. From this fancy, wild as it is, he had not wholly cleared his head, when he feared lest the *climate* of his country might be *too cold* for flights of imagination

Into a mind already occupied by such fancies, another not more reasonable might easily find its way. He that could fear lest his genius had fallen upon too old a world, or too chill a climate, might consistently magnify to himself the

* This opinion is, with great learning and ingenuity, refuted in a book now very little known, "An Apology or Declaration of the Power and Providence of God in the Government of the World," by Dr. George Hakewill, London, folio, 1635. The first who ventured to propagate it in this country was Dr. Gabriel Goodman, bishop of Gloucester, a man of a versatile temper, and the author of a book entitled "The Fall of Man, or the Corruption of Nature proved by Natural Reason." Lond. 1616 and 1624, 4to. He was plundered in the Usurpation, turned Roman Catholic, and died in obscurity.—See Athen. Oxon. vol. i. p. 727.—H.

† ———Unless an age too late, or cold
Climate, or years damp my intended wing.
Par. Lost, b. ix. l. 44.—J. B.

influence of the seasons, and believe his faculties to be vigorous only half the year.

His submission to the seasons was at least more reasonable than his dread of decaying nature, or a frigid zone, for general causes must operate uniformly in a general abatement of mental power; if less could be performed by the writer, less likewise would content the judges of his work. Among this lagging race of frosty grovellers, he might still have risen into eminence by producing something which they should not willingly let die. However inferior to the heroes who were born in better ages, he might still be great among his contemporaries, with the hope of growing every day greater in the dwindle of posterity. He might still be a giant among the pigmies, the one-eyed monarch of the blind.

Of his artifices of study, or particular hours of composition, we have little account, and there was perhaps little to be told. Richardson, who seems to have been very diligent in his inquiries, but discovers always a wish to find Milton discriminated from other men, relates, "that he would sometimes lie awake whole nights, but not a verse could he make; and on a sudden his poetical faculty would rush upon him with an *impetus* or *æstrum*, and his daughter was immediately called to secure what came. At other times he would dictate perhaps forty lines in a breath, and then reduce them to half the number."

These bursts of light, and involutions of darkness, these transient and involuntary excursions and retrocessions of invention, having some appearance of deviation from the common train of nature, are eagerly caught by the lovers of a wonder. Yet something of this inequality happens to every man in every mode of exertion, manual or mental. The mechanic cannot handle his hammer and his file at all times with equal dexterity; there are hours, he knows not why, when *his hand is out*. By Mr. Richardson's relation, casually conveyed, much regard cannot be claimed. That in his intellectual hour Milton called for his daughter "to secure what came," may be questioned; for unluckily it happens to be known that his daughters were never taught to write; nor would he have been obliged, as is universally confessed, to have employed any casual visitor in disburthening his memory, if his daughter could have performed the office.

The story of reducing his exuberance has been told of other authors, and, though doubtless true of every fertile and copious mind, seems to have been gratuitously transferred to Milton.

What he has told us, and we cannot now know more, is, that he composed much of this poem in the night and morning, I suppose before his mind was disturbed with common business; and that he poured out with great fluency his unpremeditated verse. Versification, free, like his, from the distresses of rhyme, must, by a work so long, be made prompt and habitual; and, when his thoughts were once adjusted, the words would come at his command.

At what particular times of his life the parts of his work were written, cannot often be known. The beginning of the third book shows that he had lost his sight; and the introduction to the seventh, that the return of the King had clouded him with discountenance, and that he was offended by the licentious festivity of the Restoration. There are no other internal notes of time. Milton, being now cleared from all effects of his disloyalty, had nothing required from him but the common duty of living in quiet, to be rewarded with the common right of protection; but this, which, when he skulked from the approach of his King, was perhaps more than he hoped, seems not to have satisfied him; for no sooner is he safe, than he finds himself in danger, "fallen on evil days and evil tongues, and with darkness and with danger compass'd round." This darkness, had his eyes been better employed, had undoubtedly deserved compassion; but to add the mention of danger was ungrateful and unjust. He was fallen indeed on *evil days;* the time was come in which regicides could no longer boast their wickedness. But of *evil tongues* for Milton to complain required impudence at least equal to his other powers; Milton, whose warmest advocates must allow that he never spared any asperity of reproach, or brutality of insolence.

But the charge itself seems to be false; for it would be hard to recollect any reproach cast upon him, either serious or ludicrous, through the whole remaining part of his life. He pursued his studies, or his amusements, without persecution, molestation, or insult. Such is the reverence paid to great abilities, however misused: they who contemplated in Milton the scholar and the wit were contented to forget the reviler of his King.

When the plague (1665) raged in London, Milton took refuge at Chalfont, in Bucks; where Elwood, who had taken the house for him, first saw a complete copy of "Paradise Lost;" and, having perused it, said to him, "Thou hast said a great deal upon "Paradise Lost;" what hast thou to say upon Paradise found?"

Next year, when the danger of infection had ceased, he returned to Bunhill-fields, and designed the publication of his poem. A license was necessary, and he could expect no great kindness from a chaplain of the Archbishop of Canterbury. He seems, however, to have been treated with tenderness; for though objections were made to particular passages, and among them to the simile of the sun eclipsed in the first book, yet the license was granted; and

he sold his copy, April 27, 1667, to Samuel Simmons, for an immediate payment of five pounds, with a stipulation to receive five pounds more when thirteen hundred should be sold of the first edition; and again, five pounds after the sale of the same number of the second edition; and another five pounds after the same sale of the third. None of the three editions were to be extended beyond fifteen hundred copies.

The first edition was of ten books, in a small quarto. The titles were varied from year to year: and an advertisement and the arguments of the books were omitted in some copies, and inserted in others.

The sale gave him in two years a right to his second payment, for which the receipt was signed April 26, 1669. The second edition was not given till 1674; it was printed in small octavo; and the number of books was increased to twelve, by a division of the seventh and twelfth; and some other small improvements were made. The third edition was published in 1678; and the widow, to whom the copy was then to devolve, sold all her claims to Simmons for eight pounds, according to her receipt given Dec. 21, 1680. Simmons had already agreed to transfer the whole right to Brabazon Aylmer, for twenty-five pounds; and Aylmer sold to Jacob Tonson half, August 17, 1683, and half, March 24, 1690, at a price considerably enlarged. In the history of "Paradise Lost" a deduction thus minute will rather gratify than fatigue.

The slow sale and tardy reputation of this poem have been always mentioned as evidences of neglected merit, and of the uncertainty of literary fame; and inquiries have been made, and conjectures offered, about the causes of its long obscurity and late reception. But has the case been truly stated? Have not lamentation and wonder been lavished on an evil that was never felt?

That in the reigns of Charles and James, the "Paradise Lost" received no public acclamations, is readily confessed. Wit and literature were on the side of the court: and who that solicited favour or fashion would venture to praise the defender of the regicides? All that he himself could think his due, from *evil tongues* in *evil days*, was that reverential silence which was generously preserved. But it cannot be inferred, that his poem was not read, or not, however unwillingly, admired.

The sale, if it be considered, will justify the public. Those who have no power to judge of past times but by their own, should always doubt their conclusions. The call for books was not in Milton's age what it is in the present. To read was not then a general amusement; neither traders, nor often gentlemen, thought themselves disgraced by ignorance. The women had not then aspired to literature, nor was every house supplied with a closet of knowledge. Those, indeed, who professed learning, were no less learned than at any other time; but of that middle race of students who read for pleasure or accomplishment, and who buy the numerous products of modern typography, the number was then comparatively small. To prove the paucity of readers, it may be sufficient to remark, that the nation had been satisfied from 1623 to 1664, that is, forty-one years, with only two editions of the works of Shakspeare, which probably did not together make one thousand copies.

The sale of thirteen hundred copies in two years, in opposition to so much recent enmity, and to a style of versification new to all, and disgusting to many, was an uncommon example of the prevalence of genius. The demand did not immediately increase; for many more readers than were supplied at first the nation did not afford. Only three thousand were sold in eleven years; for it forced its way without assistance; its admirers did not dare to publish their opinion; and the opportunities now given of attracting notice by advertisements were then very few; the means of proclaiming the publication of new books have been produced by that general literature which now pervades the nation through all its ranks.

But the reputation and price of the copy still advanced, till the Revolution put an end to the secrecy of love, and "Paradise Lost" broke into open view with sufficient security of kind reception.

Fancy can hardly forbear to conjecture with what temper Milton surveyed the silent progress of his work, and marked its reputation stealing its way in a kind of subterraneous current through fear and silence. I cannot but conceive him calm and confident, little disappointed, not at all dejected, relying on his own merit with steady consciousness, and waiting without impatience the vicissitudes of opinion, and the impartiality of a future generation.

In the mean time he continued his studies, and supplied the want of sight by a very odd expedient, of which Philips gives the following account:

Mr. Philips tells us, "that though our Author had daily about him one or other to read, some persons of man's estate, who, of their own accord, greedily catched at the opportunity of being his readers, that they might as well reap the benefit of what they read to him, as oblige him by the benefit of their reading; and others of younger years were sent by their parents to the same end; yet excusing only the daughter by reason of her bodily infirmity and difficult utterance of speech (which, to say truth, I doubt was the principal cause of excusing her) the other two were condemned to the performance of reading

and exactly pronouncing of all the languages of whatever book he should, at one time or other, think fit to peruse; viz. the Hebrew (and, I think, the Syriac,) the Greek, the Latin, the Italian, Spanish, and French. All which sorts of books to be confined to read, without understanding one word, must needs be a trial of patience almost beyond endurance. Yet it was endured by both for a long time, though the irksomeness of this employment could not be always concealed, but broke out more and more into expressions of uneasiness; so that at length they were all, even the eldest also, sent out to learn some curious and ingenious sorts of manufacture, that are proper for women to learn, particularly embroideries in gold or silver."

In the scene of misery which this mode of intellectual labour sets before our eyes, it is hard to determine whether the daughters or the father are most to be lamented. A language not understood can never be so read as to give pleasure, and very seldom so as to convey meaning. If few men would have had resolution to write books with such embarrassments, few likewise would have wanted ability to find some better expedient.

Three years after his "Paradise Lost" (1667,) he published his "History of England," comprising the whole fable of Geoffrey of Monmouth, and continued to the Norman Invasion. Why he should have given the first part, which he seems not to believe, and which is universally rejected, it is difficult to conjecture. The style is harsh; but it has something of rough vigour, which perhaps may often strike, though it cannot please.

On this history the licenser again fixed his claws, and before he would transmit it to the press tore out several parts. Some censures of the Saxon monks were taken away, lest they should be applied to the modern clergy; and a character of the Long Parliament and Assembly of Divines was excluded; of which the author gave a copy to the Earl of Anglesey, and which, being afterwards published, has been since inserted in its proper place.

The same year were printed, "Paradise Regained" and "Samson Agonistes," a tragedy written in imitation of the ancients, and never designed by the author for the stage. As these poems were published by another bookseller, it has been asked whether Simmons was discouraged from receiving them by the slow sale of the former. Why a writer changed his bookseller a hundred years ago, I am far from hoping to discover. Certainly, he, who in two years sells thirteen hundred copies of a volume in quarto, bought for two payments of five pounds each, has no reason to repent his purchase.

When Milton showed "Paradise Regained" to Elwood, "This," said he, "is owing to you; for you put it in my head by the question you put to me at Chalfont, which otherwise I had not thought of."

His last poetical offspring was his favourite. He could not, as Elwood relates, endure to hear "Paradise Lost" preferred to "Paradise Regained." Many causes may vitiate a writer's judgment of his own works. On that which has cost him much labour he sets a high value, because he is unwilling to think that he has been diligent in vain; what has been produced without toilsome efforts is considered with delight, as a proof of vigorous faculties and fertile invention; and the last work, whatever it be, has necessarily most of the grace of novelty. Milton, however it happened, had this prejudice, and had it to himself.

To that multiplicity of attainments, and extent of comprehension, that entitled this great author to our veneration, may be added a kind of humble dignity, which did not disdain the meanest services to literature. The epic poet, the controvertist, the politician, having already descended to accommodate children with a book of rudiments, now, in the last years of his life, composed a book of logic for the initiation of students in philosophy; and published (1672,) *Artis Logicæ plenior Institutio ad Petri Rami Methodum concinnata;* that is "A new Scheme of Logic, according to the Method of Ramus." I know not whether, even in this book, he did not intend an act of hostility against the Universities; for Ramus was one of the first oppugners of the old philosophy, who disturbed with innovations the quiet of the schools.

His polemical disposition again revived. He had now been safe so long, that he forgot his fears, and published a "Treatise of true Religion, Heresy, Schism, Toleration, and the best Means to prevent the Growth of Popery."

But this little tract is modestly written, with respectful mention of the Church of England, and an appeal to the Thirty-nine Articles. His principle of toleration is, agreement in the sufficiency of the Scriptures; and he extends it to all who, whatever their opinions are, profess to derive them from the Sacred Books. The papists appeal to other testimonies, and are therefore, in his opinion, not to be permitted the liberty of either public or private worship; for though they plead conscience, "we have no warrant," he says, "to regard conscience which is not grounded in Scripture."

Those who are not convinced by his reasons, may be perhaps delighted with his wit. The term Roman Catholic is, he says, "one of the Pope's bulls; it is particular universal, or catholic schismatic."

He has, however, something better. As the best preservative against popery, he recommends the diligent perusal of the Scriptures, a duty,

from which he warns the busy part of mankind not to think themselves excused.

He now reprinted his juvenile poems, with some additions.

In the last year of his life he sent to the press, seeming to take delight in publication, a collection of Familiar Epistles in Latin; to which, being too few to make a volume, he added some academical exercises, which perhaps he perused with pleasure, as they recalled to his memory the days of youth, but for which nothing but veneration for his name could now procure a reader.

When he had attained his sixty-sixth year, the gout, with which he had been long tormented, prevailed over the enfeebled powers of nature. He died by a quiet and silent expiration, about the 10th of November, 1674, at his house in Bunhill-fields; and was buried next his father in the chancel of St. Giles, at Cripplegate. His funeral was very splendidly and numerously attended.

Upon his grave there is supposed to have been no memorial; but in our time a monument has been erected in Westminster Abbey "To the Author of Paradise Lost," by Mr. Benson, who has in the inscription bestowed more words upon himself than upon Milton.

When the inscription for the monument of Philips, in which he was said to be *soli Miltono secundus*, was exhibited to Dr. Sprat, then dean of Westminster, he refused to admit it; the name of Milton was, in his opinion, too detestable to be read on the wall of a building dedicated to devotion. Atterbury, who succeeded him, being author of the inscription, permitted its reception. "And such has been the change of public opinion," said Dr. Gregory, from whom I heard this account, "that I have seen erected in the church a statue of that man, whose name I once knew considered as a pollution of its walls."

Milton has the reputation of having been in his youth eminently beautiful, so as to have been called the lady of his college. His hair, which was of a light brown, parted at the foretop, and hung down upon his shoulders, according to the picture which he has given of Adam. He was, however, not of the heroic stature, but rather below the middle size, according to Mr. Richardson, who mentions him as having narrowly escaped from being short and thick. He was vigorous and active, and delighted in the exercise of the sword, in which he is related to have been eminently skilful. His weapon was, I believe, not the rapier, but the back-sword, of which he recommends the use in his book on education.

His eyes are said never to have been bright; but, if he was a dexterous fencer, they must have been once quick.

His domestic habits, so far as they are known, were those of a severe student. He drank little strong drink of any kind, and fed without excess in quantity, and in his earlier years without delicacy of choice. In his youth he studied late at night; but afterwards changed his hours, and rested in bed from nine to four in the summer and five in the winter. The course of his day was best known after he was blind. When he first rose, he heard a chapter in the Hebrew Bible, and then studied till twelve; then took some exercise for an hour; then dined, then played on the organ, and sang, or heard another sing, then studied till six; then entertained his visitors till eight; then supped, and, after a pipe of tobacco and a glass of water, went to bed.

So is his life described: but this even tenor appears attainable only in colleges. He that lives in the world will sometimes have the succession of his practice broken and confused. Visitors, of whom Milton is represented to have had great numbers, will come and stay unseasonably; business, of which every man has some, must be done when others will do it.

When he did not care to rise early, he had something read to him by his bedside; perhaps at this time his daughters were employed. He composed much in the morning, and dictated in the day, sitting obliquely in an elbow-chair, with his leg thrown over the arm.

Fortune appears not to have had much of his care. In the civil wars he lent his personal estate to the parliament; but when after the contest was decided, he solicited repayment, he met not only with neglect, but sharp rebuke; and, having tired both himself and his friends, was given up to poverty and hopeless indignation, till he showed how able he was to do greater service. He was then made Latin secretary, with two hundred pounds a year; and had a thousand pounds for his "Defence of the People." His widow, who, after his death, retired to Namptwich, in Cheshire, and died about 1729, is said to have reported that he lost two thousand pounds by entrusting it to a scrivener; and that, in the general depredation upon the church, he had grasped an estate of about sixty pounds a year belonging to Westminster Abbey, which, like other sharers of the plunder of rebellion, he was afterwards obliged to return. Two thousand pounds, which he had placed in the Excise-office, were also lost. There is yet no reason to believe that he was ever reduced to indigence. His wants, being few, were competently supplied. He sold his library before his death, and left his family fifteen hundred pounds, on which his widow laid hold and only gave one hundred to each of his daughters.

His literature was unquestionably great. He read all the languages which are considered either as learned or polite; Hebrew with its two dialects, Greek, Latin, Italian, French, and Spanish. In Latin his skill was such as places him in the first rank of writers and critics; and he appears to have cultivated Italian

with uncommon diligence. The books in which his daughter, who used to read to him, represented him as most delighting, after Homer, which he could almost repeat, were Ovid's Metamorphoses and Euripides. His Euripides is by Mr. Cradock's kindness, now in my hands: the margin is sometimes noted; but I have found nothing remarkable.

Of the English poets he set most value upon Spenser, Shakspeare, and Cowley. Spenser was apparently his favourite; Shakspeare he may easily be supposed to like, with every other skilful reader; but I should not have expected that Cowley, whose ideas of excellence were so different from his own, would have had much of his approbation. His character of Dryden, who sometimes visited him, was, that he was a good rhymist, but no poet.

His theological opinions are said to have been first Calvinistical; and afterwards, perhaps when he began to hate the presbyterians, to have tended towards Arminianism. In the mixed questions of theology and government he never thinks that he can recede far enough from popery or prelacy: but what Baudius says of Erasmus seems applicable to him, *magis habuit quod fugeret, quam quod sequeretur.* He had determined rather what to condemn, than what to approve. He has not associated himself with any denomination of protestants; we know rather what he was not, than what he was. He was not of the church of Rome; he was not of the church of England.

To be of no church is dangerous. Religion, of which the rewards are distant, and which is animated only by faith and hope, will glide by degrees out of the mind, unless it be invigorated and reimpressed by external ordinances, by stated calls to worship, and the salutary influence of example. Milton, who appears to have had full conviction of the truth of Christianity, and to have regarded the Holy Scriptures with the profoundest veneration, and to have been untainted by any heretical peculiarity of opinion, and to have lived in a confirmed belief of the immediate and occasional agency of Providence, yet grew old without any visible worship. In the distribution of his hours, there was no hour of prayer, either solitary, or with his household; omitting public prayers, he omitted all.

Of this omission the reason has been sought upon a supposition which ought never to be made, that men live with their own approbation, and justify their conduct to themselves. Prayer certainly was not thought superfluous by him, who represents our first parents as praying acceptably in the state of innocence, and efficaciously after their fall. That he lived without prayer can hardly be affirmed; his studies and meditations were an habitual prayer. The neglect of it in his family was probably a fault for which he condemned himself, and which he intended to correct, but that death, as too often happens, intercepted his reformation.

His political notions were those of an acrimonious and surly republican, for which it is not known that he gave any better reason than that "a popular government was the most frugal; for the trappings of a monarchy would set up an ordinary commonwealth." It is surely very shallow policy that supposes money to be the chief good: and even this, without considering that the support and expense of a court is, for the most part, only a particular kind of traffic, for which money is circulated without any national impoverishment.

Milton's republicanism was, I am afraid, founded in an envious hatred of greatness, and a sullen desire of independence; in petulance impatient of control, and pride disdainful of superiority. He hated monarchs in the state, and prelates in the church; for he hated all whom he was required to obey. It is to be suspected, that his predominant desire was to destroy rather than establish, and that he felt not so much the love of liberty as repugnance to authority.

It has been observed, that they who most loudly clamour for liberty do not most liberally grant it. What we know of Milton's character, in domestic relations, is, that he was severe and arbitrary. His family consisted of women; and there appears in his books something like a Turkish contempt of females, as subordinate and inferior beings. That his own daughters might not break the ranks, he suffered them to be depressed by a mean and penurious education. He thought women made only for obedience, and man only for rebellion.

Of his family some account may be expected. His sister first married to Mr. Philips, afterwards married to Mr. Agar, a friend of her first husband, who succeeded him in the Crown-office. She had, by her first husband, Edward and John, the two nephews whom Milton educated; and, by her second, two daughters.

His brother, Sir Christopher, had two daughters, Mary, and Catharine;* and a son, Thomas, who succeeded Agar in the Crown-

* Both these persons were living at Holloway, about the year 1734, and at that time possessed such a degree of health and strength as enabled them on Sundays and prayer-days to walk a mile up a steep hill to Highgate Chapel. One of them was ninety-two at the time of her death. Their parentage was known to few, and their names were corrupted into Melton. By the Crown-office, mentioned in the two last paragraphs, we are to understand the Crown-office of the Court of Chancery.—H.

office, and left a daughter living, in 1749, in Grosvenor-street.

Milton had children only by his first wife; Anne, Mary, and Deborah. Anne, though deformed, married a master-builder, and died of her first child. Mary died single. Deborah married Abraham Clark, a weaver in Spitalfields, and lived seventy-six years, to August 1727. This is the daughter of whom public mention has been made. She could repeat the first lines of Homer, the Metamorphoses, and some of Euripides, by having often read them. Yet here incredulity is ready to make a stand. Many repetitions are necessary to fix in the memory lines not understood; and why should Milton wish or want to hear them so often? These lines were at the beginning of the poems. Of a book written in a language not understood, the beginning raises no more attention than the end; and as those that understand it know commonly the beginning best, its rehearsal will seldom be necessary. It is not likely that Milton required any passage to be so much repeated as that his daughter could learn it; nor likely that he desired the initial lines to be read at all; nor that the daughter, weary of the drudgery of pronouncing unideal sounds, would voluntarily commit them to memory.

To this gentlewoman Addison made a present, and promised some establishment, but died soon after. Queen Caroline sent her fifty guineas. She had seven sons and three daughters; but none of them had any children, except her son Caleb and her daughter Elizabeth. Caleb went to Fort St. George, in the East Indies, and had two sons, of whom nothing is now known. Elizabeth married Thomas Foster, a weaver in Spitalfields; and had seven children, who all died. She kept a petty grocer's or chandler's shop, first at Holloway, and afterwards in Cock-lane near Shoreditch Church. She knew little of her grandfather, and that little was not good. She told of his harshness to his daughters, and his refusal to have them taught to write; and, in opposition to other accounts, represented him as delicate, though temperate, in his diet.

In 1750, April 4, "Comus" was played for her benefit. She had so little acquaintance with diversion or gayety, that she did not know what was intended when a benefit was offered her. The profits of the night were only one hundred and thirty pounds, though Dr. Newton brought a large contribution; and twenty pounds were given by Tonson, a man who is to be praised as often as he is named. Of this sum, one hundred pounds were placed in the stocks, after some debate between her and her husband in whose name it should be entered; and the rest augmented their little stock, with which they removed to Islington. This was the greatest benefaction that "Paradise Lost" ever procured the author's descendants; and to this he who has now attempted to relate his life had the honour of contributing a prologue.

In the examination of Milton's poetical works, I shall pay so much regard to time as to begin with his juvenile productions. For his early pieces he seems so have had a degree of fondness not very laudable; what he has once written he resolves to preserve, and gives to the public an unfinished poem, which he broke off because he was "nothing satisfied with what he had done," supposing his readers less nice than himself. These preludes to his future labours are in Italian, Latin, and English. Of the Italian I cannot pretend to speak as a critic; but I have heard them commended by a man well qualified to decide their merit. The Latin pieces are lusciously elegant; but the delight which they afford is rather by the exquisite imitation of the ancient writers, by the purity of the diction, and the harmony of the numbers, than by any power of invention, or vigour of sentiment. They are not all of equal value; the elegies excel the odes; and some of the exercises on Gunpowder Treason might have been spared.

The English poems, though they make no promises of "Paradise Lost,"* have this evidence of genius, that they have a cast original and unborrowed. But their peculiarity is not excellence; if they differ from the verses of others, they differ for the worse; for they are too often distinguished by repulsive harshness; the combinations of words are new, but they are not pleasing; the rhymes and epithets seem to be laboriously sought, and violently applied.

That in the early parts of his life he wrote with much care appears from his manuscripts, happily preserved at Cambridge, in which many of his smaller works are found as they were first written, with the subsequent corrections. Such relics show how excellence is acquired; what we hope ever to do with ease, we must learn first to do with diligence.

Those who admire the beauties of this great poet sometimes force their own judgment into false approbation of his little pieces, and prevail upon themselves to think that admirable which is only singular. All that short compositions can commonly attain is neatness and elegance. Milton never learned the art of doing little things with grace; he overlooked the milder excellence of suavity and softness; he was a lion that had no skill in dangling the kid.

One of the poems on which much praise has been bestowed, is "Lycidas;" of which the diction is harsh, the rhymes uncertain, and the numbers unpleasing. What beauty there is we

* With the exception of "Comus," in which, Dr. Johnson afterwards says, may very plainly be discovered the dawn of twilight of "Paradise Lost."—C.

must therefore seek in the sentiments and images. It is not to be considered as the effusion of real passion; for passion runs not after remote allusions and obscure opinions. Passion plucks no berries from the myrtle and ivy, nor calls upon Arethuse and Mincius, nor tells of rough satyrs and "fauns with cloven heel." Where there is leisure for fiction there is little grief.

In this poem there is no nature, for there is no truth; there is no art, for there is nothing new. Its form is that of a pastoral; easy, vulgar, and therefore disgusting; whatever images it can supply are long ago exhausted; and its inherent improbability always forces dissatisfaction on the mind. When Cowley tells of Hervey, that they studied together, it is easy to suppose how much he must miss the companion of his labours, and the partner of his discoveries; but what image of tenderness can be excited by these lines?

> We drove a field, and both together heard
> What time the grey fly winds her sultry horn,
> Battening our flocks with the fresh dews at night."

We know that they never drove a field, and that they had no flocks to batten; and though it be allowed that the representation may be allegorical, the true meaning is so uncertain and remote, that it is never sought, because it cannot be known when it is found.

Among the flocks, and copses, and flowers, appear the heathen deities; Jove and Phœbus, Neptune and Æolus, with a long train of mythological imagery, such as a college easily supplies. Nothing can less display knowledge, or less exercise invention, than to tell how a shepherd has lost his companion, and must now feed his flocks alone, without any judge of his skill in piping; and how one god asks another god what has become of Lycidas, and how neither god can tell. He who thus grieves will excite no sympathy; he who thus praises will confer no honour.

This poem has yet a grosser fault. With these trifling fictions are mingled the most awful and sacred truths, such as ought never to be polluted with such irreverent combinations. The shepherd likewise is now a feeder of sheep, and afterwards an ecclesiastical pastor, a superintendent of a Christian flock. Such equivocations are always unskilful; but here they are indecent, and at least approach to impiety, of which, however, I believe the writer not to have been conscious.

Such is the power of reputation justly acquired, that its blaze drives away the eye from nice examination. Surely no man could have fancied that he read "Lycidas" with pleasure, had he not known the Author.

Of the two pieces, "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," I believe opinion is uniform; every man that reads them, reads them with pleasure. The Author's design is not, what Theobald has remarked, merely to show how objects derive their colours from the mind, by representing the operation of the same things upon the gay and the melancholy temper, or upon the same man as he is differently disposed: but rather how, among the successive variety of appearances, every disposition of mind takes hold on those by which it may be gratified.

The cheerful man hears the lark in the morning; the pensive man hears the nightingale in the evening. The cheerful man sees the cock strut, and hears the horn and hounds echo in the wood; then walks, not unseen, to observe the glory of the rising sun, or listen to the singing milk-maid, and view the labours of the ploughman and the mower; then casts his eyes about him over scenes of smiling plenty, and looks up to the distant tower, the residence of some fair inhabitant; thus he pursues real gayety through a day of labour or of play, and delights himself at night with the fanciful narratives of superstitious ignorance.

The pensive man, at one time, walks unseen to muse at midnight; and at another hears the sullen curfew. If the weather drives him home, he sits in a room lighted only by glowing embers; or by a lonely lamp outwatches the north star, to discover the habitation of separate souls, and varies the shades of meditation, by contemplating the magnificent or pathetic scenes of tragic and epic poetry. When the morning comes, a morning gloomy with rain and wind, he walks into the dark trackless woods,* falls asleep by some murmuring water, and with melancholy enthusiasm expects some dream of prognostication, or some music played by aerial performers.

Both Mirth and Melancholy are solitary, silent inhabitants of the breast, that neither receive nor transmit communication: no mention is therefore made of a philosophical friend, or a pleasant companion. The seriousness does not arise from any participation of calamity, nor the gayety from the pleasures of the bottle.

The man of cheerfulness, having exhausted the country, tries what towered cities will afford, and mingles with scenes of splendour, gay assemblies, and nuptial festivities; but he mingles a mere spectator, as, when the learned comedies of Jonson, or the wild dramas of Shakspeare, are exhibited, he attends the theatre.

The pensive man never loses himself in crowds, but walks the cloister, or frequents the cathedral. Milton probably had not yet forsaken the church.

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* Here, as Warton justly observes, Johnson "has confounded his description." The melancholy man does not go out while it rains, but waits till

> ——— the sun begins to fling
> His flaming beams.———

J. B.

Both his characters delight in music; but he seems to think that cheerful notes would have obtained from Pluto a complete dismission of Eurydice, of whom solemn sounds only procured a conditional release.

For the old age of Cheerfulness he makes no provision; but Melancholy he conducts with great dignity to the close of life. His cheerfulness is without levity, and his pensiveness without asperity.

Through these two poems the images are properly selected and nicely distinguished; but the colours of the diction seem not sufficiently discriminated. I know not whether characters are kept sufficiently apart. No mirth can, indeed, be found in his melancholy; but I am afraid that I always meet some melancholy in his mirth. They are two noble efforts of imagination.*

The greatest of his juvenile performances is the mask of "Comus," in which may very plainly be discovered the dawn or twilight of "Paradise Lost." Milton appears to have formed very early that system of diction, and mode of verse, which his maturer judgment approved, and from which he never endeavoured nor desired to deviate.

Nor does "Comus" afford only a specimen of his language; it exhibits likewise his power of description and his vigour of sentiment, employed in the praise and defence of virtue. A work more truly poetical is rarely found; allusions, images, and descriptive epithets, embellish almost every period with lavish decoration. As a series of lines, therefore, it may be considered as worthy of all the admiration with which the votaries have received it.

As a drama it is deficient. The action is not probable. A mask, in those parts where supernatural intervention is admitted, must indeed be given up to all the freaks of imagination; but, so far as the action is merely human, it ought to be reasonable, which can hardly be said of the conduct of the two brothers; who, when their sister sinks with fatigue in a pathless wilderness, wander both away together in search of berries too far to find their way back, and leave a helpless lady to all the sadness and danger of solitude. This, however, is a defect overbalanced by its convenience.

What deserves more reprehension is, that th prologue spoken in the wild wood by the atter dant Spirit is addressed to the audience; mode of communication so contrary to the na ture of dramatic representation, that no prece dents can support it.

The discourse of the Spirit is too long; an ob jection that may be made to almost all the fol lowing speeches; they have not the sprightlines of a dialogue animated by reciprocal contention but seem rather declamations deliberately com posed, and formally repeated on a moral ques tion. The auditor therefore listens as to lecture, without passion, without anxiety.

The song of Comus has airiness and jollity but what may recommend Milton's morals a well as his poetry, the invitations to pleasur are so general, that they excite no distinc images of corrupt enjoyment, and take no dan gerous hold on the fancy.

The following soliloquies of Comus and th Lady are elegant, but tedious. The song mus owe much to the voice if it ever can deligh At last the brothers enter with too much tran quillity; and, when they have feared lest thei sister should be in danger, and hoped that she not in danger, the elder makes a speech i praise of chastity, and the younger finds hov fine it is to be a philosopher.

Then descends the Spirit in form of a shep herd; and the brother, instead of being in hast to ask his help, praises his singing, and inquire his business in that place. It is remarkable that at this interview the brother is taken wit a short fit of rhyming. The Spirit relates tha the Lady is in the power of Comus; the brothe moralizes again; and the Spirit makes a lon narration, of no use because it is false, an therefore unsuitable to a good being.

In all these parts the language is poetical, an the sentiments are generous; but there is some thing wanting to allure attention.

The dispute between the Lady and Comus i the most animated and affecting scene of th drama, and wants nothing but a brisker recipro cation of objections and replies to invite atten tion and detain it.

The songs are vigorous and full of imagery but they are harsh in their diction, and not ver musical in their numbers.

Throughout the whole the figures are to bold, and the language too luxuriant for dia logue. It is a drama in the epic style, inelegant ly splendid, and tediously instructive.

The Sonnets were written in different part of Milton's life, upon different occasions. The deserve not any particular criticism; for of th best it can only be said, that they are not bad and perhaps only the eighth and the twenty first are truly entitled to this slender commen dation. The fabric of a sonnet, however adapte to the Italian language, has never succeeded i

* Mr. Warton intimates (and there can be little doubt of the truth of his conjecture) that Milton borrowed many of the images in these two fine poems from "Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy," a book published in 1621, and at sundry times since, abounding in learning, curious information, and pleasantry. Mr. Warton says, that Milton appears to have been an attentive reader thereof; and to this assertion I add, of my own knowledge, that it was a book that Dr. Johnson frequently resorted to, as many others have done, for amusement after the fatigue of study.—H.

ours, which, having greater variety of termination, requires the rhymes to be often changed.

Those little pieces may be despatched without much anxiety; a greater work calls for greater care. I am now to examine "Paradise Lost;" a poem, which, considered with respect to design, may claim the first place, and with respect to performance, the second, among the productions of the human mind.

By the general consent of critics, the first praise of genius is due to the writer of an epic poem, as it requires an assemblage of all the powers which are singly sufficient for other compositions. Poetry is the art of uniting pleasure with truth, by calling imagination to the help of reason. Epic poetry undertakes to teach the most important truths by the most pleasing precepts, and therefore relates some great event in the most affecting manner. History must supply the writer with the rudiments of narration, which he must improve and exalt by a nobler art, must animate by dramatic energy, and diversify by retrospection and anticipation; morality must teach him the exact bounds, and different shades of vice and virtue; from policy, and the practice of life, he has to learn the discriminations of character, and the tendency of the passions, either single or combined; and physiology must supply him with illustrations and images. To put these materials to poetical use, is required an imagination capable of painting nature, and realizing fiction. Nor is he yet a poet till he has attained the whole extension of his language, distinguished all the delicacies of phrase, and all the colours of words, and learned to adjust their different sounds to all the varieties of metrical modulation.

Bossu is of opinion, that the poet's first work is to find a moral, which his fable is afterwards to illustrate and establish. This seems to have been the process only of Milton; the moral of other poems is incidental and consequent; in Milton's only it is essential and intrinsic. His purpose was the most useful and the most arduous; "to vindicate the ways of God to man;" to show the reasonableness of religion, and the necessity of obedience to the Divine law.

To convey this moral there must be a fable, a narration artfully constructed, so as to excite curiosity, and surprise expectation. In this part of his work, Milton must be confessed to have equalled every other poet. He has involved in his account of the fall of man the events which preceded, and those that were to follow it: he has interwoven the whole system of theology with such propriety, that every part appears to be necessary; and scarcely any recital is wished shorter for the sake of quickening the progress of the main action.

The subject of an epic poem is naturally an event of great importance. That of Milton is not the destruction of a city, the conduct of a colony, or the foundation of an empire. His subject is the fate of worlds, the revolutions of heaven and of earth; rebellion against the supreme King, raised by the highest order of created beings; the overthrow of their host, and the punishment of their crime; the creation of a new race of reasonable creatures, their original happiness and innocence, their forfeiture of immortality, and their restoration to hope and peace.

Great events can be hastened or retarded only by persons of elevated dignity. Before the greatness displayed in Milton's poem, all other greatness shrinks away. The weakest of his agents are the highest and noblest of human beings, the original parents of mankind; with whose actions the elements consented: on whose rectitude, or deviation of will, depended the state of terrestrial nature, and the condition of all the future inhabitants of the globe.

Of the other agents in the poem, the chief are such as it is irreverence to name on slight occasions. The rest were lower powers;

> ——of which the least could wield
> Those elements, and arm him with the force
> Of all their regions;

powers, which only the control of Omnipotence restrains from laying creation waste, and filling the vast expanse of space with ruin and confusion. To display the motives and actions of beings thus superior, so far as human reason can examine them, or human imagination represent them, is the task which this mighty Poet has undertaken and performed.

In the examination of epic poems, much speculation is commonly employed upon the characters. The characters in the "Paradise Lost" which admit of examination are those of angels and of man; of angels good and evil; of man in his innocent and sinful state.

Among the angels, the virtue of Raphael is mild and placid, of easy condescension and free communication; that of Michael is regal and lofty, and, as may seem, attentive to the dignity of his own nature. Abdiel and Gabriel appear occasionally, and act as every incident requires; the solitary fidelity of Abdiel is very amiably painted.

Of the evil angels the characters are more diversified. To Satan, as Addison observes, such sentiments are given as suit "the most exalted and most depraved being." Milton has been censured by Clarke* for the impiety which sometimes breaks from Satan's mouth; for there are thoughts, as he justly remarks, which no observation of character can justify, because no good man would willingly permit them to pass, however transiently, through his own mind.

* Author of the "Essay on Study."—Dr. J.

To make Satan speak as a rebel, without any such expressions as might taint the reader's imagination, was indeed one of the great difficulties in Milton's undertaking; and I cannot but think that he has extricated himself with great happiness. There is in Satan's speeches little that can give pain to a pious ear. The language of rebellion cannot be the same with that of obedience. The maliguity of Satan foams in haughtiness and obstinacy: but his expressions are commonly general, and no otherwise offensive than as they are wicked.

The other chiefs of the celestial rebellion are very judiciously discriminated in the first and second books; and the ferocious character of Moloch appears, both in the battle and the council, with exact consistency.

To Adam and to Eve are given, during their innocence, such sentiments as innocence can generate and utter. Their love is pure benevolence and mutual veneration; their repasts are without luxury, and their diligence without toil. Their addresses to their Maker have little more than the voice of admiration and gratitude. Fruition left them nothing to ask; and innocence left them nothing to fear.

But with guilt enter distrust and discord, mutual accusation, and stubborn self-defence; they regard each other with alienated minds, and dread their Creator as the avenger of their transgression. At last they seek shelter in his mercy, soften to repentance, and melt in supplication. Both before and after the fall, the superiority of Adam is diligently sustained.

Of the *probable* and the *marvellous*, two parts of a vulgar epic poem, which immerge the critic in deep consideration, the "Paradise Lost" requires little to be said. It contains the history of a miracle, of creation and redemption; it displays the power and the mercy of the Supreme Being: the probable therefore is marvellous, and the marvellous is probable. The substance of the narrative is truth; and, as truth allows no choice, it is like necessity, superior to rule. To the accidental or adventitious parts, as to every thing human, some slight exceptions may be made; but the main fabric is immoveably supported.

It is justly remarked by Addison, that this poem has, by the nature of its subject, the advantage above all others, that it is universally and perpetually interesting. All mankind will, through all ages, bear the same relation to Adam and Eve, and must partake of that good and evil which extend to themselves.

Of the *machinery*, so called from Θεὸς ἀπὸ μηχανῆς, by which is meant the occasional interposition of supernatural power, another fertile topic of critical remarks, here is no room to speak, because every thing is done under the immediate and visible direction of Heaven; but the rule is so far observed, that no part of the action could have been accomplished by any other means.

Of episodes, I think there are only two contained in Raphael's relation of the war in heaven, and Michael's prophetic account of the changes to happen in this world. Both are closely connected with the great action; one was necessary to Adam as a warning, the other as a consolation.

To the completeness or integrity of the design, nothing can be objected; it has distinctly and clearly what Aristotle requires—a beginning, a middle, and an end. There is perhaps no poem, of the same length, from which so little can be taken without apparent mutilation. Here are no funeral games, nor is there any long description of a shield. The short digressions at the beginning of the third, seventh, and ninth books, might doubtless be spared; but superfluities so beautiful who would take away? or who does not wish that the author of the "Iliad" had gratified succeeding ages with a little knowledge of himself? Perhaps no passages are more frequently or more attentively read than those extrinsic paragraphs; and, since the end of poetry is pleasure, that cannot be unpoetical with which all are pleased.

The questions, whether the action of the poem be strictly one, whether the poem can be properly termed heroic, and who is the hero, are raised by such readers as draw their principles of judgment rather from books than from reason. Milton, though he entitled "Paradise Lost" only a poem, yet calls it himself heroic song. Dryden petulantly and indecently denies the heroism of Adam, because he was overcome: but there is no reason why the hero should not be unfortunate, except established practice, since success and virtue do not go necessarily together. Cato is the hero of Lucan; but Lucan's authority will not be suffered by Quintilian to decide. However, if success be necessary, Adam's deceiver was at last crushed; Adam was restored to his Maker's favour, and therefore may securely resume his human rank.

After the scheme and fabric of the poem, must be considered its component parts, the sentiments and the diction.

The *sentiments*, as expressive of manners, or appropriated to characters, are, for the greater part, unexceptionably just.

Splendid passages, containing lessons of morality, or precepts of prudence, occur seldom. Such is the original formation of this poem, that, as it admits no human manners till the fall, it can give little assistance to human conduct. Its end is to raise the thoughts above sublunary cares or pleasures. Yet the praise of that fortitude, with which Abdiel maintained his singularity of virtue against the scorn of multitudes, may be accommodated to all times; and Raphael's reproof of Adam's curiosity after the planetary

tions, with the answer returned by Adam, y be confidently opposed to any rule of life ich any poet has delivered.

The thoughts which are occasionally called th in the progress, are such as could only be duced by an imagination in the highest de- e fervid and active, to which materials were plied by incessant study and unlimited curi- y. The heat of Milton's mind may be said ublimate his learning, to throw off into his rk the spirit of science, unmingled with its sser parts.

He had considered creation in its whole ex- t, and his descriptions are therefore learned. had accustomed his imagination to unre- ined indulgence, and his conceptions there- e were extensive. The characteristic quality his poem is sublimity. He sometimes des- ds to the elegant, but his element is the great. can occasionally invest himself with grace; his natural port is gigantic loftiness.* He please when pleasure is required; but it is peculiar power to astonish.

He seems to have been well acquainted with own genius, and to know what it was that ture had bestowed upon him more bounti- y than upon others; the power of displaying vast, illuminating the splendid, enforcing the ful, darkening the gloomy, and aggravating dreadful; he therefore chose a subject on ich too much could not be said, on which he ght tire his fancy without the censure of ex- vagance.

The appearances of nature, and the occur- ces of life, did not satiate his appetite of atness. To paint things as they are, requires inute attention, and employs the memory her than the fancy. Milton's delight was to rt in the wide regions of possibility; reality s a scene too narrow for his mind. He sent his ulties out upon discovery, into worlds where y imagination can travel, and delighted to m new modes of existence, and furnish senti- nt and action to superior beings, to trace the nsels of hell, or accompany the choirs of ven.

But he could not be always in other worlds; must sometimes revisit earth, and tell of ngs visible and known. When he cannot e wonder by the sublimity of his mind, he es delight by its fertility.

Whatever be his subject, he never fails to fill imagination: but his images and descrip- ns of the scenes or operations of Nature do seem to be always copied from original form, to have the freshness, raciness, and energy mmediate observation. He saw Nature, as yden expresses it, "through the spectacles of ks;" and on most occasions calls learning to his assistance. The garden of Eden brings to his mind the vale of Enna, where Proserpine was gathering flowers. Satan makes his way through fighting elements, like Argo between the Cyanean rocks; or Ulysses, between the two Sicilian whirlpools, when he shunned Charybdis on the larboard. The mythological allusions have been justly censured, as not being always used with notice of their vanity; but they contribute variety to the narration, and produce an alternate exercise of the memory and the fancy.

His similes are less numerous, and more various, than those of his predecessors. But he does not confine himself within the limits of rigorous comparison: his great excellence is amplitude; and he expands the adventitious image beyond the dimensions which the occasion required. Thus, comparing the shield of Satan to the orb of the moon, he crowds the imagination with the discovery of the telescope, and all the wonders which the telescope discovers.

Of his moral sentiments it is hardly praise to affirm that they excel those of all other poets; for this superiority he was indebted to his acquaintance with the sacred writings. The ancient epic poets, wanting the light of Revelation, were very unskilful teachers of virtue; their principal characters may be great, but they are not amiable. The reader may rise from their works with a greater degree of active or passive fortitude, and sometimes of prudence; but he will be able to carry away few precepts of justice, and none of mercy.

From the Italian writers it appears, that the advantages of even Christian knowledge may be possessed in vain. Ariosto's gravity is generally known; and, though the *Deliverance of Jerusalem* may be considered as a sacred subject, the poet has been very sparing of moral instruction.

In Milton every line breathes sanctity of thought and purity of manners, except when the train of the narration requires the introduction of the rebellious spirits; and even they are compelled to acknowledge their subjection to God, in such a manner as excites reverence and confirms piety.

Of human beings there are but two; but those two are the parents of mankind, venerable before their fall for dignity and innocence, and amiable after it for repentance and submission. In the first state their affection is tender without weakness, and their piety sublime without presumption. When they have sinned, they show how discord begins in mutual frailty, and how it ought to cease in mutual forbearance; how confidence of the Divine favour is forefeited by sin, and how hope of pardon may be obtained by penitence and prayer. A state of innocence we can only conceive, if indeed, in our present misery, it be possible to conceive it; but

* Algarotti terms it *gigantesca sublimita Miltoni*.—Dr. J.

the sentiments and worship proper to a fallen and offending being, we have all to learn, as we have all to practise.

The Poet, whatever be done, is always great. Our progenitors, in their first state, conversed with angels; even when folly and sin had degraded them, they had not in their humiliation *the port of mean suitors;* and they rise again to reverential regard, when we find that their prayers were heard.

As human passions did not enter the world before the fall, there is in the "Paradise Lost" little opportunity for the pathetic; but what little there is has not been lost. That passion which is peculiar to rational nature, the anguish arising from the consciousness of transgression, and the horrors attending the sense of the Divine displeasure, are very justly described and forcibly impressed. But the passions are moved only on one occasion; sublimity is the general and prevailing quality of this poem; sublimity variously modified, sometimes descriptive, sometimes argumentative.

The defects and faults of "Paradise Lost," for faults and defects every work of man must have, it is the business of impartial criticism to discover. As, in displaying the excellence of Milton, I have not made long quotations, because of selecting beauties there had been no end, I shall in the same general manner mention that which seems to deserve censure; for what Englishman can take delight in transcribing passages, which, if they lessen the reputation of Milton, diminish in some degree the honour of our country?

The generality of my scheme does not admit the frequent notice of verbal inaccuracies: which Bentley, perhaps better skilled in grammar than in poetry, has often found, though he sometimes made them, and which he imputed to the obtrusions of a reviser, whom the Author's blindness obliged him to employ; a supposition rash and groundless, if he thought it true; and vile and pernicious, if, as is said, he in private allowed it to be false.

The plan of "Paradise Lost" has this inconvenience, that it comprises neither human actions nor human manners.* The man and woman who act and suffer are in a state which no other man or woman can ever know. The reader finds no transaction in which he can be engaged; beholds no condition in which he can by any effort of imagination place himself; he has, therefore, little natural curiosity or sympathy.

We all, indeed, feel the effects of Adam's disobedience; we all sin like Adam, and like him must all bewail our offences; we have restless and insidious enemies in the fallen angels; and in the blessed spirits we have guardians and friends: in the redemption of mankind we h to be included; and in the description of hea and hell we are surely interested, as we are to reside hereafter either in the regions of r ror or of bliss.

But these truths are too important to be n they have been taught to our infancy; t have mingled with our solitary thoughts familiar conversations, and are habitually in woven with the whole texture of life. B therefore not new, they raise no unaccusto emotion in the mind; what we knew bef we cannot learn; what is not unexpected, not surprise.

Of the ideas suggested by these awful sce from some we recede with reverence, ex when stated hours require their associati and from others we shrink with horror, or mit them only as salutary inflictions, as co terpoises to our interests and passions. S images rather obstruct the career of fancy t incite it.

Pleasure and terror are, indeed, the gene sources of poetry; but poetical pleasure mus such as human imagination can at least ceive; and poetical terror such as hu strength and fortitude may combat. The g and evil of eternity are too ponderous for wings of wit; the mind sinks under them v passive helplessness, content with calm b and humble adoration.

Known truths, however, may take a diffe appearance, and be conveyed to the mind new train of intermediate images. This Mi has undertaken, and performed with pregna and vigour of mind peculiar to himself. W ever considers the few radical positions w the Scriptures afforded him, will wonder what energetic operation he expanded them such extent, and ramified them to so m variety, restrained as he was by religious re ence from licentiousness of fiction.

Here is a full display of the united force study and genius; of a great accumulation materials, with judgment to digest, and fa to combine them: Milton was able to se from nature, or from story, from ancient fa or from modern science, whatever could il trate or adorn his thoughts. An accumula of knowledge impregnated his mind, fermen by study, and exalted by imagination.

It has been therefore said, without an in cent hyperbole, by one of his encomiasts, tha reading "Paradise Lost," we read a book universal knowledge.

But original deficience cannot be suppl The want of human interest is always "Paradise Lost" is one of the books which reader admires and lays down, and forgets take up again. None ever wished it lon than it is. Its perusal is a duty rather tha pleasure. We read Milton for instruction,

* But, says Dr. Warton, it has throughout a reference to human life and actions.—C.

re harassed and overburdened, and look elsehere for recreation; we desert our master, id seek for companions.

Another inconvenience of Milton's design is, at it requires the description of what cannot described, the agency of spirits. He saw at immateriality supplied no images, and that could not show angels acting but by instruents of action: he therefore invested them ith form and matter. This, being necessary, as therefore defensible; and he should have sered the consistency of his system, by keeping materiality out of sight, and enticing his readto drop it from his thoughts. But he has unppily perplexed his poetry with his philosoy. His infernal and celestial powers are metimes pure spirit, and sometimes animated dy. When Satan walks with his lance upon e *burning marl*, he has a body; when, in his ssage between hell and the new world, he is in nger of sinking in the vacuity, and is supported by a gust of rising vapours, he has a body; hen he animates the toad, he seems to be mere irit, that can penetrate matter at pleasure; hen he *starts up in his own shape*, he has at least determined form; and when he is brought bere Gabriel, he has *a spear and a shield*, which had the power of hiding in the toad, though e arms of the contending angels are evidently aterial.

The vulgar inhabitants of Pandæmonium, ing *incorporeal spirits*, are *at large, though without number*, in a limited space: yet in the battle, hen they were overwhelmed by mountains, eir armour hurt them, *crushed in upon their bstance, now grown gross by sinning*. This likeise happened to the uncorrupted angels, who ere overthrown the *sooner for their arms, for armed they might easily as spirits have evaded by ntraction or remove*. Even as spirits they are rdly spiritual; for *contraction* and *remove* are nages of matter; but if they could have escaped ithout their armour, they might have escaped om it, and left only the empty cover to be batred. Uriel, when he rides on a sunbeam, is aterial; Satan is material, when he is afraid the prowess of Adam.

The confusion of spirit and matter which perdes the whole narration of the war of heaven, ls it with incongruity; and the book in which is related is, I believe, the favourite of chilen, and gradually neglected as knowledge is creased.

After the operation of immaterial agents hich cannot be explained, may be considered at of allegorical persons which have no real istence. To exalt causes into agents, to invest stract ideas with form, and animate them with tivity, has always been the right of poetry. ut such airy beings are, for the most part, suffered only to do their natural office, and retire. hus Fame tells a tale, and Victory hovers over a general, or perches on a standard; but Fame and Victory can do no more. To give them any real employment, or ascribe to them any material agency, is to make them allegorical no longer, but to shock the mind by ascribing effects to nonentity. In the "Prometheus" of Æschylus, we see Violence and Strength, and in the "Alcestis" of Euripides, we see Death, brought upon the stage, all as active persons of the drama; but no precedents can justify absurdity.

Milton's allegory of Sin and Death is undoubtedly faulty. Sin is indeed the mother of Death, and may be allowed to be the portress of hell; but when they stop the journey of Satan, a journey described as real, and when Death offers him battle, the allegory is broken. That Sin and Death should have shown the way to hell, might have been allowed; but they cannot facilitate the passage by building a bridge, because the difficulty of Satan's passage is described as real and sensible, and the bridge ought to be only figurative. The hell assigned to the rebellious spirits is described as not less local than the residence of man. It is placed in some distant part of space, separated from the regions of harmony and order, by a chaotic waste and an unoccupied vacuity; but Sin and Death worked up a *mole* of *aggravated soil*, cemented with *asphaltus*; a work too bulky for ideal architects.

This unskilful allegory appears to me one of the greatest faults of the poem; and to this there was no temptation but the Author's opinion of its beauty.

To the conduct of the narrative some objections may be made. Satan is with great expectation brought before Gabriel in paradise, and is suffered to go away unmolested. The creation of man is represented as the consequence of the vacuity left in heaven by the expulsion of the rebels; yet Satan mentions it as a report *rife in heaven* before his departure.

To find sentiments for the state of innocence was very difficult; and something of anticipation, perhaps, is now and then discovered. Adam's discourse of dreams seems not to be the speculation of a new-created being. I know not whether his answer to the angel's reproof for curiosity does not want something of propriety; it is the speech of a man acquainted with many other men. Some philosophical notions, especially when the philosophy is false, might have been better omitted. The angel, in a comparison, speaks of *timorous deer*, before deer were yet timorous, and before Adam could understand the comparison.

Dryden remarks, that Milton has some flats among his elevations. This is only to say that all the parts are not equal. In every work one part must be for the sake of others; a palace must have passages; a poem must have transitions. It is no more to be required that wit

should always be blazing, than that the sun should always stand at noon. In a great work there is a vicissitude of luminous and opaque parts, as there is in the world a succession of day and night. Milton, when he has expatiated in the sky, may be allowed sometimes to revisit earth; for what other author ever soared so high, or sustained his flight so long?

Milton, being well versed in the Italian poets, appears to have borrowed often from them; and, as every man catches something from his companions, his desire of imitating Ariosto's levity has disgraced his work with the "Paradise of Fools;" a fiction not in itself ill-imagined, but too ludicrous for its place.

His play on words, in which he delights too often; his equivocations, which Bentley endeavours to defend by the example of the ancients; his unnecessary and ungraceful use of terms of art, it is not necessary to mention, because they are easily remarked, and generally censured; and at last bear so little proportion to the whole, that they scarcely deserve the attention of a critic.

Such are the faults of that wonderful performance, "Paradise Lost;" which he who can put in balance with its beauties must be considered not as nice but as dull, as less to be censured for want of candour, than pitied for want of sensibility.

Of "Paradise Regained," the general judgment seems now to be right, that it is in many parts elegant, and every where instructive. It was not to be supposed that the writer of "Paradise Lost" could ever write without great effusions of fancy; and exalted precepts of wisdom. The basis of "Paradise Regained" is narrow; a dialogue without action can never please like a union of the narrative and dramatic powers. Had this poem been written not by Milton, but by some imitator, it would have claimed and received universal praise.

If "Paradise Regained" has been too much depreciated, "Sampson Agonistes" has in requital been too much admired. It could only be by long prejudice, and the bigotry of learning, that Milton could prefer the ancient tragedies, with their incumbrance of a chorus, to the exhibitions of the French and English stages; and it is only by a blind confidence in the reputation of Milton, that a drama can be praised in which the intermediate parts have neither cause nor consequence, neither hasten nor retard the catastrophe.

In this tragedy are, however, many particular beauties, many just sentiments, and striking lines; but it wants that power of attracting the attention which a well-connected plan produces.

Milton would not have excelled in dramatic writing; he knew human nature only in the gross, and had never studied the shades of character, nor the combinations of concurring, the perplexity of contending, passions. He ha read much, and knew what books could teach but had mingled little in the world, and was d ficient in the knowledge which experience mu confer.

Through all his greater works there preval a uniform peculiarity of *diction*, a mode an cast of expression which bears little resemblan to that of any former writer; and which is far removed from common use, that an un learned reader, when he first opens his boo finds himself surprised by a new language.

This novelty has been, by those who can fin nothing wrong in Milton, imputed to his labo rious endeavours after words suitable to th grandeur of his ideas. "Our language," say Addison, "sunk under him." But the trut is, that, both in prose and verse, he had forme his style by a perverse and pedantic principl He was desirous to use English words with foreign idiom. This in all his prose is disco vered and condemned; for there judgment op rates freely, neither softened by the beauty, n awed by the dignity, of his thoughts; but suc is the power of his poetry, that his call is obeye without resistance, the reader feels himself captivity to a higher and a nobler mind, and cr ticism sinks in admiration.

Milton's style was not modified by his sub ject; what is shown with greater extent "Paradise Lost," may be found in "Comus. One source of his peculiarity was his familiarit with the Tuscan poets; the disposition of h words, is, I think, frequently Italian; perha sometimes combined with other tongues.

Of him, at last, may be said what Jonson say of Spenser, that "he wrote no language," bu has formed what Butler calls a "Babylonis dialect," in itself harsh and barbarous, but mad by exalted genius and extensive learning th vehicle of so much instruction and so much ple sure, that, like other lovers, we find grace in i deformity.

Whatever be the faults of his diction, he can not want the praise of copiousness and variety he was master of his language in its full extent and has selected the melodious words with suc diligence, that from his book alone the art English poetry might be learned.

After his diction, something must be said his *versification*. "The measure," he says, "i the English heroic verse without rhyme." this mode he had many examples among th Italians, and some in his own country. Th Earl of Surrey is said to have translated one Virgil's books without rhyme;* and, beside ou tragedies, a few short poems had appeared i

* The Earl of Surrey translated *two* books of Vi gil without rhyme, the second and the fourth.—J. H

blank verse, particularly one tending to reconcile the nation to Raleigh's wild attempt upon Guiana, and probably written by Raleigh himself. These petty performances cannot be supposed to have much influenced Milton, who more probably took his hint from Trissino's *Italia Liberata*; and, finding blank verse easier than rhyme, was desirous of persuading himself that it is better.

"Rhyme," he says, and says truly, "is no necessary adjunct of true poetry." But, perhaps, of poetry, as a mental operation, metre or music is no necessary adjunct: it is however by the music of metre that poetry has been discriminated in all languages; and, in languages melodiously constructed with a due proportion of long and short syllables, metre is sufficient. But one language cannot communicate its rules to another; where metre is scanty and imperfect, some help is necessary. The music of the English heroic lines strikes the ear so faintly, that it is easily lost, unless all the syllables of every line co-operate together; this co-operation can be only obtained by the preservation of every verse unmingled with another as a distinct system of sounds; and this distinctness is obtained and preserved by the artifice of rhyme. The variety of pauses, so much boasted by the lovers of blank verse, changes the measures of an English poet to the periods of a declaimer; and there are only a few skilful and happy readers of Milton, who enable their audience to perceive where the lines end or begin. "Blank verse," said an ingenious critic, "seems to be verse only to the eye."

Poetry may subsist without rhyme, but English poetry will not often please; nor can rhyme ever be safely spared but where the subject is able to support itself. Blank verse makes some approach to that which is called the lapidary style; has neither the easiness of prose, nor the melody of numbers, and therefore tires by long continuance. Of the Italian writers without rhyme, whom Milton alleges as precedents, not one is popular; what reason could urge in its defence has been confuted by the ear.

But, whatever be the advantages of rhyme, I cannot prevail on myself to wish that Milton had been a rhymer; for I cannot wish his work to be other than it is; yet, like other heroes, he is to be admired rather than imitated. He that thinks himself capable of astonishing may write blank verse: but those that hope only to please must condescend to rhyme.

The highest praise of genius is original invention. Milton cannot be said to have contrived the structure of an epic poem, and therefore owes reverence to that vigour and amplitude of mind to which all generations must be indebted for the art of poetical narration, for the texture of the fable, the variation of incidents, the interposition of dialogue, and all the stratagems that surprise and enchain attention. But, of all the borrowers from Homer, Milton is perhaps the least indebted. He was naturally a thinker for himself, confident of his own abilities, and disdainful of help or hinderance: he did not refuse admission to the thoughts or images of his predecessors, but he did not seek them. From his contemporaries he neither courted nor received support; there is in his writings nothing by which the pride of other authors might be gratified, or favour gained, no exchange of praise, nor solicitation of support. His great works were performed under discountenance, and in blindness; but difficulties vanished at his touch; he was born for whatever is arduous; and his work is not the greatest of heroic poems, only because it is not the first.

BUTLER.

Of the great Author of "Hudibras" there is a life prefixed to the later editions of his poem, by an unknown writer, and therefore of disputable authority; and some account is incidentally given by Wood, who confesses the uncertainty of his own narrative: more however than they knew cannot now be learned, and nothing remains but to compare and copy them.

Samuel Butler was born in the parish of Strensham, in Worcestershire, according to his biographer, in 1612. This account Dr. Nash finds confirmed by the register. He was christened February 14.

His father's condition is variously represented. Wood mentions him as competently wealthy; but Mr. Longueville, the son of Butler's principal friend, says he was an honest farmer with some small estate, who made a shift to educate his son at the grammar-school of Worcester,

under Mr. Henry Bright,* from whose care he removed for a short time to Cambridge; but, for want of money, was never made a member of any college. Wood leaves us rather doubtful whether he went to Cambridge or Oxford; but at last makes him pass six or seven years at Cambridge, without knowing in what hall or college; yet it can hardly be imagined that he lived so long in either university but as belonging to one house or another; and it is still less likely that he could have so long inhabited a place of learning with so little distinction as to leave his residence uncertain. Dr. Nash has discovered that his father was owner of a house and a little land, worth about eight pounds a year still called Butler's tenement.

Wood has his information from his brother, whose narrative placed him at Cambridge, in opposition to that of his neighbours, which sent him to Oxford. The brother seems the best authority, till, by confessing his inability to tell his hall or college, he gives reason to suspect that he was resolved to bestow on him an academical education; but durst not name a college, for fear of detection.

He was, for some time, according to the author of his life, clerk to Mr. Jefferys, of Earl's Croomb, in Worcestershire, an eminent justice of the peace. In his service he had not only leisure for study, but for recreation; his amusements were music and painting: and the reward of his pencil was the friendship of the celebrated Cooper. Some pictures, said to be his, were shown to Dr. Nash, at Earl's Croomb; but, when he inquired for them some years afterwards, he found them destroyed, to stop windows, and owns that they hardly deserved a better fate.

He was afterwards admitted into the family of the Countess of Kent, where he had the use of a library; and so much recommended himself to Selden, that he was often employed by him in literary business. Selden, as is well known, was steward to the Countess, and is supposed to have gained much of his wealth by managing her estate.

In what character Butler was admitted into that lady's service, how long he continued in it, and why he left it, is, like the other incidents of his life, utterly unknown.

The vicissitudes of his condition placed him afterwards in the family of Sir Samuel Luke, one of Cromwell's officers. Here he observed so much of the character of the sectaries, that he is said to have written or begun his poem at this time; and it is likely that such a design would be formed in a place where he saw the principles and practices of the rebels, audacious and undisguised in the confidence of success.

At length the King returned, and the time came in which loyalty hoped for its reward. Butler, however, was only made secretary to the Earl of Carbury, president of the principality of Wales; who conferred on him the stewardship of Ludlow Castle, when the Court of the Marches was revived.

In this part of his life, he married Mrs. Herbert, a gentlewoman of a good family, and lived, says Wood, upon her fortune, having studied the common law, but never practised it. A fortune she had, says his biographer, but it was lost by bad securities.

In 1663 was published the first part, containing three cantos, of the poem of "Hudibras," which, as Prior relates, was made known at court, by the taste and influence of the Earl of Dorset. When it was known, it was necessarily admired: the King quoted, the courtiers studied, and the whole party of the royalists applauded it. Every eye watched for the golden shower which was to fall upon the Author, who certainly was not without his part in the general expectation.

In 1664 the second part appeared; the curiosity of the nation was rekindled, and the writer was again praised and elated. But praise was his whole reward. "Clarendon," says Wood, "gave him reason to hope for places and employments of value and credit;" but no such advantages did he ever obtain. It is reported that the King once gave him three hundred guineas; but of this temporary bounty I find no proof.

Wood relates that he was secretary to Villiers, duke of Buckingham, when he was chancellor

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* These are the words of the author of the short account of Butler prefixed to "Hudibras," which Dr. Johnson, notwithstanding what he says above, seems to have supposed was written by Mr. Longueville, the father; but the contrary is to be inferred from a subsequent passage, wherein the author laments that he had neither such an acquaintance nor interest with Mr. Longueville, as to procure for him the golden remains of Butler there mentioned. He was probably led into the mistake by a note in the Biog. Brit. p. 1077, signifying that the son of this gentleman was living in 1736.

Of this friend and generous patron of Butler, Mr. William Longueville, I find an account, written by a person who was well acquainted with him, to this effect; viz. that he was a conveyancing lawyer, and a bencher of the Inner Temple, and had raised himself from a low beginning to very great eminence in that profession; that he was eloquent and learned, of spotless integrity; that he supported an aged father who had ruined his fortunes by extravagance, and by his industry and application re-edified a ruined family; that he supported Butler, who, but for him, must literally have starved; and received from him, as a recompence, the papers called his "Remains." Life of the Lord-keeper Guilford, p. 289.—These have since been given to the public by Mr. Thyer, of Manchester; and the originals are now in the hands of the Rev. Dr. Farmer, master of Emanuel College, Cambridge.—H.

of Cambridge: this is doubted by the other writer, who yet allows the Duke to have been his frequent benefactor. That both these accounts are false there is reason to suspect, from a story told by Packe, in his account of the Life of Wycherley; and from some verses which Mr. Thyer has published in the Author's Remains.

"Mr. Wycherley," says Packe, "had always laid hold of an opportunity which offered of representing to the Duke of Buckingham how well Mr. Butler had deserved of the royal family, by writing his inimitable 'Hudibras;' and that it was a reproach to the court, that a person of his loyalty and wit should suffer in obscurity, and under the wants he did. The Duke always seemed to hearken to him with attention enough; and after some time undertook to recommend his pretensions to his Majesty. Mr. Wycherley, in hopes to keep him steady to his word, obtained of his Grace to name a day, when he might introduce that modest and unfortunate poet to his new patron. At last an appointment was made, and the place of meeting was agreed to be the Roebuck. Mr. Butler and his friend attended accordingly; the Duke joined them; but, as the devil would have it, the door of the room where they sat was open, and his Grace, who had seated himself near it, observing a pimp of his acquaintance (the creature too was a knight) trip by with a brace of ladies, immediately quitted his engagement to follow another kind of business, at which he was more ready than in doing good offices to men of desert, though no one was better qualified than he, both in regard to his fortune and understanding, to protect them; and from that time to the day of his death, poor Butler never found the least effect of his promise!"

Such is the story. The verses are written with a degree of acrimony, such as neglect and disappointment might naturally excite; and such as it would be hard to imagine Butler capable of expressing against a man who had any claim to his gratitude.

Notwithstanding this discouragement and neglect, he still prosecuted his design; and in 1678 published a third part, which still leaves the poem imperfect and abrupt. How much more he originally intended, or with what events the action was to be concluded, it is vain to conjecture. Nor can it be thought strange that he should stop here, however unexpectedly. To write without reward is sufficiently unpleasing. He had now arrived at an age when he might think it proper to be in jest no longer, and perhaps his health might now begin to fail.

He died in 1680; and Mr. Longueville, having unsuccessfully solicited a subscription for his interment in Westminster Abbey, buried him at his own cost in the churchyard of Covent-garden.* Dr. Simon Patrick read the service.

Granger was informed by Dr. Pearce, who named for his authority Mr. Lowndes of the Treasury, that Butler had a yearly pension of a hundred pounds. This is contradicted by all tradition, by the complaints of Oldham, and by the reproaches of Dryden; and I am afraid will never be confirmed.

About sixty years afterwards, Mr. Barber, a printer, mayor of London, and a friend to Butler's principles, bestowed on him a monument in Westminster Abbey, thus inscribed:

M. S.
SAMUELIS BUTLERI,
Qui Strenshamiæ in agro Vigorn. nat. 1612,'
obiit Lond. 1680.
Vir doctus imprimis, acer, integer;
Operibus Ingenii, non item præmiis, fœlix
Satyrici apud nos Carminis Artifex egregius
Quo simulatæ Religionis Larvam detraxit,
Et Perduellium scelera liberrimè exagitavit;
Scriptorum in suo genere, Primus et Postremus.
Ne, cui vivo deerant ferè omnia,
Deesset etiam mortuo Tumulus,
Hoc tandem posito marmore, curavit
JOHANNES BARBER, Civis Londinensis, 1721.

After his death were published three small volumes of his posthumous works: I know not by whom collected, or by what authority ascertained;† and, lately, two volumes more have been printed by Mr. Thyer, of Manchester, indubitably genuine. From none of these pieces can his life be traced, or his character discovered. Some verses, in the last collection, show him to have been among those who ridiculed the institution of the Royal Society, of which the enemies were for some time very numerous and very acrimonious, for what reason it is hard to conceive, since the philosophers professed not to advance doctrines, but to produce facts; and the most zealous enemy of innovation must admit the gradual progress of experience, however he may oppose hypothetical temerity.

In this mist of obscurity passed the life of Butler, a man whose name can only perish with his language. The mode and place of his education are unknown; the events of his life are variously related; and all that can be told with certainty is, that he was poor.

The poem of "Hudibras" is one of those compositions of which a nation may justly boast; as the images which it exhibits are do-

* In a note in the "Biographia Britannica," p. 1075, he is said, on the authority of the younger Mr. Longueville, to have lived for some years in Rose-street, Covent-garden, and also that he died there; the latter of these particulars is rendered highly probable, by his being interred in the cemetery of that parish.—H.

† They were collected into one, and published in 12mo. 1732.—H.

mestic, the sentiments unborrowed and unexpected, and the strain of diction original and peculiar. We must not, however, suffer the pride, which we assume as the countrymen of Butler, to make any encroachment upon justice, nor appropriate those honours which others have a right to share. The poem of "Hudibras" is not wholly English; the original idea is to be found in the history of "Don Quixote;" a book to which a mind of the greatest powers may be indebted without disgrace.

Cervantes shows a man, who having, by the incessant perusal of incredible tales, subjected his understanding to his imagination, and familiarised his mind by pertinacious meditation to trains of incredible events, and scenes of impossible existence; goes out in the pride of knighthood to redress wrongs, and defend virgins, to rescue captive princesses, and tumble usurpers from their thrones; attended by a squire, whose cunning, too low for the suspicion of a generous mind, enables him often to cheat his master.

The hero of Butler is a presbyterian justice, who, in the confidence of legal authority and the rage of zealous ignorance, ranges the country to repress superstition and correct abuses, accompanied by an independent clerk, disputatious and obstinate, with whom he often debates, but never conquers him.

Cervantes had so much kindness for Don Quixote, that, however he embarrasses him with absurd distresses, he gives him so much sense and virtue as may preserve our esteem; wherever he is, or whatever he does, he is made by matchless dexterity commonly ridiculous, but never contemptible.

But for poor Hudibras, his poet had no tenderness; he chooses not that any pity should be shown or respect paid him; he gives him up at once to laughter and contempt, without any quality that can dignify or protect him.

In forming the character of Hudibras, and describing his person and habiliments, the author seems to labour with a tumultuous confusion of dissimilar ideas. He had read the history of the mock knights-errant; he knew the notions and manners of a presbyterian magistrate, and tried to unite the absurdities of both, however distant, in one personage. Thus he gives him that pedantic ostentation of knowledge which has no relation to chivalry, and loads him with martial incumbrances that can add nothing to his civil dignity. He sends him out a *colonelling*, and yet never brings him within sight of war.

If Hudibras be considered as the representative of the presbyterians, it is not easy to say why his weapons should be represented as ridiculous or useless; for, whatever judgment might be passed upon their knowledge or their arguments, experience had sufficiently shown that their swords were not to be despised.

The hero, thus compounded of swaggerer and pedant, of knight and justice, is led forth to action, with his squire Ralpho, an independent enthusiast.

Of the contexture of events planned by the Author, which is called the action of the poem, since it is left imperfect, no judgment can be made. It is probable that the hero was to be led through many luckless adventures, which would give occasion, like his attack upon the "bear and fiddle," to expose the ridiculous rigour of the sectaries; like his encounter with Sidrophel and Whachum, to make superstition and credulity contemptible; or, like his recourse to the low retailer of the law, discover the fraudulent practices of different professions.

What series of events he would have formed, or in what manner he would have rewarded or punished his hero, it is now vain to conjecture. His work must have had, as it seems, the defect which Dryden imputes to Spenser; the action could not have been one; there could only have been a succession of incidents, each of which might have happened without the rest, and which could not all co-operate to any single conclusion.

The discontinuity of the action might however have been easily forgiven, if there had been action enough: but I believe every reader regrets the paucity of events, and complains that in the poem of "Hudibras," as in the history of Thucydides, there is more said than done. The scenes are too seldom changed, and the attention is tired with long conversation.

It is, indeed, much more easy to form dialogues than to contrive adventures. Every position makes way for an argument, and every objection dictates an answer. When two disputants are engaged upon a complicated and extensive question, the difficulty is not to continue, but to end, the controversy. But whether it be that we comprehend but few of the possibilities of life, or that life itself affords little variety, every man who has tried knows how much labour it will cost to form such a combination of circumstances as shall have at once the grace of novelty and credibility, and delight fancy without violence to reason.

Perhaps the dialogue of this poem is not perfect. Some power of engaging the attention might have been added to it by quicker reciprocation, by seasonable interruptions, by sudden questions, and by a nearer approach to dramatic sprightliness; without which fictitious speeches will always tire, however sparkling with sentences, and however variegated with allusions.

The great source of pleasure is variety. Uniformity must tire at last, though it be uniformity of excellence. We love to expect; and, when expectation is disappointed or gratified, we want to be again expecting. For this impatience of the present, whoever would please must make

rovision. The skilful writer *irritat, mulcet,* nakes a due distribution of the still and ani- nated parts. It is for want of this artful inter- exture, and those necessary changes, that the vhole of a book may be tedious, though all the arts are praised.

If inexhaustible wit could give perpetual leasure, no eye would ever leave half-read the vork of Butler; for what poet has ever brought o many remote images so happily together? It s scarcely possible to peruse a page without nding some association of images that was ever found before. By the first paragraph the eader is amused, by the next he is delighted, nd by a few more strained to astonishment; but stonishment is a toilsome pleasure; he is soon veary of wondering, and longs to be diverted.

Omnia vult belle Matho dicere, dic aliquando
Et bene, dic neutrum, dic aliquando male.

Imagination is useless without knowledge: ature gives in vain the power of combination, nless study and observation supply materials to e combined. Butler's treasures of knowledge ppear proportioned to his expense: whatever opic employs his mind, he shows himself quali- ed to expand and illustrate it with all the ac- essaries that books can furnish: he is found ot only to have travelled the beaten road, but he bye-paths of literature; not only to have aken general surveys, but to have examined articulars with minute inspection.

If the French boast the learning of Rabelais, re need not be afraid of confronting them with Butler.

But the most valuable parts of his perform- nce are those which retired study and native vit cannot supply. He that merely makes a ook from books may be useful, but can scarcely e great. Butler had not suffered life to glide eside him unseen or unobserved. He had vatched with great diligence the operations of uman nature, and traced the effects of opinion, umour, interest, and passion. From such re- narks proceeded that great number of senten- ious distichs which have passed into conversa- ion, and are added as proverbial axioms to the eneral stock of practical knowledge.

When any work has been viewed and admired, he first question of intelligent curiosity is, how vas it performed? "Hudibras" was not a asty effusion; it was not produced by a sud- en tumult of imagination, or a short paroxysm f violent labour. To accumulate such a mass f sentiments at the call of accidental desire, or f sudden necessity, is beyond the reach and ower of the most active and comprehensive ind. I am informed by Mr. Thyer, of Man- hester, that excellent editor of this author's re- ics, that he could show something like "Hu- ibras" in prose. He has in his possession the ommon-place book, in which Butler reposited not such events and precepts as are gathered by reading, but such remarks, similitudes, allusions, assemblages, or inferences, as occasion prompted, or meditation produced, those thoughts that were generated in his own mind, and might be usefully applied to some future purpose. Such is the labour of those who write for immortality.

But human works are not easily found with- out a perishable part. Of the ancient poets every reader feels the mythology tedious and oppressive. Of "Hudibras," the manners, being founded on opinions, are temporary and local, and therefore become every day less intel- ligible, and less striking. What Cicero says of philosophy is true likewise of wit and humour, that "time effaces the fictions of opinions, and confirms the determinations of Nature." Such manners as depend upon standing relations and general passions are co-extended with the race of man; but those modifications of life and pe- culiarities of practice, which are the progeny of error and perverseness, or at best of some acci- dental influence or transient persuasion, must perish with their parents.

Much therefore of that humour which trans- ported the last* century with merriment is lost to us, who do not know the sour solemnity, the sullen superstition, the gloomy moroseness, and the stubborn scruples of the ancient puritans; or, if we knew them, derive our information only from books, or from tradition, have never had them before our eyes, and cannot but by recol- lection and study understand the lines in which they are satirized. Our grandfathers knew the picture from the life; we judge of the life by contemplating the picture.

It is scarcely possible, in the regularity and composure of the present time, to image the tumult of absurdity, and clamour of contradic- tion, which perplexed doctrine, disordered prac- tice, and disturbed both public and private quiet, in that age when subordination was broken, and awe was hissed away; when any unsettled in- novator, who could hatch a half-formed notion, produced it to the public; when every man might become a preacher, and almost every preacher could collect a congregation.

The wisdom of the nation is very reasonably supposed to reside in the parliament. What can be concluded of the lower classes of the peo- ple, when, in one of the parliaments summoned by Cromwell, it was seriously proposed, that all the records in the tower should be burnt, that all memory of things past should be effaced, and that the whole system of life should commence anew?

We have never been witnesses of animosities excited by the use of mince-pies and plum-por- ridge; nor seen with what abhorrence those,

* The seventeenth.

who could eat them at all other times of the year, would shrink from them in December. An old puritan, who was alive in my childhood, being at one of the feasts of the church invited by a neighbour to partake his cheer, told him, that if he would treat him at an alehouse with beer brewed for all times and seasons, he should accept his kindness, but would have none of his superstitious meats or drinks.

One of the puritanical tenets was the illegality of all games of chance; and he that reads Gataker upon *Lots* may see how much learning and reason one of the first scholars of his age thought necessary, to prove that it was no crime to throw a die, or play at cards, or to hide a shilling for the reckoning.

Astrology, however, against which so much of the satire is directed, was not more the folly of the puritans than of others. It had in that time a very extensive dominion Its predictions raised hopes and fears in minds which ought to have rejected it with contempt. In hazardous undertakings care was taken to begin under the influence of a propitious planet; and, when the King was prisoner in Carisbrook Castle, an astrologer was consulted what hour would be found most favourable to an escape.

What effect this poem had upon the public, whether it shamed imposture, or reclaimed credulity, is not easily determined. Cheats can seldom stand long against laughter. It is certain that the credit of planetary intelligence wore fast away; though some men of knowledge, and Dryden among them, continued to believe that conjunctions and oppositions had a great part in the distribution of good or evil, and in the government of sublunary things.

Poetical action ought to be probable upon certain suppositions; and such probability as burlesque requires is here violated only by one incident. Nothing can show more plainly the necessity of doing something, and the difficulty of finding something to do, than that Butler was reduced to transfer to his hero the flagellation of Sancho, not the most agreeable fiction of Cervantes; very suitable indeed to the manners of that age and nation, which ascribed wonderful efficacy to voluntary penances; but so remote from the practice and opinions of the Hudibrastic time, that judgment and imagination are alike offended.

The diction of this poem is grossly familiar, and the numbers purposely neglected, excep a few places where the thoughts by their n excellence secure themselves from viola being such as mean language cannot exp The mode of versification has been blame Dryden, who regrets that the heroic mea was not rather chosen. To the critical sent of Dryden the highest reverence would be were not his decisions often precipitate, an opinions immature. When he wished to ch the measure, he probably would have been ling to change more. If he intended that, w the numbers were heroic, the diction sh still remain vulgar, he planned a very heter neous and unnatural composition. If he ferred a general stateliness both of sound words, he can be only understood to wish ler had undertaken a different work.

The measure is quick, sprightly, and c quial, suitable to the vulgarity of the words the levity of the sentiments. But such num and such diction can gain regard only when are used by a writer whose vigour of fancy copiousness of knowledge entitle him to tempt of ornaments, and who, in confiden the novelty and justness of his conceptions, afford to throw metaphors and epithets a To another that conveys common thought careless versification, it will only be said, *per videri Cinna vult, et est pauper.* The m ing and diction will be worthy of each o and criticism may justly doom them to p together.

Nor even though another Butler should a would another "Hudibras" obtain the regard. Burlesque consists in a dispropo between the style and the sentiments, o tween the adventitious sentiments and the damental subject. It, therefore, like all b compounded of heterogeneous parts, contai it a principle of corruption. All dispropo is unnatural: and from what is unnatura can derive only the pleasure which novelty duces. We admire it awhile as a strange th but when it is no longer strange, we perceiv deformity. It is a kind of artifice, whic frequent repetition detects itself: and reader, learning in time what he is to ex lays down his book, as the spectator t away from a second exhibition of those t of which the only use is to show that they be played.

ROCHESTER.

JOHN WILMOT, afterwards Earl of Rochester, e son of Henry Earl of Rochester, better nown by the title of Lord Wilmot, so often entioned in Clarendon's History, was born pril 10, 1647, at Ditchley, in Oxfordshire. fter a grammatical education at the school of urford, he entered a nobleman into Wadham ollege, in 1659, only twelve years old; and in 61, at fourteen, was, with some other persons high rank, made master of arts by Lord Clandon in person.

He travelled afterwards into France and aly; and at his return devoted himself to the urt. In 1665 he went to sea with Sandwich, d distinguished himself at Bergen by uncomon intrepidity; and the next summer served ain on board Sir Edward Spragge, who, in e heat of the engagement, having a message of proof to send to one of his captains, could find man ready to carry it but Wilmot, who, in open boat, went and returned amidst the orm of shot.

But his reputation for bravery was not lastg; he was reproached with slinking away in reet quarrels, and leaving his companions to ift as they could without him; and Sheffield uke of Buckingham, has left a story of his resal to fight him.

He had very early an inclination to intemperce, which he totally subdued in his travels; t, when he became a courtier, he unhappily dicted himself to dissolute and vicious comny, by which his principles were corrupted, d his manners depraved. He lost all sense of ligious restraint, and, finding it not convenient admit the authority of laws, which he was solved not to obey, sheltered his wickedness hind infidelity.

As he excelled in that noisy and licentious erriment which wine excites, his companions gerly encouraged him in excess, and he willgly indulged it; till, as he confessed to Dr. urnet, he was for five years together conually drunk, or so much inflamed by freent ebriety, as in no interval to be master of mself.

In this state he played many frolics, which it not for his honour that we should remember, d which are not now distinctly known. He en pursued low amours in mean disguises, d always acted with great exactness and dexity the characters which he assumed.

He once erected a stage on Tower-hill, and rangued the populace as a mountebank; and, ving made physic part of his study, is said to ve practised it successfully.

He was so much in favour with King Charles, that he was made one of the gentlemen of the bed-chamber, and comptroller of Woodstock Park.

Having an active and inquisitive mind, he never, except in his paroxysms of intemperance, was wholly negligent of study; he read what is considered as polite learning so much, that he is mentioned by Wood as the greatest scholar of all the nobility. Sometimes he retired into the country, and amused himself with writing libels, in which he did not pretend to confine himself to truth.

His favourite author in French was Boileau, and in English, Cowley.

Thus in a course of drunken gayety, and gross sensuality, with intervals of study perhaps yet more criminal, with an avowed contempt of all decency and order, a total disregard of every moral, and a resolute denial of every religious obligation, he lived worthless and useless, and blazed out his youth and his health in lavish voluptuousness; till, at the age of one-and-thirty, he had exhausted the fund of life, and reduced himself to a state of weakness and decay.

At this time he was led to an acquaintance with Dr. Burnet, to whom he laid open with great freedom the tenor of his opinions, and the course of his life, and from whom he received such conviction of the reasonableness of moral duty, and the truth of Christianity, as produced a total change both of his manners and opinions. The account of those salutary conferences is given by Burnet in a book, entitled, "Some Passages of the Life and Death of John Earl of Rochester," which the critic ought to read for its elegance, the philosopher for its arguments, and the saint for its piety. It were an injury to the reader to offer him an abridgment.

He died July 26, 1680, before he had completed his thirty-fourth year; and was so worn away by a long illness, that life went out without a struggle.

Lord Rochester was eminent for the vigour of his colloquial wit, and remarkable for many wild pranks and sallies of extravagance. The glare of his general character diffused itself upon his writings; the compositions of a man whose name was heard so often were certain of attention, and from many readers certain of applause. This blaze of reputation is not yet quite extinguished; and his poetry still retains some splendour beyond that which genius has bestowed.

Wood and Burnet give us reason to believe,

that much was imputed to him which he did not write. I know not by whom the original collection was made, or by what authority its genuineness was ascertained. The first edition was published in the year of his death, with an air of concealment, professing in the title-page to be printed at Antwerp.

Of some of the pieces, however, there is no doubt. The imitation of Horace's satire, the verses to Lord Mulgrave, satire against Man, the verses upon "Nothing." and perhaps some others, are I believe genuine, and perhaps most of those which the collection exhibits.*

As he cannot be supposed to have found leisure for any course of continued study, his pieces are commonly short, such as one fit of resolution would produce.

His songs have no particular character; they tell, like other songs, in smooth and easy language, of scorn and kindness, dismission and desertion, absence and inconstancy, with the common-places of artificial courtship. They are commonly smooth and easy; but have little nature, and little sentiment.

His imitation of Horace on Lucilius is not inelegant, or unhappy. In the reign of Charles the Second began that adaption, which has since been very frequent, of ancient poetry to present times; and perhaps few will be found where the parallelism is better preserved than in this. The versification is indeed sometimes careless, but it is sometimes vigorous and weighty.

The strongest effort of his Muse is his poem upon "Nothing." He is not the first who has chosen this barren topic for the boast of his fertility. There is a poem called "Nihil," in Latin, by Passerat, a poet and critic of the sixteenth century in France; who, in his own epitaph, expresses his zeal for good poetry thus:—

> —Molliter ossa quiescent,
> Sint modo carminibus non onerata malis.

His works are not common, and therefore I shall subjoin his verses.

In examining this performance, "Nothing" must be considered as having not only a negative but a kind of positive signification; as I need not fear thieves, I have *nothing*, and *nothing* is a very powerful protector. In the first part of the sentence it is taken negatively, in the second it is taken positively, as an agent. In one of Boileau's lines it was a question, whether he should use *à rien faire*, or *à ne rien faire*; and the first was preferred because gave *rien* a sense in some sort positive. *Nothi* can be a subject only in its positive sense, a such a sense is given it in the first line:—

> *Nothing*, thou elder brother ev'n to shade.

In this line, I know not whether he does n allude to a curious book, "De Umbra," b Wowerus, which having told the qualities *shade*, concludes with a poem in which are the lines:

> Jam primum terram validis circumspice claus'ri
> Suspensam tctum, decus admirabile mundi
> Terrasque tractusque maris, camposque liquente
> Æris et vasti laqueata palatia cœli——
> Omnibus UMBRA prior.

The positive sense is generally preserved wi great skill through the whole poem; thoug sometimes, in a subordinate sense, the negati *nothing* is injudiciously mingled. Passerat co founds the two senses.

Another of his most vigorous pieces is h lampoon on Sir Car Scrope, who, in a poe called "The Praise of satire," had some lin like these:*—

> He who can push into a midnight fray
> His brave companion, and then run away,
> Leaving him to be murder'd in the street,
> Then put it off with some buffoon conceit:
> Him, thus dishonour'd, for a wit you own,
> And court him as top fiddler of the town.

This was meant of Rochester, whose *buffo conceit* was, I suppose, a saying often mentione that *every man would be a coward if he durst*; a drew from him those furious verses; to whi Scrope made in reply an epigram, ending wi these lines:

> Thou ca's' hurt no man's fame with thy ill word
> Thy pen is full as harmless as thy sword.

Of the satire against "Man," Rochester c only claim what remains when all Boileau part is taken away.

In all his works there is sprightliness a vigour, and every where may be found toke of a mind which study might have carried excellence. What more can be expected from life spent in ostentatious contempt of regularit and ended before the abilities of many oth men began to be displayed?†

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* Dr. Johnson has made no mention of "Valentinian," (altered from Beaumont and Fletcher) which was published after his death by a friend who describes him in the preface not only as being one of the greatest geniuses, but one of the most virtuous men that ever existed.—J. B.

* I quote from memory.—Dr. J.

† The late George Stephens, Esq. made the sele tion of Rochester's Poems which appears in J Johnson's edition; but Mr. Malone observes, th the same task had been performed in the early pe of the last century by Jacob Tonson.—C

POEMA

Cl. V. JOANNIS PASSERATII,

Regii in Academia Parisiensi Professoris,

AD ORNATISSIMUM VIRUM ERRICUM MEMMIUM.

Janus adest, festæ poscunt sua dona Kalendæ,
Munus abest festis quod possim offerre Kalendis.
Siccine Castalius nobis exaruit humor?
Usque adeo ingenii nostri est exhausta facultas,
Immunem ut videat redeuntis janitor anni?
Quod nusquam est, potius nova per vestigia quæram.
Ecce autem partes dum sese versat in omnes
Invenit mea Musa *nihil*, ne despice munus.
Nam *nihil* est gemmis, *nihil* est pretiosius auro.
Huc animum, huc igitur vultus adverte benignos:
Res nova narratur quæ nulli audita priorum,
Ausonii et Graii dixerunt cætera vates,
Ausoniæ indictum *nihil* est Græcæque Camœnæ.
E cœlo quacunque Ceres sua prospicit arva,
Aut genitor liquidis orbem complectitur ulnis
Oceanus, *nihil* interitus et originis expers.
Immortale *nihil*, *nihil* omni parte beatum.
Quod si hinc majestas et vis divina probatur,
Num quid honore deum, num quid dignabimur aris?
Nonspectu lucis *nihil* est jucundius almæ,
Vere *nihil*, *nihil* irriguo formosius horto,
Floridius pratis, Zephyri clementius aura;
In bello sanctum *nihil* est, Martisque tumultu:
Justum in pace *nihil*, *nihil* est in fœdere tutum.
Felix cui *nihil* est, (fuerant hæc vota Tibullo)
Non timet insidias: fures, incendia temnit:
Sollicitas sequitur nullo sub judice lites.
Ille ipse invictis qui subjicit omnia fatis
Senonis sapiens, *nihil* admiratur et optat.
Socraticique gregis fuit ista scientia quondam,
Scire *nihil*, studio cui nunc incumbitur uni.
Nec quicquam in ludo mavult didicisse juventus,
Ad magnas quia ducit opes, et culmen honorum.
Nosce *nihil*, nosces fertur quod Pythagoreæ
Grano hærere fabæ, cui vox adjuncta negantis.
Multi Mercurio freti duce viscera terræ
Pura liquefaciunt simul, et patrimonia miscent,
Arcano instantes operi, et carbonibus atris,
Qui tandem exhausti damnis, fractique labore,
Inveniunt atque inventum *nihil* usque requirunt.
Hoc dimetiri non ulla decempeda possit:
Nec numeret Libycæ numerum qui callet arenæ:
Et Phœbo ignotum *nihil* est, *nihil* altius astris.
Tuque, tibi licet eximium sit mentis acumen,
Omnem in naturam penetrans, et in abdita rerum,
Pace tua, Memmi, *nihil* ignorare videris.
Sole tamen *nihil* est, a puro clarius igne.
Tange *nihil*, dicesque *nihil* sine corpore tangi.
Cerne *nihil*, cerni dices *nihil* absque colore.
Surdum audit loquiturque *nihil* sine voce, volatque
Absque ope pennarum, et graditur sine cruribus ullis
Absque loco motuque *nihil* per inane vagatur.
Humano generi utilius *nihil* arte medendi.
Ne rhombos, igitur, neu Thessala murmura tentet
Idalia vacuum trajectus arundine pectus,
Neu legat Idæo Dictæum in vertice gramen.
Vulneribus sævi *nihil* auxiliatur amoris.
Vexerit et quemvis trans mœstas portitor undas,
Ad superos imo *nihil* hunc revocabit ab orco.
Inferni *nihil* inflectit præcordia regis.
Parcarumque colos, et inexorabile pensum.
Obruta Phlegræis campis Titania pubes
Fulmineo sensit *nihil* esse potentius ictu:
Forrigitur magni *nihil* extra mœnia mundi:
Diique *nihil* metuunt. Quid longo carmine plura
Commemorem? Virtute *nihil* præstantius ipsa,
Splendidius *nihil* est; *nihil* est Jove denique majus.
Sed tempus finem argutis imponere nugis
Ne tibi si multa laudem mea carmina charta,
De *nihilo nihili* pariant fastidia versus.

ROSCOMMON.

Wentworth Dillon, Earl of Roscommon, was the son of James Dillon, and Elizabeth Wentworth, sister to the Earl of Strafford. He was born in Ireland * during the lieutenancy of Strafford, who being both his uncle and his godfather, gave him his own surname. His father, the third Earl of Roscommon, had been converted by Usher to the protestant religion; † and when the popish rebellion broke out, Strafford thinking the family in great danger from the fury of the Irish, sent for his godson, and placed him at his own seat in Yorkshire, where he was instructed in Latin; which he learned so as to write it with purity and elegance, though he was never able to retain the rules of grammar.

Such is the account given by Mr. Fenton, from whose notes on Waller most of this account must be borrowed, though I know not whether all that he relates is certain. The instructor whom he assigns to Roscommon, is one Dr. Hall, by whom he cannot mean the famous Hall, then an old man and a bishop.

When the storm broke out upon Strafford,

* The Biog. Britan. says, probably about the year 1632; but this is inconsistent with the date of Strafford's viceroyalty in the following page.—C.

† It was his grandfather, Sir Robert Dillon, second Earl of Roscommon, who was converted from popery, and his conversion is recited in the patent of Sir James, the first Earl of Roscommon, as one of the grounds of his creation.—Malone.

his house was a shelter no longer; and Dillon, by the advice of Usher, was sent to Caen, where the protestants had then a university, and continued his studies under Bochart.

Young Dillon, who was sent to study under Bochart, and who is represented as having already made great proficiency in literature, could not be more than nine years old. Strafford went to govern Ireland in 1633, and was put to death eight years afterwards. That he was sent to Caen is certain; that he was a great scholar may be doubted.

At Caen he is said to have had some preternatural intelligence of his father's death.

"The Lord Roscommon, being a boy of ten years of age, at Caen, in Normandy, one day was, as it were, madly extravagant in playing, leaping, getting over the tables, boards, &c. He was wont to be sober enough; they said, God grant this bodes no ill-luck to him! In the heat of this extravagant fit he cries out, 'My father is dead!' A fortnight after, news came from Ireland that his father was dead. This account I had from Mr. Knolles, who was his governor, and then with him—since secretary to the Earl of Strafford; and I have heard his Lordship's relations confirm the same."—AUBREY'S MISCELLANY.

The present age is very little inclined to favour any accounts of this kind, nor will the name of Aubrey much recommend it to credit; it ought not, however, to be omitted, because better evidence of a fact cannot easily be found than is here offered; and it must be by preserving such relations that we may at last judge how much they are to be regarded. If we stay to examine this account, we shall see difficulties on both sides; here is the relation of a fact given by a man who had no interest to deceive, and who could not be deceived himself; and here is, on the other hand, a miracle which produces no effect; the order of nature is interrupted, to discover not a future but only a distant event, the knowledge of which is of no use to him to whom it is revealed. Between these difficulties what way shall be found? Is reason or testimony to be rejected? I believe what Osborne says of an appearance of sanctity may be applied to such impulses or anticipations as this: "Do not wholly slight them, because they may be true; but do not wholly trust them, because they may be false."

The state both of England and Ireland was at this time such, that he who was absent from either country had very little temptation to return; and therefore Roscommon, when he left Caen, travelled into Italy, and amused himself with its antiquities, and particularly with medals, in which he acquired uncommon skill.

At the Restoration, with the other friends of monarchy, he came to England, was made captain of the band of pensioners, and learned so much of the dissoluteness of the court, that he addicted himself immoderately to gaming, by which he was engaged in frequent quarrels, and which undoubtedly brought upon him its usual concomitants, extravagance and distress.

After some time, a dispute about part of his estate forced him into Ireland, where he was made by the Duke of Ormond captain of the guards, and met with an adventure thus related by Fenton:—

"He was at Dublin as much as ever distempered with the same fatal affection for play, which engaged him in one adventure that well deserves to be related. As he returned to his lodgings from a gaming-table, he was attacked in the dark by three ruffians, who were employed to assassinate him. The Earl defended himself with so much resolution, that he despatched one of the aggressors: whilst a gentleman, accidentally passing that way, interposed, and disarmed another: the third secured himself by flight. This generous assistant was a disbanded officer, of a good family and fair reputation; who, by what we call the partiality of fortune, to avoid censuring the iniquities of the times, wanted even a plain suit of clothes to make a decent appearance at the Castle. But his Lordship, on this occasion, presenting him to the Duke of Ormond, with great importunity prevailed with his Grace, that he might resign his post of captain of the guards to his friend; which for about three years the gentleman enjoyed, and, upon his death, the Duke returned the commission to his generous benefactor."

When he had finished his business, he returned to London: was made master of the horse to the Dutchess of York; and married the Lady Frances, daughter to the Earl of Burlington, and widow of Colonel Courteney.*

He now busied his mind with literary projects, and formed the plan for a society for refining our language and fixing its standard; "in imitation," says Fenton, "of those learned and polite societies with which he had been acquainted abroad." In this design his friend Dryden is said to have assisted him.

The same design, it is well known, was revived by Dr. Swift in the ministry of Oxford; but it has never since been publicly mentioned, though at that time great expectations were formed by some of its establishment and its effects. Such a society might, perhaps, without much difficulty, be collected; but that it would produce what is expected from it may be doubted.

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* He was married to Lady Frances Boyle, in April, 1662. By this lady he had no issue. He married secondly, 10th Nov. 1674, Isabella, daughter of Matthew Boynton, of Barmston, in Yorkshire.—MALONE.

The Italian academy seems to have obtained its end. The language was refined, and so fixed that it has changed but little. The French academy thought that they refined their language, and doubtless thought rightly; but the event has not shown that they fixed it; for the French of the present time is very different from that of the last century.

In this country an academy could be expected to do but little. If an academician's place were profitable, it would be given by interest; if attendance were gratuitous, it would be rarely paid, and no man would endure the least disgust. Unanimity is impossible, and debate would separate the assembly.

But suppose the philological decree made and promulgated, what would be its authority? In absolute governments, there is sometimes a general reverence paid to all that has the sanction of power, and the countenance of greatness. How little this is the state of our country needs not be told. We live in an age in which it is a kind of public sport to refuse all respect that cannot be enforced. The edicts of an English academy would probably be read by many, only that they might be sure to disobey them.

That our language is in perpetual danger of corruption cannot be denied; but what prevention can be found? The present manners of the nation would deride authority; and therefore nothing is left but that every writer should criticise himself.

All hopes of new literary institutions were quickly suppressed by the contentious turbulence of King James's reign; and Roscommon, foreseeing that some violent concussion of the state was at hand, purposed to retire to Rome, alleging, that "it was best to sit near the chimney when the chamber smoked;" a sentence, of which the application seems not very clear.

His departure was delayed by the gout; and he was so impatient either of hinderance or of pain, that he submitted himself to a French empiric, who is said to have repelled the disease into his bowels.

At the moment in which he expired, he uttered, with an energy of voice that expressed the most fervent devotion, two lines of his own version of "Dies Iræ:—

> My God, my Father, and my Friend,
> Do not forsake me in my end.

He died in 1684, and was buried with great pomp in Westminster Abbey.

His poetical character is given by Mr. Fenton:—

"In his writings," says Fenton, "we view the image of a mind which was naturally serious and solid; richly furnished and adorned with all the ornaments of learning, unaffectedly disposed in the most regular and elegant order. His imagination might have probably been more fruitful and sprightly, if his judgment had been less severe. But that severity (delivered in a masculine, clear, succinct style) contributed to make him so eminent in the didactical manner, that no man, with justice, can affirm he was ever equalled by any of our nation, without confessing at the same time that he is inferior to none. In some other kinds of writing his genius seems to have wanted fire to attain the point of perfection; but who can attain it?"

From this account of the riches of his mind, who would not imagine that they had been displayed in large volumes and numerous performances? Who would not, after the perusal of this character, be surprised to find that all the proofs of this genius, and knowledge, and judgment, are not sufficient to form a single book, or to appear otherwise than in conjunction with the works of some other writer of the same petty size?* But thus it is that characters are written: we know somewhat, and we imagine the rest. The observation, that his imagination would probably have been more fruitful and sprightly, if his judgment had been less severe, may be answered by a remarker somewhat inclined to cavil, by a contrary supposition, that his judgment would probably have been less severe, if his imagination had been more fruitful. It is ridiculous to oppose judgment to imagination; for it does not appear that men have necessarily less of one as they have more of the other.

We must allow of Roscommon, what Fenton has not mentioned so distinctly as he ought, and what is yet very much to his honour, that he is, perhaps, the only correct writer in verse before Addison: and that, if there are not so many or so great beauties in his compositions as in those of some contemporaries, there are at least fewer faults. Nor is this his highest praise; for Mr. Pope has celebrated him as the only moral writer of King Charles's reign:—

> Unhappy Dryden! in all Charles's days,
> Roscommon only boasts unspotted lays.

His great work is his "Essay on Translated

---

* They were published, together with those of Duke, in an octavo volume, in 1717. The editor, whoever he was, professes to have taken great care to procure and insert all of his Lordship's poems that are truly genuine. The truth of this assertion is flatly denied by the author of an account of Mr. John Pomfret, prefixed to his remains; who asserts, that the Prospect of Death was written by that person many years after Lord Roscommon's decease; as, also, that the paraphrase of the Prayer of Jeremy was written by a gentleman of the name of Southcourt, living in the year 1724.—H.

Verse;" of which Dryden writes thus in his preface to his "Miscellanies:"—

"It was my Lord Roscommon's 'Essay on Translated Verse,'" says Dryden, "which made me uneasy, till I tried whether or no I was capable of following his rules, and of reducing the speculation into practice. For many a fair precept in poetry is like a seeming demonstration in mathematics, very specious in the diagram, but failing in the mechanic operation. I think I have generally observed his instructions: I am sure my reason is sufficiently convinced both of their truth and usefulness; which, in other words, is to confess no less a vanity than to pretend that I have, at least, in some places, made examples to his rules."

This declaration of Dryden will, I am afraid, be found little more than one of those cursory civilities which one author pays to another; for when the sum of Lord Roscommon's precepts is collected, it will not be easy to discover how they can qualify their reader for a better performance of translation than might have been attained by his own reflections.

He that can abstract his mind from the elegance of the poetry, and confine it to the sense of the precepts, will find no other direction than that the author should be suitable to the translator's genius; that he should be such as may deserve a translation; that he who intends to translate him should endeavour to understand him; that perspicuity should be studied, and unusual and uncouth names sparingly inserted; and that the style of the original should be copied in its elevation and depression. These are the rules that are celebrated as so definite and important; and for the delivery of which to mankind so much honour has been paid. Roscommon has indeed deserved his praises, had they been given with discernment, and bestowed not on the rules themselves, but the art with which they are introduced, and the decorations with which they are adorned.

The "Essay," though generally excellent, is not without its faults. The story of the Quack, borrowed from Boileau, was not worth the importation; he has confounded the British and Saxon mythology:—

I grant that from some mossy idol oak,
In double rhymes, our *Thor* and *Woden* spoke.

The oak, as I think Gildon has observed, belonged to the British druids, and *Thor* and *Woden* were Saxon deities. Of the *double rhymes*, which he so liberally supposes, he certainly had no knowledge.

His interposition of a long paragraph of blank verses is unwarrantably licentious. Latin poets might as well have introduced a series of iambics among their heroics.

His next work is the translation of the "Art of Poetry;" which has received, in my opinion, not less praise than it deserves. Blank verse, left merely to its numbers, has little operation either on the ear or mind: it can hardly support itself without bold figures and striking images. A poem frigidly didactic, without rhyme, is so near to prose, that the reader only scorns it for pretending to be verse.

Having disentangled himself from the difficulties of rhyme, he may justly be expected to give the sense of Horace with great exactness, and to suppress no subtlety of sentiment for the difficulty of expressing it. This demand, however, his translation will not satisfy; what he found obscure, I do not know that he has ever cleared.

Among his smaller works the "Eclogue of Virgil" and the "Dies Iræ" are well translated; though the best line in the "Dies Iræ" is borrowed from Dryden. In return, succeeding poets have borrowed from Roscommon.

In the verses on the Lap-dog, the pronouns *thou* and *you* are offensively confounded; and the turn at the end is from Waller.

His versions of the two odes of Horace are made with great liberty, which is not recompensed by much elegance or vigour.

His political verses are sprightly, and when they were written must have been very popular.

Of the scene of "Guarini" and the prologue of "Pompey," Mrs. Philips, in her letters to Sir Charles Cotterel, has given the history.

"Lord Roscommon," says she, "is certainly one of the most promising young noblemen in Ireland. He has paraphrased a psalm admirably; and a scene of "Pastor Fido" very finely, in some places much better than Sir Richard Fanshaw. This was undertaken merely in compliment to me, who happened to say that it was the best scene in Italian, and the worst in English. He was only two hours about it. It begins thus:—

"Dear happy groves, and you the dark retreat
Of silent horror, Rest's eternal seat."

From these lines, which are since somewhat mended, it appears that he did not think a work of two hours fit to endure the eye of criticism without revisal.

When Mrs. Philips was in Ireland, some ladies that had seen her translation of "Pompey" resolved to bring it on the stage at Dublin; and, to promote their design, Lord Roscommon gave them a prologue, and Sir Edward Dering an Epilogue; "which," says she, "are the best performances of those kinds I ever saw." If this is not criticism, it is at least gratitude. The thought of bringing Cæsar and Pompey into Ireland, the only country over which Cæsar never had any power, is lucky.

Of Roscommon's works the judgment of the

ublic seems to be right. He is elegant, but ot great; he never labours after exquisite auties, and he seldom falls into gross faults. is versification is smooth, but rarely vigorous; and his rhymes are remarkably exact. He im proved taste, if he did not enlarge knowledge, and may be numbered among the benefactors to English literature. *

OTWAY.

F THOMAS OTWAY, one of the first names in e English drama, little is known; nor is there y part of that little which his biographer can ke pleasure in relating.

He was born at Trottin, in Sussex, March 3, 51, the son of Mr. Humphry Otway, rector Woolbeding. From Winchester-school, where was educated, he was entered, in 1669, a mmoner of Christ-church; but left the uni rsity without a degree, whether for want of oney, or from impatience of academical re raint, or mere eagerness to mingle with the orld, is not known.

It seems likely that he was in hope of being sy and conspicuous; for he went to London, d commenced player; but found himself un le to gain any reputation on the stage.†

This kind of inability he shared with Shak eare and Jonson, as he shared likewise some their excellences. It seems reasonable to ex ct that a great dramatic poet should without fficulty become a great actor; that he who n feel, could express; that he who can excite ssion, should exhibit with great readiness its ternal modes: but since experience has fully oved, that of those powers, whatever be their inity, one may be possessed in a great degree him who has very little of the other; it must allowed that they depend upon different fa lties, or on different use of the same faculty; at the actor must have a pliancy of mien, a xibility of countenance, and a variety of tones, hich the poet may be easily supposed to want; that the attention of the poet and the player ve been differently employed: the one has en considering thought, and the other action; e has watched the heart, and the other con nplated the face.

Though he could not gain much notice as a player, he felt in himself such powers as might qualify for a dramatic author; and in 1675, his twenty-fifth year, produced "Alcibiades," a tragedy; whether from the Alcibiade of Palaprat, I have not means to inquire. Langbaine, the great detector of plagiarism, is silent.

In 1677, he published "Titus and Berenice," translated from Rapin, with the "Cheats of Scapin," from Moliere; and in 1678, "Friendship in Fashion," a comedy, which, whatever might be its first reception, was, upon its revival at Drury-lane, in 1749, hissed off the stage for immorality and obscenity.

Want of morals, or of decency, did not in those days exclude any man from the company of the wealthy and the gay, if he brought with him any powers of entertainment; and Otway is said to have been at this time a favourite companion of the dissolute wits. But as he who desires no virtue in his companion has no virtue in himself, those whom Otway frequented had no purpose of doing more for him than to pay his reckoning. They desired only to drink and laugh: their fondness was without benevolence, and their familiarity without friendship. Men of wit, says one of Otway's biographers, received at that time no favour from the great, but to share their riots; "from which they were dismissed again to their own narrow circumstances. Thus they languished in poverty, without the support of eminence."

Some exception, however, must be made. The Earl of Plymouth, one of King Charles natural sons, procured for him a cornet's commission in some troops then sent into Flanders. But Otway did not prosper in his military character: for he soon left his commission behind him, whatever was the reason, and came back to London in extreme indigence; which Rochester mentions with merciless insolence in the "Session of the Poets:"—

In "Roscius Anglicanus," by Downes the prompt, p. 34, we learn that it was the character of the ng, in Mrs. Behn's "Forced Marriage, or the Jea s Bridegroom," which Mr. Otway attempted to rform, and failed in. This event appears to have ppened in the year 1672.—R.

* This Life was originally written by Dr. Johnson in the "Gentleman's Magazine" for May, 1748. It then had notes, which are now incorporated with the text.—C.

Tom Otway came next, Tom Shadwell's dear zany,
And swears for heroics he writes best of any;
Don Carlos his pockets so amply had fill'd,
That his mange was quite cured, and his lice were all kill'd.
But Apollo had seen his face on the stage,
And prudently did not think fit to engage
The scum of a play-house, for the prop of an age.

"Don Carlos," from which he is represented as having received so much benefit, was played in 1675. It appears, by the lampoon, to have had great success, and is said to have been played thirty nights together. This, however, it is reasonable to doubt;* as so long a continuance of one play upon the stage is a very wide deviation from the practice of that time; when the ardour for theatrical entertainments was not yet diffused through the whole people, and the audience, consisting of nearly the same persons, could be drawn together only by variety.

The "Orphan" was exhibited in 1680. This is one of the few plays that keep possession of the stage, and has pleased for almost a century, through all the vicissitudes of dramatic fashion. Of this play nothing new can easily be said. It is a domestic tragedy drawn from middle life. Its whole power is upon the affections; for it is not written with much comprehension of thought, or elegance of expression. But if the heart is interested, many other beauties may be wanting, yet not be missed.

The same year produced "The History and Fall of Caius Marius;" much of which is borrowed from the "Romeo and Juliet" of Shakspeare.

In 1683† was published the first, and next year‡ the second, parts of "The Soldier's Fortune," two comedies now forgotten; and in 1685§ his last and greatest dramatic work, "Venice Preserved," a tragedy which still continues to be one of the favourites of the public, notwithstanding the want of morality in the original design, and the despicable scenes of vile comedy‖ with which he has diversified his tragic action. By comparing this with his "Orphan," it will appear that his images were by time become stronger, and his language more energetic. The striking passages are in every mouth; and the public seems to judge rightly of the faults and excellences of this play, that it is the work of a man not attentive to decency, nor zealous for virtue; but of one who conceived forcibly and drew originally, by consulting nature in his own breast.

Together with those plays he wrote the poems which are in the present collection, and translated from the French the "History of the Triumvirate."

All this was performed before he was thirty four years old; for he died April 14, 1685, in a manner which I am unwilling to mention. Having been compelled by his necessities to contract debts, and hunted, as is supposed, by the terriers of the law, he retired to a public house on Tower-hill, where he is said to have died for want; or, as it is related by one of his biographers, by swallowing, after a long fast, a piece of bread which charity had supplied. He went out, as is reported, almost naked, in the rage of hunger, and, finding a gentleman in a neighbouring coffee-house, asked him for a shilling. The gentleman gave him a guinea; and Otway going away bought a roll, and was choked with the first mouthful. All this, I hope, is not true; and there is this ground of better hope, that Pope, who lived near enough to be well informed, relates in Spence's "Memorials," that he died of a fever caught by violent pursuit of a thief that had robbed one of his friends. But that indigence, and its concomitants, sorrow and despondency, pressed hard upon him, has never been denied, whatever immediate cause might bring him to the grave.

Of the poems which the present collection admits, the longest is the "Poet's Complaint of his Muse," part of which I do not understand, and in that which is less obscure I find little to commend. The language is often gross, and the numbers are harsh. Otway had not much cultivated versification, nor much replenished his mind with general knowledge. His principal power was in moving the passions, to which Dryden* in his latter years left an illustrious testimony. He appears by some of his verses to have been a zealous loyalist, and had what was in those times the common reward of loyalty; he lived and died neglected.

* This doubt is indeed very reasonable. I know not where it is said that "Don Carlos" was acted *thirty* nights together. Wherever it is said, it is untrue. Downes, who is perfectly good authority on this point, informs us that it was performed *ten* days successively.—MALONE.

† 1681. ‡ 1684. § 1682.

‖ The "despicable scenes of vile comedy" can be no bar to its being a favourite of the public, as they are always omitted in the representation.—J. B.

* In his preface to Fresnoy's "Art of Painting" —Dr. J

WALLER.

EDMUND WALLER was born on the third of arch, 1605, at Colshill, in Hertfordshire. His her was Robert Waller, Esq. of Agmondesm, in Buckinghamshire, whose family was iginally a branch of the Kentish Wallers; and s mother was the daughter of John Hampden, Hampden in the same county, and sister to ampden, the zealot of rebellion.

His father died while he was yet an infant, t left him a yearly income of three thousand e hundred pounds; which, rating together e value of money and the customs of life, we ay reckon more than equivalent to ten thoud at the present time.

He was educated by the care of his mother, Eton; and removed afterwards to King's Cole, in Cambridge. He was sent to parliament his eighteenth, if not in his sixteenth, year, d frequented the court of James the First, ere he heard a very remarkable conversation, ich the writer of the Life prefixed to his orks, who seems to have been well informed facts, though he may sometimes err in chrology, has delivered as indubitably certain:—

"He found Dr. Andrews, bishop of Winester, and Dr. Neale, bishop of Durham, nding behind his Majesty's chair; and there ppened something extraordinary," continues s writer, "in the conversation those prelates d with the King, on which Mr. Waller did en reflect. His Majesty asked the bishops, Ily Lords, cannot I take my subjects' money en I want it, without all this formality of liament?' The Bishop of Durham readily swered, 'God forbid, Sir, but you should: n are the breath of our nostrils.' Whereupon King turned, and said to the Bishop of Winster, 'Well, my Lord, what say you?' 'Sir,' lied the Bishop, 'I have no skill to judge of liamentary cases.' The King answered, o put-offs, my Lord; answer me presently.' hen, Sir,' said he, 'I think it is lawful for to take my brother Neale's money; for he rs it.' Mr. Waller said, the company was ised with this answer, and the wit of it seemto affect the King; for, a certain lord coming oon after, his Majesty cried out, 'Oh, my d, they say you lig with my lady.' 'No, ' says his Lordship in confusion; 'but I like company, because she has so much wit.' hy then,' says the King, 'do you not lig h my Lord of Winchester there?'"

Waller's political and poetical life began nearly together. In his eighteenth year he wrote the poem that appears first in his works, on the "Prince's Escape at St. Andero:" a piece which justifies the observation made by one of his editors, that he attained, by a felicity like instinct, a style which, perhaps, will never be obsolete: and that, "were we to judge only by the wording, we could not know what was wrote at twenty, and what at four-score." His versification was, in his first essay, such as it appears in his last performance. By the perusal of Fairfax's translation of "Tasso," to which, as Dryden* relates, he confessed himself indebted for the smoothness of his numbers, and by his own nicety of observation, he had already formed such a system of metrical harmony as he never afterwards much needed, or much endeavoured to improve. Denham corrected his numbers by experience, and gained ground gradually upon the ruggedness of his age; but what was acquired by Denham was inherited by Waller.

The next poem, of which the subject seems to fix the time, is supposed by Mr. Fenton to be the Address to the Queen, which he considers as congratulating her arrival, in Waller's twentieth year. He is apparently mistaken; for the mention of the nation's obligations to her frequent pregnancy, proves that it was written when she had brought many children. We have therefore no date of any other poetical production before that which the murder of the Duke of Buckingham occasioned: the steadiness with which the King received the news in the chapel deserved indeed to be rescued from oblivion.

Neither of these pieces that seem to carry their own dates could have been the sudden effusion of fancy. In the verses on the Prince's escape, the prediction of his marriage with the Princess of France must have been written after the event; in the other, the promises of the King's kindness to the descendants of Buckingham, which could not be properly praised till it had appeared by its effects, show that time was taken for revision and improvement. It is not known that they were published till they appeared long afterwards with other poems.

Waller was not one of those idolaters of praise who cultivate their minds at the expense of their fortunes. Rich as he was by inheritance, he took care early to grow richer, by marrying Mrs. Banks, a great heiress in the city, whom the in-

* Preface to his "Fables."—Dr. J.

terest of the court was employed to obtain for Mr. Croft. Having brought him a son, who died young, and a daughter, who was afterwards married to Mr. Dormer, of Oxfordshire, she died in childbed, and left him a widower of about five-and-twenty, gay and wealthy, to please himself with another marriage.

Being too young to resist beauty, and probably too vain to think himself resistible, he fixed his heart, perhaps half fondly and half ambitiously, upon the Lady Dorothea Sidney, eldest daughter of the Earl of Leicester, whom he courted by all the poetry in which Sacharissa is celebrated; the name is derived from the Latin appellation of *sugar*, and implies, if it means any thing, a spiritless mildness, and dull goodnature, such as excites rather tenderness than esteem, and such as, though always treated with kindness, is never honoured or admired.

Yet he describes Sacharissa as a sublime predominating beauty, of lofty charms, and imperious influence, on whom he looks with amazement rather than fondness, whose chains he wishes, though in vain, to break, and whose presence is *wine* that *inflames to madness*.

His acquaintance with this high-born dame gave wit no opportunity of boasting its influence; she was not to be subdued by the powers of verse, but rejected his addresses, it is said, with disdain, and drove him away to solace his disappointment with Amoret or Phillis. She married, in 1639, the Earl of Sunderland, who died at Newberry in the King's cause; and, in her old age, meeting somewhere with Waller, asked him when he would again write such verses upon her: "When you are as young, Madam," said he, "and as handsome as you were then."

In this part of his life it was that he was known to Clarendon, among the rest of the men who were eminent in that age for genius and literature; but known so little to his advantage that they who read his character will not much condemn Sacharissa, that she did not descend from her rank to his embraces, nor think every excellence comprised in wit.

The lady was, indeed, inexorable; but his uncommon qualifications, though they had no power upon her, recommended him to the scholars and statesmen; and undoubtedly many beauties of that time, however they might receive his love, were proud of his praises. Who they were, whom he dignifies with poetical names, cannot now be known. Amoret, according to Mr. Fenton, was the Lady Sophia Murray. Perhaps by traditions preserved in families more may be discovered.

From the verses written at Penshurst, it has been collected that he diverted his disappointment by a voyage; and his biographers, from his poem on the Whales, think it not improbable that he visited the Bermudas; but it seems much more likely that he should amuse himself with forming an imaginary scene, than that an important an incident, as a visit to America should have been left floating in conjectural probability.

From his twenty-eighth to his thirty-fifth year, he wrote his pieces on the reduction of Sallee; on the reparation of St. Paul's; to the King on his Navy; the panegyric on the Queen mother; the two poems to the Earl of Northumberland; and perhaps others, of which the time cannot be discovered.

When he had lost all hopes of Sacharissa, he looked round him for an easier conquest, and gained a lady of the family of Bresse, or Breaux. The time of his marriage is not exactly known. It has not been discovered that this wife was won by his poetry; nor is any thing told of her but that she brought him many children. He doubtless praised some whom he would have been afraid to marry, and perhaps married one whom he would have been ashamed to praise. Many qualities contribute to domestic happiness, upon which poetry has no colours to bestow; and many airs and sallies may delight imagination which he who flatters them never can approve. There are charms made only for distant admiration. No spectacle is nobler than a blaze.

Of his wife, his biographers have recorded that she gave him five sons and eight daughters.

During the long interval of parliament, he represented as living among those with whom it was most honourable to converse, and enjoying an exuberant fortune with that independence and liberty of speech and conduct which wealth ought always to produce. He was however considered as the kinsman of Hampden, and was therefore supposed by the courtiers not to favour them.

When the parliament was called in 1640, it appeared that Waller's political character had not been mistaken. The King's demand of supply produced one of those noisy speeches which disaffection and discontent regularly dictate; a speech filled with hyperbolical complaints of imaginary grievances: "They," says he, "who think themselves already undone, can never apprehend themselves in danger; as they who have nothing left can never give freely." Political truth is equally in danger from the praises of courtiers, and the exclamation of patriots.

He then proceeds to rail at the clergy, being sure at that time of a favourable audience. His topic is such as will always serve its purpose, an accusation of acting and preaching only for preferment: and he exhorts the commons *carefully* to *provide* for their *protection against the pit law*.

It always gratifies curiosity to trace a sentiment. Waller has in his speech quoted Hooker in one passage; and in another has copied him

without quoting. "Religion," says Waller, "ought to be the first thing in our purpose and desires; but that which is first in dignity is not always to precede in order of time; for well-being supposes a being; and the first impediment which men naturally endeavour to remove, is the want of those things without which they cannot subsist. God first assigned unto Adam maintenance of life, and gave him a title to the rest of the creatures before he appointed a law to observe."

"God first assigned Adam," says Hooker, "maintenance of life, and then appointed him a law to observe.—True it is that the kingdom of God must be the first thing in our purpose and desires; but inasmuch as a righteous life presupposeth life, inasmuch as to live virtuously it is impossible, except we live; therefore the first impediment which naturally we endeavour to remove is penury, and want of things without which we cannot live."—Book. i. Sect. 9.

The speech is vehement; but the great position, that grievances ought to be redressed before supplies are granted, is agreeable enough to law and reason: nor was Waller, if his biographer may be credited, such an enemy to the King, as not to wish his distresses lightened; for he relates, "that the King sent particularly to Waller, to second his demand of some subsidies to pay off the army; and Sir Henry Vane objecting against first voting a supply, because the King would not accept unless it came up to his proportion, Mr. Waller spoke earnestly to Sir Thomas Jermyn, comptroller of the household, to save his master from the effects of so bold a falsity: 'for,' he said, 'I am but a country gentleman, and cannot pretend to know the King's mind:' but Sir Thomas durst not contradict the secretary; and his son, the Earl of St. Alban's, afterwards told Mr. Waller, that his father's cowardice ruined the King."

In the Long Parliament, which, unhappily for the nation, met Nov. 3, 1640, Waller represented Agmondesham the third time; and was considered by the discontented party as a man sufficiently trusty and acrimonious to be employed in managing the prosecution of Judge Crawley, for his opinion in favour of ship-money; and his speech shows that he did not disappoint their expectations. He was probably the more ardent, as his uncle Hampden had been particularly engaged in the dispute, and, by a sentence which seems generally to be thought unconstitutional, particularly injured.

He was not however a bigot to his party, nor adopted all their opinions. When the great question, whether Episcopacy ought to be abolished, was debated, he spoke against the innovation so coolly, so reasonably, and so firmly, that it is not without great injury to his name that his speech, which was as follows, has been hitherto omitted in his works.*

* "There is no doubt but the sense of what this nation had suffered from the present bishops hath produced these complaints; and the apprehensions men have of suffering the like in time to come, make so many desire the taking away of Episcopacy: but I conceive it is possible that we may not now take a right measure of the minds of the people by their petitions; for, when they subscribed them, the bishops were armed with a dangerous commission of making new canons, imposing new oaths, and the like; but now we have disarmed them of that power. These petitioners lately did look upon Episcopacy as a beast armed with horns and claws; but now that we have cut and pared them (and may, if we see cause, yet reduce it into narrower bounds), it may, perhaps, be more agreeable. However, if they be still in passion, it becomes us soberly to consider the right use and antiquity thereof; and not to comply further with a general desire, than may stand with a general good.

"We have already showed, that Episcopacy and the evils thereof are mingled like water and oil; we have also, in part, severed them; but I believe you will find, that our laws and the present government of the church are mingled like wine and water; so inseparable, that the abrogation of, at least, a hundred of our laws is desired in these petitions. I have often heard a noble answer of the Lords commended in this House, to a proposition of like nature, but of less consequence; they gave no other reason of their refusal but this, *Nolumus mutare Leges Angliæ:* it was the bishops who so answered then; and it would become the dignity and wisdom of this House to answer the people now, with a *Nolumus mutare.*

"I see some are moved with a number of hands against the bishops; which, I confess, rather inclines me to their defence; for I look upon Episcopacy as a counterscarp, or outwork; which, if it be taken by this assault of the people, and withal this mystery once revealed, 'That we must deny them nothing when they ask it thus in troops,' we may, in the next place, have as hard a task to defend our property, as we have lately had to recover it from the prerogative. If, by multiplying hands and petitions, they prevail for an equality in things ecclesiastical, the next demand, perhaps, may be *Lex Agraria*, the like equality in things temporal.

"The Roman story tells us, 'That when the people began to flock about the senate, and were more curious to direct and know what was done than to obey, that commonwealth soon came to ruin: their *Legem rogare* grew quickly to be a

* This speech has been retrieved, from a paper printed at that time, by the writers of the Parliamentary History.—Dr. J.

Legem ferre; and after, when their legions had found that they could make a dictator, they never suffered the senate to have a voice any more in such election.'

"If these great innovations proceed, I shall expect a flat and level in learning too, as well as in church preferments: *Honos alit Artes.* And though it be true that grave and pious men do study for learning sake, and embrace virtue for itself; yet it is true that youth, which is the season when learning is gotten, is not without ambition; nor will ever take pains to excel in any thing, when there is not some hope of excelling others in reward and dignity.

"There are two reasons chiefly alleged against our church-government.

"First, Scripture, which, as some men think, points out another form.

"Second, The abuses of the present superiors.

"For Scripture, I will not dispute it in this place; but I am confident that, whenever an equal division of lands and goods shall be desired, there will be as many places in Scripture found out, which seem to favour that, as there are now alleged against the prelacy or preferment of the church. And, as for abuses, where you are now in the remonstrance told what this and that poor man hath suffered by the bishops, you may be presented with a thousand instances of poor men that have received hard measure from their landlords; and of worldly goods abused, to the injury of others, and disadvantage of the owners.

"And therefore, Mr. Speaker, my humble motion is, That we may settle men's minds herein; and, by a question, declare our resolution, *to reform*, that is, *not to abolish Episcopacy.*"

It cannot but be wished that he, who could speak in this manner, had been able to act with spirit and uniformity.

When the Commons began to set the royal authority at open defiance, Waller is said to have withdrawn from the House, and to have returned with the King's permission; and, when the King set up his standard, he sent him a thousand broad pieces. He continued, however, to sit in the rebellious conventicle; but "spoke," says Clarendon, "with great sharpness and freedom, which, now there was no danger of being outvoted, was not restrained; and therefore used as an argument against those who were gone upon pretence that they were not suffered to deliver their opinion freely in the House, which could not be believed, when all men knew what liberty Mr. Waller took, and spoke every day with impunity against the sense and proceedings of the House."

Waller, as he continued to sit, was one of the commissioners nominated by the parliament to treat with the King at Oxford; and when they were presented, the King said to him, "Though you are the last, you are not the lowest nor the least in my favour." Whitlock, who, being another of the commissioners, was witness of this kindness, imputes it to the King's knowledge of the plot, in which Waller appeared afterwards to have been engaged against the parliament. Fenton, with equal probability, believes that this attempt to promote the royal cause arose from his sensibility of the King's tenderness. Whitlock says nothing of his behaviour at Oxford: he was sent with several others to add pomp to the commission, but was not one of those to whom the trust of treating was imparted.

The engagement, known by the name of Waller's plot, was soon afterwards discovered. Waller had a brother-in-law, Tomkyns, who was clerk of the Queen's council, and at the same time had a very numerous acquaintance, and great influence, in the city. Waller and he, conversing with great confidence, told both their own secrets and those of their friends; and, surveying the wide extent of their conversation, imagined that they found in the majority of all ranks great disapprobation of the violence of the Commons, and unwillingness to continue the war. They knew that many favoured the King, whose fear concealed their loyalty; and many desired peace, though they durst not oppose the clamour for war; and they imagined that, if those who had these good intentions could be informed of their own strength, and enabled by intelligence to act together, they might overpower the fury of sedition, by refusing to comply with the ordinance for the twentieth part, and the other taxes levied for the support of the rebel army, and by uniting great numbers in a petition for peace. They proceeded with great caution. Three only met in one place, and no man was allowed to impart the plot to more than two others; so that, if any should be suspected or seized, more than three could not be endangered.

Lord Conway joined in the design, and, Clarendon imagines, incidentally mingled, as he was a soldier, some martial hopes or projects, which however were only mentioned, the main design being to bring the loyal inhabitants to the knowledge of each other; for which purpose there was to be appointed one in every district, to distinguish the friends of the King, the adherents to the parliament, and the neutrals. How far they proceeded does not appear; the result of their inquiry, as Pym declared,* was, that within the walls, for one that was for the royalists, there were three against them; but that without the walls, for one that was against them, there were five for them. Whether this was said from knowledge or guess, was perhaps never inquired.

* Parliamentary History, Vol. xii.—Dr. J.

It is the opinion of Clarendon, that in Waller's plan no violence or sanguinary resistance was comprised; that he intended only to abate the confidence of the rebels by public declarations, and to weaken their power by an opposition to new supplies. This, in calmer times, and more than this, is done without fear; but such was the acrimony of the Commons, that no method of obstructing them was safe.

About this time another design was formed by Sir Nicholas Crispe, a man of loyalty that deserves perpetual remembrance: when he was a merchant in the city, he gave and procured the King, in his exigencies, a hundred thousand pounds; and, when he was driven from the Exchange, raised a regiment, and commanded it.

Sir Nicholas flattered himself with an opinion, that some provocation would so much exasperate, or some opportunity so much encourage, the King's friends in the city, that they would break out in open resistance, and would then want only a lawful standard, and an authorised commander; and extorted from the King, whose judgment too frequently yielded to importunity, a commission of array, directed to such as he thought proper to nominate, which was sent to London by the Lady Aubigney. She knew not what she carried, but was to deliver it on the communication of a certain token which Sir Nicholas imparted.

This commission could be only intended to lie ready till the time should require it. To have attempted to raise any forces, would have been certain destruction; it could be of use only when the forces should appear. This was, however, an act preparatory to martial hostility. Crispe would undoubtedly have put an end to the session of parliament, had his strength been equal to his zeal: and out of the design of Crispe, which involved very little danger, and that of Waller, which was an act purely civil, they compounded a horrid and dreadful plot.

The discovery of Waller's design is variously related. In "Clarendon's History" it is told, that a servant of Tomkyns, lurking behind the hangings, when his master was in conference with Waller, heard enough to qualify him for an informer, and carried his intelligence to Pym. A manuscript, quoted in the "Life of Waller," relates, that "he was betrayed by his sister Price, and her presbyterian chaplain, Mr. Goode, who stole some of his papers; and, if he had not strangely dreamed the night before that his sister had betrayed him, and thereupon burnt the rest of his papers by the fire that was in his chimney, he had certainly lost his life by it." The question cannot be decided. It is not unreasonable to believe that the men in power, receiving intelligence from the sister, would employ the servant of Tomkyns to listen at the conference, that they might avoid an act so offensive as that of destroying the brother by the sister's testimony.

The plot was published in the most terrific manner.

On the 31st of May (1643,) at a solemn fast, when they were listening to the sermon, a messenger entered the church, and communicated his errand to Pym, who whispered it to others that were placed near him, and then went with them out of the church, leaving the rest in solicitude and amazement. They immediately sent guards to proper places, and that night apprehended Tomkyns and Waller; having yet traced nothing but that letters had been intercepted, from which it appears that the parliament and the city were soon to be delivered into the hands of the cavaliers.

They perhaps yet knew little themselves, beyond some general and indistinct notices. "But Waller," says Clarendon, "was so confounded with fear, that he confessed whatever he had heard, said, thought, or seen; all that he knew of himself, and all that he suspected of others, without concealing any person of what degree or quality soever, or any discourse which he had ever upon any occasion entertained with them; what such and such ladies of great honour, to whom, upon the credit of his wit and great reputation, he had been admitted, had spoke to him in their chambers upon the proceedings in the Houses, and how they had encouraged him to oppose them; what correspondence and intercourse they had with some ministers of state at Oxford, and how they had conveyed all intelligence thither." He accused the Earl of Portland and Lord Conway as cooperating in the transaction; and testified that the Earl of Northumberland had declared himself disposed in favour of any attempt that might check the violence of the parliament, and reconcile them to the King.

He undoubtedly confessed much which they could never have discovered, and perhaps somewhat which they would wished to have been suppressed; for it is inconvenient, in the conflict of factions, to have that disaffection known which cannot safely be punished.

Tomkyns was seized on the same night with Waller, and appears likewise to have partaken of his cowardice; for he gave notice of Crispe's commission of array, of which Clarendon never knew how it was discovered. Tomkyns had been sent with the token appointed, to demand it from Lady Aubigney, and had buried it in his garden, where, by his direction, it was dug up; and thus the rebels obtained, what Clarendon confesses them to have had, the original copy.

It can raise no wonder that they formed one plot out of these two designs, however remote from each other, when they saw the same agent employed in both, and found the commission of

array in the hands of him who was employed in collecting the opinions and affections of the people.

Of the plot, thus combined, they took care to make the most. They sent Pym among the citizens, to tell them of their imminent danger, and happy escape: and inform them, that the design was, "to seize the Lord Mayor and all the Committee of Militia, and would not spare one of them." They drew up a vow and covenant, to be taken by every member of either House, by which he declared his detestation of all conspiracies against the parliament, and his resolution to detect and oppose them. They then appointed a day of thanksgiving for this wonderful delivery; which shut out, says Clarendon, all doubts whether there had been such a deliverance, and whether the plot was real or fictitious.

On June 11, the Earl of Portland and Lord Conway were committed, one to the custody of the Mayor, and the other of the Sheriff; but their lands and goods were not seized.

Waller was still to immerse himself deeper in ignominy. The Earl of Portland and Lord Conway denied the charge; and there was no evidence against them but the confession of Waller, of which undoubtedly many would be inclined to question the veracity. With these doubts he was so much terrified, that he endeavoured to persuade Portland to a declaration like his own, by a letter extant in Fenton's edition. "But for me," says he, "you had never known any thing of this business, which was prepared for another; and therefore I cannot imagine why you should hide it so far as to contract your own ruin by concealing it, and persisting unreasonably to hide that truth, which without you already is, and will every day, be made more manifest. Can you imagine yourself bound in honour to keep that secret, which is already revealed by another? or possible it should still be a secret, which is known to one of the other sex?—If you persist to be cruel to yourself for their sakes who deserve it not, it will nevertheless be made appear, ere long, I fear to your ruin. Surely, if I had the happiness to wait on you, I could move you to compassionate both yourself and me, who, desperate as my case is, am desirous to die with the honour of being known to have declared the truth. You have no reason to contend to hide what is already revealed—inconsiderately to throw away yourself, for the interest of others, to whom you are less obliged than you are aware of."

This persuasion seems to have had little effect. Portland sent (June 29) a letter to the Lords, to tell them that he "is in custody, as he conceives, without any charge; and that, by what Mr. Waller had threatened him with since he was imprisoned, he doth apprehend a very cruel, long, and ruinous restraint:—He therefore prays, that he may not find the effects of Mr Waller's threats, a long and close imprisonment; but may be speedily brought to a legal trial, and then he is confident the vanity and falsehood of those informations which have been given against him will appear."

In consequence of this letter, the Lords ordered Portland and Waller to be confronted; when the one repeated his charge, and the other his denial. The examination of the plot being continued (July 1,) Thinn, usher of the House of Lords, deposed, that Mr. Waller having had a conference with the Lord Portland in an upper room, Lord Portland said, when he came down, "Do me the favour to tell my Lord Northumberland, that Mr. Waller has extremely pressed me to save my own life and his, by throwing the blame upon the Lord Conway and the Earl of Northumberland."

Waller, in his letter to Portland, tells him of the reasons which he could urge with resistless efficacy in a personal conference; but he overrated his own oratory; his vehemence, whether of persuasion or intreaty, was returned with contempt.

One of his arguments with Portland is, that the plot is already known to a woman. This woman was doubtless Lady Aubigney, who, upon this occasion, was committed to custody; but who, in reality, when she delivered the commission, knew not what it was.

The parliament then proceeded against the conspirators, and committed their trial to a council of war. Tomkyns and Chaloner were hanged near their own doors. Tomkyns, when he came to die, said it was a *foolish business;* and indeed there seems to have been no hope that it should escape discovery; for though never more than three met at a time, yet a design so extensive must, by necessity, be communicated to many, who could not be expected to be all faithful and all prudent. Chaloner was attended at his execution by Hugh Peters. His crime was, that he had commission to raise money for the King; but it appears not that the money was to be expended upon the advancement of either Crispe's or Waller's plot.

The Earl of Northumberland, being too great for prosecution, was only once examined before the Lords. The Earl of Portland and Lord Conway, persisting to deny the charge, and no testimony but Waller's yet appearing against them, were, after a long imprisonment, admitted to bail. Hasel, the King's messenger, who carried the letters to Oxford, died the night before his trial. Hampden escaped death, perhaps by the interest of his family; but was kept in prison to the end of his life. They whose names were inserted in the commission of array were not capitally punished, as it could not be proved that they had consented to their own nomination; but they were considered as malignants, and their estates were seized

" Waller, though confessedly," says Clarendon, " the most guilty, with incredible dissimulation affected such a remorse of conscience, that s trial was put off, out of Christian compasn, till he might recover his understanding." hat use he made of this interval, with what erality and success he distributed flattery and ney, and how, when he was brought (July 4) fore the house, he confessed and lamented, d submitted and implored, may be read in e " History of the Rebellion." (B. vii.) he speech, to which Clarendon ascribes the eservation of his *dear-bought life*, is insertin his works. The great historian, however, ems to have been mistaken in relating that he evailed in the principal part of his supplican, not to be tried by a council of war; for, cording to Whitlock, he was, by expulsion m the House, abandoned to the tribunal ich he so much dreaded, and, being tried and ndemned, was reprieved by Essex; but after a ar's imprisonment, in which time resentment ew less acrimonious, paying a fine of ten thoud pounds, he was permitted to recollect himf in another country.

Of his behaviour in this part of his life, it is t necessary to direct the reader's opinion. Let us not," says his last ingenious biography, " condemn him with untempered severy, because he was not a prodigy which the rld hath seldom seen, because his character cluded not the poet, the orator, and the hero." For the place of his exile he chose France, and yed some time at Roan, where his daughter argaret was born, who was afterwards his faurite, and his amanuensis. He then removed Paris, where he lived with great splendour d hospitality; and from time to time amused mself with poetry, in which he sometimes eaks of the rebels, and their usurpation, in the tural language of an honest man.

At last it became necessary, for his support, sell his wife's jewels; and, being reduced, as said, at last *to the rump-jewel*, he solicited from romwell permission to return, and obtained it the interest of Colonel Scroop, to whom his ter was married. Upon the remains of a forne which the danger of his life had very much minished, he lived at Halbarn, a house built himself very near to Beaconsfield, where his ther resided. His mother, though related to romwell and Hampden, was zealous for the yal cause, and, when Cromwell visited her, used reproach him; he, in return, would throw a pkin at her, and say he would not dispute th his aunt; but finding in time that she acd for the King, as well as talked, he made her a prisoner to her own daughter, in her own house. If he would do any thing, he could not do less.

Cromwell, now Protector, received Waller, as his kinsman, to familiar conversation. Waller, as he used to relate, found him sufficiently versed in ancient history; and when any of his enthusiastic friends came to advise or consult him, could sometimes overhear him discoursing in the cant of the times: but, when he returned, he would say, " Cousin Waller, I must talk to these men in their own way:" and resumed the common style of conversation.

He repaid the Protector for his favours (1654) by the famous " Panegyric," which has been always considered as the first of his poetical productions. His choice of encomiastic topics is very judicious; for he considers Cromwell in his exaltation, without inquiring how he attained it; there is consequently no mention of the rebel or the regicide. All the former part of his hero's life is veiled with shades; and nothing is brought to view but the chief, the governor, the defender of England's honour, and the enlarger of her dominion. The act of violence by which he obtained the supreme power is lightly treated, and decently justified. It was certainly to be desired that the detestable band should be dissolved, which had destroyed the church, murdered the King, and filled the nation with tumult and oppression: yet Cromwell had not the right of dissolving them; for all that he had before done could be justified only by supposing them invested with lawful authority. But combinations of wickedness would overwhelm the world by the advantage which licentious principles afford, did not those who have long practised perfidy grow faithless to each other.

In the poem on the war with Spain are some passages at least equal to the best parts of the " Panegyric;" and, in the conclusion, the poet ventures yet a higher flight of flattery, by recommending royalty to Cromwell and the nation. Cromwell was very desirous, as appears from his conversation, related by Whitlock, of adding the title to the power of monarchy; and is supposed to have been withheld from it partly by fear of the army, and partly by fear of the laws, which, when he should govern by the name of king, would have restrained his authority. When therefore a deputation was solemnly sent to invite him to the crown, he, after a long conference, refused it; but is said to have fainted in his coach, when he parted from them.

The poem on the death of the Protector seems to have been dictated by real veneration for his memory. Dryden and Sprat wrote on the same occasion; but they were young men, struggling into notice, and hoping for some favour from the ruling party. Waller had little to expect; he had received nothing but his pardon from Crom-

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* Life of Waller, prefixed to an edition of his orks, published, in 1773, by Percival Stockdale. C.

well, and was not likely to ask any thing from those who should succeed him.

Soon afterwards, the Restoration supplied him with another subject; and he exerted his imagination, his elegance, and his melody, with equal alacrity for Charles the Second. It is not possible to read, without some contempt and indignation, poems of the same author, ascribing the highest degree of *power and piety* to Charles the First, then transferring the same *power and piety* to Oliver Cromwell; now inviting Oliver to take the crown, and then congratulating Charles the Second on his recovered right. Neither Cromwell nor Charles could value his testimony as the effect of conviction, or receive his praises as effusions of reverence; they could consider them but as the labour of invention, and the tribute of dependence.

Poets, indeed, profess fiction; but the legitimate end of fiction is the conveyance of truth; and he that has flattery ready for all whom the vicissitudes of the world happen to exalt, must be scorned as a prostituted mind, that may retain the glitter of wit, but has lost the dignity of virtue.

The Congratulation was considered as inferior in poetical merit to the "Panegyric:" and it is reported, that, when the King told Waller of the disparity, he answered, "Poets, Sir, succeed better in fiction than in truth."

The Congratulation is indeed not inferior to the "Panegyric," either by decay of genius, or for want of diligence; but because Cromwell had done much, and Charles had done little. Cromwell wanted nothing to raise him to heroic excellence but virtue; and virtue his Poet thought himself at liberty to supply. Charles had yet only the merit of struggling without success, and suffering without despair. A life of escapes and indigence could supply poetry with no splendid images.

In the first parliament summoned by Charles the Second (March 8, 1661) Waller sat for Hastings, in Sussex, and served for different places in all the parliaments in that reign. In a time when fancy and gayety were the most powerful recommendations to regard, it is not likely that Waller was forgotten. He passed his time in the company that was highest, both in rank and wit, from which even his obstinate sobriety did not exclude him. Though he drank water, he was enabled by his fertility of mind to heighten the mirth of Bacchanalian assemblies; and Mr. Saville said, that "no man in England should keep him company without drinking but Ned Waller."

The praise given him by St. Evremond is a proof of his reputation; for it was only by his reputation that he could be known, as a writer, to a man who, though he lived a great part of a long life upon an English pension, never condescended to understand the language of the nation that maintained him.

In parliament, "he was," says Burnet, "t delight of the House, and though old said t liveliest things of any among them." This, ho ever, is said in his account of the year seven five, when Waller was only seventy. His na as a speaker occurs often in Grey's Collection but I have found no extracts that can be mo quoted as exhibiting sallies of gayety than coge cy of argument.

He was of such consideration, that his r marks were circulated, and recorded. Wh the Duke of York's influence was high, both Scotland and England, it drew, says Burnet lively reflection from Waller, the celebrated w He said, "the House of Commons had resolv that the Duke should not reign after the Kin death; but the King, in opposition to them, h resolved that he should reign even in his life If there appear no extraordinary *liveliness* in th *remark*, yet its reception proves the speaker have been a *celebrated wit*, to have had a nam which men of wit were proud of mentioning.

He did not suffer his reputation to die grad ally away, which may easily happen in a lo life; but renewed his claim to poetical distin tion from time to time, as occasions were offe ed, either by public events or private inciden and contenting himself with the influence of muse, or loving quiet better than influence, never accepted any office of magistracy.

He was not, however, without some atte tion to his fortune; for he asked from the Ki (in 1665) the provostship of Eton College, a obtained it; but Clarendon refused to put the s to the grant, alleging that it could be held o by a clergyman. It is known that Sir Hen Wotton qualified himself for it by deacon's ord

To this opposition, the "Biographia" impu the violence and acrimony with which Wal joined Buckingham's faction in the prosecut of Clarendon. The motive was illiberal and d honest, and showed that more than sixty ye had not been able to teach him morality. I accusation is such as conscience can hardly supposed to dictate without the help of mali "We were to be governed by Janizaries inst of parliaments, and are in danger from a wo plot than that of the fifth of November; then the Lords and Commons had been destro there had been a succession; but here both been destroyed, for ever." This is the language a man who is glad of an opportunity to rail, a ready to sacrifice truth to interest at one ti and to anger at another.

A year after the Chancellor's banishme another vacancy gave him encouragement another petition, which the King referred to council, who, after hearing the question argu by lawyers for three days, determined that office could be held only by a clergyman, acco ing to the act of Uniformity, since the prov had always received institution as for a parso age from the bishops of Lincoln. The King th

d, he could not break the law which he had de: and Dr. Zachary Cradok, famous for a gle sermon, at most for two sermons, was sen by the fellows.

That he asked any thing more is not known; s certain that he obtained nothing, though he tinued obsequious to the court through the of Charles's reign.

At the accession of King James (in 1685) he s chosen for parliament, being then fourscore, Saltash, in Cornwall; and wrote a "Presage the Downfall of the Turkish Empire," ich he presented to the King on his birth-day. is remarked, by his commentator Fenton, t in reading Tasso he had early imbibed a eration for the heroes of the holy war, and a lous enmity to the Turks, which never left n. James, however, having soon after begun at he thought a holy war at home, made te to put all molestation of the Turks out of power.

ames treated him with kindness and famil-ty, of which instances are given by the ter of his life. One day taking him into closet, the King asked him how he liked of the pictures: "My eyes," said Waller, e dim, and I do not know it." The King it was the Princess of Orange. "She is," Waller, "like the greatest woman in the ld." The King asked who was that; and answered, Queen Elizabeth. "I wonder," the King, "you should think so; but I t confess she had a wise council." "And, " said Waller, "did you ever know a fool se a wise one?" Such is the story, which nce heard of some other man. Pointed ms, and acute replies, fly loose about the ld, and are assigned successively to those m it may be the fashion to celebrate.

When the king knew that he was about to ry his daughter to Dr. Birch, a clergyman, rdered a French gentleman to tell him, that e King wondered he could think of marry-his daughter to a falling church." "The g," said Waller, "does me great honour, in ng notice of my domestic affairs; but I have d long enough to observe, that this falling rch has got a trick of rising again."

He took notice to his friends of the King's duct; and said, that "he would be left like hale upon the strand." Whether he was y to any of the transactions which ended in Revolution, is not known. His heir joined Prince of Orange.

Having now attained an age beyond which laws of nature seldom suffer life to be ex-ded, otherwise than by a future state, he as to have turned his mind upon preparation the decisive hour, and therefore consecrated poetry to devotion. It is pleasing to discover his piety was without weakness; that his llectual powers continued vigorous: and that the lines which he composed, when "*he, for age, could neither read nor write,*" are not inferior to the effusions of his youth.

Towards the decline of life, he bought a small house with a little land, at Coleshill; and said, "he should be glad to die, like the stag, where he was roused." This, however, did not happen. When he was at Beaconsfield, he found his legs grow timid: he went to Windsor, where Sir Charles Scarborough then attended the King, and requested him, as both a friend and a physician, to tell him, *what that swelling meant.* "Sir," answered Scarborough, "your blood will run no longer." Waller repeated some lines of Virgil, and went home to die.

As the disease increased upon him, he composed himself for his departure; and, calling upon Dr. Birch to give him the holy sacrament, he desired his children to take it with him, and made an earnest declaration of his faith in Christianity. It now appeared what part of his conversation with the great could be remembered with delight. He related, that being present when the Duke of Buckingham talked profanely before King Charles, he said to him, "My Lord, I am a great deal older than your Grace, and have, I believe, heard more arguments for atheism than ever your Grace did; but I have lived long enough to see there is nothing in them; and so I hope your Grace will."

He died October 21, 1687, and was buried at Beaconsfield, with a monument erected by his son's executors, for which Rymer wrote the inscription, and which I hope is now rescued from dilapidation.

He left several children by his second wife: of whom, his daughter was married to Dr. Birch. Benjamin, the eldest son, was disinherited, and sent to New Jersey as wanting common understanding. Edmund, the second son, inherited the estate, and represented Agmondesham in parliament, but at last turned quaker. William, the third son, was a merchant in London. Stephen, the fourth, was an eminent doctor of laws, and one of the commissioners for the Union. There is said to have been a fifth, of whom no account has descended.

The character of Waller, both moral and intellectual, has been drawn by Clarendon, to whom he was familiarly known, with nicety, which certainly none to whom he was not known can presume to emulate. It is therefore inserted here, with such remarks as others have supplied; after which, nothing remains but a critical examination of his poetry.

"Edmund Waller," says Clarendon, "was born to a very fair estate, by the parsimony or frugality of a wise father and mother: and he thought it so commendable an advantage, that he resolved to improve it with his utmost care, upon which in his nature he was too much

intent: and, in order to that, he was so much reserved and retired, that he was scarcely ever heard of till by his address and dexterity he had gotten a very rich wife in the city, against all the recommendation, and countenance, and authority of the court, which was thoroughly engaged on the behalf of Mr. Crofts, and which used to be successful in that age, against any opposition. He had the good fortune to have an alliance and friendship with Dr. Morley, who had assisted and instructed him in the reading many good books, to which his natural parts and promptitude inclined him, especially the poets; and at the age when other men used to give over writing verses (for he was near thirty years when he first engaged himself in that exercise, at least that he was known to do so), he surprised the town with two or three pieces of that kind as if a tenth Muse had been newly born to cherish drooping poetry. The Doctor at that time brought him into that company which was most celebrated for good conversation; where he was received and esteemed with great applause and respect. He was a very pleasant discourser in earnest and in jest, and therefore very grateful to all kind of company, where he was not the less esteemed for being very rich.

"He had been even nursed in parliaments, where he sat when he was very young; and so, when they were resumed again (after a long intermission) he appeared in those assemblies with great advantage; having a graceful way of speaking, and by thinking much on several arguments (which his temper and complexion, that had much of melancholic, inclined him to) he seemed often to speak upon the sudden, when the occasion had only administered the opportunity of saying what he had thoroughly considered, which gave a great lustre to all he said; which yet was rather of delight than weight. There needs no more be said to extol the excellence and power of his wit, and pleasantness of his conversation, than that it was of magnitude enough to cover a world of very great faults; that is, so to cover them, that they were not taken notice of to his reproach, *viz.* a narrowness in his nature to the lowest degree; an abjectness and want of courage to support him in any virtuous undertaking; an insinuation and servile flattery to the height the vainest and most imperious nature could be contented with; that it preserved and won his life from those who were most resolved to take it, and in an occasion in which he ought to have been ambitious to have lost it; and then preserved him again from the reproach and the contempt that was due to him for so preserving it, and for vindicating it at such a price that it had power to reconcile him to those whom he had most offended and provoked; and continued to his age with that rare felicity, that his company was acceptable where his spirit was odious; and he w least pitied where he was most detested."

Such is the account of Clarendon; on w it may not be improper to make some rema

"He was very little known till he had tained a rich wife in the city."

He obtained a rich wife about the age of t and-twenty; an age, before which few mer conspicuous much to their advantage. He known, however, in parliament and at co and, if he spent part of his time in privacy, not unreasonable to suppose that he endeavo the improvement of his mind as well as of his tune. That Clarendon might misjudge the tive of his retirement is the more probable cause he has evidently mistaken the comm ment of his poetry, which he supposes him to have attempted before thirty. As his pieces were perhaps not printed, the succe of his compositions was not known; and rendon, who cannot be imagined to have very studious of poetry, did not rectify his opinion by consulting Waller's book.

Clarendon observes, that he was introduc the wits of the age by Dr. Morley; bu writer of his Life relates that he was al among them, when, hearing a noise in the s and inquiring the cause, they found a son of Jonson under an arrest. This was M whom Waller set free at the expense of one dred pounds, took him into the country a rector of his studies, and then procured hi mission into the company of the friends terature. Of this fact, Clarendon had a n knowledge than the biographer, and is the more to be credited.

The account of Waller's parliamentary quence is seconded by Burnet, who, thou calls him "the delight of the House," that "he was only concerned to say that w should make him be applauded, he never the business of the House to heart, being a and empty, though a witty man."

Of his insinuation and flattery it is no reasonable to believe that the truth is Ascham, in his elegant description of whom in modern language we term wits, that they are open flatterers, and privy mo Waller showed a little of both, when, upon of the Dutchess of Newcastle's verses o death of a Stag, he declared that he would all his own compositions to have written and being charged with the exorbitance adulation, answered, that "nothing wa much to be given, that a lady might be from the disgrace of such a vile performa This, however, was no very mischievo very unusual deviation from truth: had h pocrisy been confined to such transaction might have been forgiven, though not pra for who forbears to flatter an author or a l

Of the laxity of his political principles

e weakness of his resolution, he experienced e natural effect, by losing the esteem of every rty. From Cromwell he had only his recal; d from Charles the Second, who delighted in s company, he obtained only the pardon of his lation Hampden, and the safety of Hampden's n.

As far as conjecture can be made from the hole of his writing, and his conduct, he was bitually and deliberately a friend to monarchy. is deviation towards democracy proceeded om his connexion with Hampden, for whose ke he prosecuted Crawley with great bitterss; and the invective which he pronounced on at occasion was so popular, that twenty thoud copies are said by his biographer to have en sold in one day.

It is confessed that his faults still left him any friends, at least many companions. His nvivial power of pleasing is universally acnowledged; but those who conversed with m intimately, found him not only passionate, pecially in his old age, but resentful; so that e interposition of friends was sometimes nessary.

His wit and his poetry naturally connected m with the polite writers of his time: he was ined with Lord Buckhurst in the translation Corneille's "Pompey;" and is said to have ded his help to that of Cowley, in the original aft of the "Rehearsal."

The care of his fortune, which Clarendon imtes to him in a degree little less than criminal, as either not constant or not successful; for, ving inherited a patrimony of three thousand ve hundred pounds a year, in the time of mes the First, and augmented it at least by e wealthy marriage, he left, about the time of e Revolution, an income of not more than velve or thirteen hundred; which, when the fferent value of money is reckoned, will be und perhaps not more than a fourth part of hat he once possessed.

Of this diminution, part was the consequence the gifts which he was forced to scatter, and e fine which he was condemned to pay at the tection of his plot; and if his estate, as is reted in his Life, was sequestered, he had probly contracted debts when he lived in exile; r we are told, that at Paris he lived in splenur, and was the only Englishman, except the ord St. Albans, that kept a table.

His unlucky plot compelled him to sell a ousand a year; of the waste of the rest there no account, except that he is confessed by his ographer to have been a bad economist. He ems to have deviated from the common prace; to have been a hoarder in his first years, nd a squanderer in his last.

Of his course of studies, or choice of books, thing is known more than that he professed mself unable to read Chapman's translation Homer without rapture. His opinion concerning the duty of a poet is contained in his declaration, "that he would blot from his works any line that did not contain some motive to virtue."

The characters, by which Waller intended to distinguish his writing, are sprightliness and dignity; in his smallest pieces, he endeavours to be gay; in the larger to be great. Of his airy and light productions, the chief source is gallantry, that attentive reverence of female excellence which has descended to us from the Gothic ages. As his poems are commonly occasional, and his addresses personal, he was not so liberally supplied with grand as with soft images; for beauty is more easily found than magnanimity.

The delicacy which he cultivated, restrains him to a certain nicety and caution, even when he writes upon the slightest matter. He has, therefore, in his whole volume, nothing burlesque, and seldom any thing ludicrous or familiar. He seems always to do his best; though his subjects are often unworthy of his care.

It is not easy to think without some contempt on an author, who is growing illustrious in his own opinion by verses, at one time, "To a Lady who can do any thing but sleep when she pleases;" at another, "To a Lady who can sleep when she pleases;" now, "To a Lady, on her passing through a crowd of people;" then, "On a braid of divers colours woven by four Ladies;" "On a tree cut in paper;" or, "To a Lady from whom he received the copy of verses on the paper-tree, which for many years had been missing."

Genius now and then produces a lucky trifle. We still read the Dove of Anacreon, and Sparrow of Catullus; and a writer naturally pleases himself with a performance which owes nothing to the subject. But compositions merely pretty have the fate of other pretty things, and are quitted in time for something useful; they are flowers fragrant and fair, but of short duration; or they are blossoms to be valued only as they foretel fruits.

Among Waller's little poems are some, which their excellency ought to secure from oblivion; as, "To Amoret," comparing the different modes of regard with which he looks on her and Sacharissa; and the verses "On Love," that begin, *Anger in hasty words or blows.*

In others he is not equally successful; sometimes his thoughts are deficient, and sometimes his expression.

The numbers are not always musical; as,

Fair Venus, in thy soft arms
The god of rage confine;
For thy whispers are the charms
Which only can divert his fierce design.
What though he frown, and to tumult do incline;
Thou the flame
Kindled in his breast canst tame
With that snow which unmelted lies on thine.

He seldom, indeed, fetches an amorous sentiment from the depths of science; his thoughts are for the most part easily understood, and his images such as the superficies of nature readily supplies; he has a just claim to popularity, because he writes to common degrees of knowledge; and is free at least from philosophical pedantry, unless perhaps the end of a Song to the Sun may be excepted, in which he is too much a Copernican. To which may be added the simile of the palm in the verses "On her passing through a crowd;" and a line in a more serious poem on the Restoration, about vipers and treacle, which can only be understood by those who happen to know the composition of the Theriaca.

His thoughts are sometimes hyperbolical, and his images unnatural:

——The plants admire,
No less than those of old did Orpheus' lyre:
If she sit down, with tops all tow'rds her bow'd;
They round about her into arbours crowd:
Or if she walks, in even ranks they stand,
Like some well-marshall'd and obsequious band.

In another place:

While in the park I sing, the listening deer
Attend my passion, and forget to fear:
When to the beeches I report my flame,
They bow their heads, as if they felt the same.
To gods appealing, when I reach their bowers,
With loud complaints they answer me in showers.
To thee a wild and cruel soul is given,
More deaf than trees, and prouder than the heaven!

"On the Head of a Stag:"

O fertile head! which every year
Could such a crop of wonder bear!
The teeming earth did never bring
So soon so hard, so huge a thing:
Which might it never have been cast
Each year's growth added to the last,
These lofty branches had supplied
The earth's bold son's prodigious pride;
Heaven with these engines had been scal'd
When mountains heap'd on mountains fail'd.

Sometimes, having succeeded in the first part, he makes a feeble conclusion. In the Song of Sacharissa's and Amoret's friendship, the two last stanzas ought to have been omitted.

His images of gallantry are not always in the highest degree delicate:

Then shall my love this doubt displace,
And gain such trust that I may come
And banquet sometimes on thy face,
But make my constant meals at home.

Some applications may be thought too remote and unconsequential; as in the verses on the Lady dancing:

The sun in figures such as these
Joys with the moon to play:
To the sweet strains they advance,
Which do result from their own spheres;
As this nymph's dance
Moves with the numbers which she hears.

Sometimes a thought, which might perhaps fill a distich, is expanded and attenuated till it grows weak and almost evanescent:

Chloris! since first our calm of peace
Was frighted hence, this good we find,
Your favours with your fears increase,
And growing mischiefs make you kind.
So the fair tree, which still preserves
Her fruit, and state, while no wind blows,
In storms from that uprightness swerves;
And the glad earth about her strows
With treasure from her yielding boughs.

His images are not always distinct; as, in the following passage, he confounds *Love* as a person with *Love* as a passion:

Some other nymphs, with colours faint,
And pencil slow, may Cupid paint,
And a weak heart in time destroy;
She has a stamp, and prints the boy:
Can with a single look, inflame
The coldest breast, the rudest tame.

His sallies of casual flattery are sometimes elegant and happy, as that *in return for the Silver Pen;* and sometimes empty and trifling, as that *upon the Card torn by the Queen.* There are a few lines written in the Dutchess's Tasso, which it is said by Fenton to have kept a summer under correction. It happened to Waller, as to others that his success was not always in proportion to his labour.

Of these petty compositions, neither the beauties nor the faults deserve much attention. The amorous verses have this to recommend them, that they are less hyperbolical than those of some other poets. Waller is not always at his last gasp; he does not die of a frown, nor live upon a smile. There is however, too much love, and too many trifles. Little things are made too important; and the empire of Beauty is represented as exerting its influence farther than can be allowed by the multiplicity of human passions, and the variety of human wants. Such books therefore, may be considered as showing the world under a false appearance, and, so far as they obtain credit from the young and unexperienced, as misleading expectation and misguiding practice.

Of his nobler and more weighty performances the greater part is panegyrical: for of praise he was very lavish, as is observed by his imitator Lord Lansdowne:

No satyr stalks within the hallow'd ground,
But queens and heroines, kings and gods abound
Glory and arms and love are all the sound.

In the first poem, on the danger of the Prince n the coast of Spain, there is a puerile and ri- iculous mention of Arion at the beginning; and he last paragraph, on the *Cable*, is in part ridi- ulously mean, and in part ridiculously tumid. The poem, however, is such as may be justly raised, without much allowance for the state of ur poetry and language at that time.

The two next poems are upon the King's *be- aviour at the death of Buckingham*, and upon his *Navy*.

He has, in the first, used the pagan deities vith great propriety:

'Twas want of such a precedent as this
Made the old heathens frame their gods amiss.

In the poem on the Navy, those lines are very noble which suppose the king's power secure gainst a second deluge; so noble, that it were al- most criminal to remark the mistake of *centre* for *urface*, or to say that the empire of the sea would e worth little if it were not that the waters ter- minate in land.

The poem upon Sallee has forcible sentiments; ut the conclusion is feeble. That on the Repairs f St. Paul's has something vulgar and obvious; uch as the mention of Amphion: and some- hing violent and harsh: as,

o all our minds with his conspire to grace
he gentiles' great apostle, and deface
hose state-obscuring sheds, that like a chain
eem'd to confine and fetter him again:
Which the glad saint shakes off at his command,
s once the viper from his sacred hand.
o joys the aged oak, when we divide
he creeping ivy from his injur'd side.

Of the two last couplets, the first is extrava- ant, and the second mean.

His praise of the Queen is too much exagge- ated; and the thought, that she "saves lovers y cutting off hope, as gangrenes are cured by pping the limb," presents nothing to the mind ut disgust and horror.

Of "The Battle of the Summer Islands," it eems not easy to say whether it is intended to aise terror or merriment. The beginning is oo splendid for jest, and the conclusion too light or seriousness. The versification is studied, he scenes are diligently displayed, and the nages artfully amplified; but, as it ends neither joy nor sorrow, it will scarcely be read a econd time.

The "Panegyric" upon Cromwell has obtain- d from the public a very liberal dividend of praise, which however cannot be said to have been un- istly lavished; for such a series of verses had rely appeared before in the English language. f the lines, some are grand, some are graceful, nd all are musical. There is now and then a eble verse, or a trifling thought; but its great ult is the choice of its hero.

The poem of "The War with Spain" begins with lines more vigorous and striking than Waller is accustomed to produce. The succeeding parts are variegated with better passages and worse. There is something too far-fetched in the comparison of the Spaniards drawing the English on, by saluting St. Lucar with cannon, *to lambs awakening the lion by bleating*. The fate of the Marquis and his lady, who were burnt in their ship, would have moved more, had the Poet not made him die like the phœnix, because he had spices about him, nor expressed their affection and their end by a conceit at once false and vulgar:

Alive, in equal flames of love they burn'd,
And now together are to ashes turn'd.

The verses to Charles, on his return, were doubtless intended to counterbalance the "Panegyric" on Cromwell. If it has been thought inferior to that with which it is naturally compared, the cause of its deficience has been already remarked.

The remaining pieces it is not necessary to examine singly. They must be supposed to have faults and beauties of the same kind with the rest. The sacred poems, however, deserve particular regard; they were the work of Waller's declining life, of those hours in which he looked upon the fame and the folly of the time past with the sentiments which his great predecessor Petrarch bequeathed to posterity, upon his review of that love and poetry which have given him immortality.

That natural jealousy which makes every man unwilling to allow much excellence in another, always produces a disposition to believe that the mind grows old with the body; and that he, whom we are now forced to confess superior, is hastening daily to a level with ourselves. By delighting to think this of the living, we learn to think it of the dead; and Fenton, with all his kindness for Waller, has the luck to mark the exact time when his genius passed the zenith, which he places at his fifty-fifth year. This is to allot the mind but a small portion. Intellectual decay is doubtless not uncommon; but it seems not to be universal. Newton was in his eighty-fifth year improving his chronology, a few days before his death; and Waller appears not, in my opinion, to have lost at eighty-two any part of his poetical power.

His sacred poems do not please like some of his other works; but before the fatal fifty-five, had he written on the same subjects, his success would hardly have been better.

It has been the frequent lamentation of good men, that verse has been too little applied to the purposes of worship, and many attempts have been made to animate devotion by pious poetry. That they have very seldom attained their end is sufficiently known, and it may not

be improper to inquire why they have miscarried.

Let no pious ear be offended if I advance, in opposition to many authorities, that poetical devotion cannot often please. The doctrines of religion may, indeed, be defended in a didactic poem; and he, who has the happy power of arguing in verse, will not lose it because his subject is sacred. A poet may describe the beauty and the grandeur of Nature, the flowers of the Spring, and the harvests of Autumn, the vicissitudes of the tide, and the revolutions of the sky, and praise the Maker for his works, in lines which no reader shall lay aside. The subject of the disputation is not piety, but the motives to piety; that of the description is not God, but the works of God.

Contemplative piety, or the intercourse between God and the human soul, cannot be poetical. Man, admitted to implore the mercy of his Creator, and plead the merits of his Redeemer, is already in a higher state than poetry can confer.

The essence of poetry is invention; such invention as, by producing something unexpected, surprises and delights. The topics of devotion are few, and being few are universally known; but few as they are, they can be made no more; they can receive no grace from novelty of sentiment, and very little from novelty of expression.

Poetry pleases by exhibiting an idea more grateful to the mind than things themselves afford. This effect proceeds from the display of those parts of nature which attract, and the concealment of those which repel, the imagination: but religion must be shown as it is; suppression and addition equally corrupt it; and such as it is, it is known already.

From poetry the reader justly expects, and from good poetry always obtains, the enlargement of his comprehension and elevation of his fancy; but this is rarely to be hoped by Christians from metrical devotion. Whatever is great, desirable, or tremendous, is comprised in the name of the Supreme Being. Omnipotence cannot be exalted; Infinity cannot be amplified; Perfection cannot be improved.

The employments of pious meditation are faith, thanksgiving, repentance, and supplication. Faith, invariably uniform, cannot be invested by fancy with decorations. Thanksgiving, the most joyful of all holy effusions, yet addressed to a Being without passions, is confined to a few modes, and is to be felt rather than expressed. Repentance, trembling in the presence of the Judge, is not at leisure for cadences and epithets. Supplication of man to man may diffuse itself through many topics of persuasion; but supplication to God can only cry for mercy.

Of sentiments purely religious, it will be found that the most simple expression is the most sublime. Poetry loses its lustre and its power, because it is applied to the decoration of something more excellent than itself. All that pious verse can do is to help the memory, and delight the ear, and for these purposes it may be very useful; but it supplies nothing to the mind. The ideas of Christian theology are too simple for eloquence, too sacred for fiction, and too majestic for ornament: to recommend them by tropes and figures, is to magnify by a concave mirror the sidereal hemisphere.

As much of Waller's reputation was owing to the softness and smoothness of his numbers it is proper to consider those minute particulars to which a versifier must attend.

He certainly very much excelled in smoothness most of the writers who were living when his poetry commenced. The poets of Elizabeth had attained an art of modulation, which was afterwards neglected or forgotten. Fairfax was acknowledged by him as his model; and he might have studied with advantage the poem of Davies,* which, though merely philosophical, yet seldom leaves the ear ungratified.

But he was rather smooth than strong: of *the full resounding line*, which Pope attributes to Dryden, he has given very few examples. The critical decision has given the praise of strength to Denham, and of sweetness to Waller.

His excellence of versification has some abatements. He uses the expletive *do* very frequently; and, though he lived to see it almost universally ejected, was not more careful to avoid it in his last compositions than in his first. Praise had given him confidence; and finding the world satisfied, he satisfied himself.

His rhymes are sometimes weak words: *so* is found to make the rhyme twice in ten lines, and occurs often as a rhyme through his book.

His double rhymes, in heroic verse, have been censured by Mrs. Phillips, who was his rival in the translation of Corneille's "Pompey;" and more faults might be found, were not the inquiry below attention.

He sometimes uses the obsolete termination of verbs, as *waxeth, affecteth;* and sometimes retains the final syllable of the preterite, as *amazed, supposed*, of which I know not whether it is not to the detriment of our language that we have totally rejected them.

Of triplets he is sparing; but he did not wholly forbear them; of an Alexandrine he has given no example.

The general character of his poetry is elegance and gayety. He is never pathetic, and very rarely sublime. He seems neither to have

* Sir John Davies, entitled, "Nosce teipsum This oracle expounded in two Elegies: I. Of Humane Knowledge; II. Of the Soule of Man and the Immortalitie thereof, 1599."—R.

ad a mind much elevated by nature, nor am-
lified by learning. His thoughts are such as a
beral conversation and large acquaintance with
fe would easily supply. They had however
hen, perhaps, that grace of novelty, which they
re now often supposed to want by those who,
aving already found them in later books, do
ot know or inquire who produced them first.
This treatment is unjust. Let not the original
uthor lose by his imitators.

Praise, however, should be due before it is
iven. The author of Waller's Life ascribes to
im the first practice of what Erythræus and
ome late critics call *alliteration*, of using in the
ame verse many words beginning with the
ame letter. But this knack, whatever be its
alue, was so frequent among early writers,
hat Gascoigne, a writer of the sixteenth cen-
ury, warns the young poet against affecting it:
Shakspeare, in the "Midsummer Night's
Dream," is supposed to ridicule it; and in
nother play the sonnet of Holofernes fully dis-
lays it.

He borrows too many of his sentiments and
lustrations from the old mythology, for which
t is vain to plead the example of ancient poets;
he deities which they introduced so frequently,
vere considered as realities, so far as to be re-
eived by the imagination, whatever sober
eason might even then determine. But of
hese images time has tarnished the splendour.
A fiction, not only detected but despised, can
ever afford a solid basis to any position, though
ometimes it may furnish a transient allusion,
r slight illustration. No modern monarch can
e much exalted by hearing that, as Hercules
ad his *club*, he has his *navy*.

But of the praise of Waller, though much
nay be taken away, much will remain; for it
annot be denied, that he added something to
ur elegance of diction, and something to our
ropriety of thought; and to him may be ap-
lied what Tasso said, with equal spirit and
ustice, of himself and Guarini, when, having
erused the "Pastor Fido," he cried out, "If
e had not read 'Aminta,' he had not excelled
t."

As Waller professed himself to have learned
he art of versification from Fairfax, it has been
hought proper to subjoin a specimen of his
vork, which, after Mr. Hoole's translation,
vill perhaps not be soon reprinted. By know-
ng the state in which Waller found our poetry,
he reader may judge how much he improved
t.

I.

Erminia's steed (this while) his mistresse bore
Through forests thicke among the shadie treene,
Her feeble hand the bridle raines forelore,
Halfe in a swoune she was for feare I weene;
But her flit courser spared nere the more,
To beare her through the desart woods unseene
Of her strong foes, that chased her through the plaine,
And still pursued, but still pursued in vaine.

II

Like as the wearie hounds at last retire,
Windlesse, displeased, from the fruitlesse chace,
When the slie beast Tapisht in bush and brire,
No art nor pains can rowse out of his place:
The Christian knights so full of shame and ire
Returned backe, with faint and wearie pace!
Yet still the fearfull Dame fled, swift as winde,
Nor euer staid, nor euer lookt behinde.

III.

Through thicke and thinne, all night, all day, she driued,
Withouten comfort, companie, or guide,
Her plaints and teares with euery thought reuiued,
She heard and saw her greefes, but naught beside.
But when the sunne his burning chariot diued
In Thetis waue, and wearie teame vntide,
On Iordans sandie banks her course she staid,
At last, there downe she light, and downe she laid.

IV.

Her teares, her drinke; her food, her sorrowings;
This was her diet that vnhappy night:
But sleepe (that sweet repose and quiet brings)
To ease the greefes of discontented wight,
Spred foorth his tender, soft, and nimble wings,
In his dull armes foulding the virgin bright:
And loue, his mother, and the graces kept
Strong watch and warde, while this faire Ladie slept.

V.

The birds awakte her with their morning song,
Their warbling musicke pearst her tender care,
The murmuring brookes and whistling windes among
The ratling boughes, and leaues, their parts did beare;
Her eies vnclosed beheld the groues along,
Of swaines and shepherd groomes that dwellings weare;
And that sweet noise, birds, winds, and waters sent,
Prouokt again the virgin to lament.

VI.

Her plaints were interrupted with a sound,
That seem'd from thickest bushes to proceed,
Some iolly shepherd sung a lustie round,
And to his voice had tun'd his oaten reed;
Thither she went, an old man there she found
(At whose right hand his little flock did feed)
Sat making baskets, his three sonnes among
That learn'd their father's art, and learn'd his song.

VII

Beholding one in shining armes appeare
The seelie man and his were sore dismaid;
But sweet Erminia comforted their feare,
Her ventall vp, her visage open laid,
You happy folke, of heau'n beloued deare,
Work on (quoth she) upon your harmless traid,

These dreadfull armes I beare no warfare bring
To your sweet toile, nor those sweet tunes you sing.

VIII.

But father, since this land, these townes and towers,
Distroied are with sword, with fire and spoile,
How may it be, unhurt that you and yours
In safetie thus, applie your harmlesse toile ?
My sonne (quoth he) this pore estate of ours
Is euer safe from storm of warlike broile ;
This wilderness doth vs in saftie keepe,
No thundering drum, no trumpet breakes our sleepe.

IX.

Haply iust heau'ns defence and shield of right,
Doth loue the innocence of simple swains.
The thunderbolts on highest mountains light,
And seld or neuer strike the lower plaines :
So kings have cause to feare *Bellonaes* might,
Not they whose sweat and toile their dinner gains,
Nor ever greedie soldier was entised
By pouertie, neglected and despised.

X.

O Pouertie, chefe of the heau'nly brood,
Dearer to me than wealth or kingly crowne !
No wish for honour, thirst of others good,
Can moue my heart, contented with my owne :
We quench our thirst with water of this flood,
Nor fear we poison should therein be throwne :
These little flocks of sheepe and tender goates
Giue milke for food, and wool to make us coates.

XI.

We little wish, we need but little wealth,
From cold and hunger vs to cloath and feed ;
These are my sonnes, their care preserues from stealth
Their fathers flocks, nor servants moe I need :
Amid these groues I walke oft for my health,
And to the fishes, birds, and beastes giue heed,
How they are fed, in forrest, spring and lake,
And their contentment for ensample take.

XII.

Time was (for each one hath his doating time,
These siluer locks were golden tresses than)
That countrie life I hated as a crime,
And from the forrests sweet contentment ran,
To Memphis' stately pallace would I clime,
And there became the mightie Caliphes man,
And though I but a simple gardner weare,
Yet could I marke abuses, see and heare.

XIII.

Entised on with hope of future gaine,
I suffered long what did my soule displease ;
But when my youth was spent, my hope was vai
I felt my native strength at last decrease ;
I gan my losse of lustie yeeres complaine,
And wisht I had enjoy'd the countries peace ;
I bod the court farewell, and with content
My later age here have I quiet spent.

XIV.

While thus he spake. Erminia husht and still
His wise discourses heard, with great attention,
His speeches graue those idle fancies kill,
Which in her troubled soule bred such dissention
After much thought reformed was her will,
Within those woods to dwell, was her intention,
Till fortune should occasion new afford,
To turne her home to her desired Lord.

XV.

She said therefore, O shepherd fortunate !
That troubles some didst whilom feel and proue,
Yet lieust now in this contented state,
Let my mishap thy thoughts to pitie moue,
To entertaine me as a willing mate
In shepherds life, which I admire and loue ;
Within these pleasant groues perchance my ha
Of her discomforts, may vnload some part.

XVI.

If gold or wealth of most esteemed deare,
If iewels rich, thou diddest hold in prise,
Such store thereof, such plentie haue I seen,
As to a greedie minde might well suffice :
With that downe trickled many a siluer teare,
Two christall streames fell from her watrie eies ;
Part of her sad misfortunes than she told,
And wept, and with her wept that shepherd ol

XVII.

With speeches kinde, he gan the virgin deare
Towards his cottage gently home to guide ;
His aged wife there made her homely cheare,
Yet welcomde her, and plast her by her side.
The Princesse dond a poore pastorаes geare,
A kerchiefe course vpon her head she tide ;
But yet her gestures and her lookes (I gesse)
Were such, as ill beseem'd a shepherdesse.

XVIII.

Not those rude garments could obscure, and hide
The heau'nly beautie of her angels face,
Nor was her princely ofspring damnifide,
Or ought disparag'de, by those labours bace ;
Her little flocks to pasture would she guide,
And milk her goates, and in their folds them pla
Both cheese and butter could she make, and fra
Her selfe to please the shepherd and his dame.

POMFRET.

Of Mr. John Pomfret nothing is known but from a slight and confused account prefixed to his poems by a nameless friend; who relates, that he was son of the Rev. Mr. Pomfret, rector of Luton, in Bedfordshire; that he was bred at Cambridge;* entered into orders, and was rector of Malden, in Bedfordshire; and might have risen in the church; but that, when he applied to Dr. Compton, bishop of London, for institution to a living of considerable value, to which he had been presented, he found a troublesome obstruction raised by a malicious interpretation of some passage in his "Choice;" from which it was inferred, that he considered happiness as more likely to be found in the company of a mistress than of a wife.

This reproach was easily obliterated; for it had happened to Pomfret as to almost all other men who plan schemes of life; he had departed from his purpose, and was then married.

The malice of his enemies had however a very fatal consequence: the delay constrained his attendance in London, where he caught the small-pox, and died in 1703, in the thirty-sixth year of his age.

He published his poems in 1699; and has been always the favourite of that class of readers, who, without vanity or criticism, seek only their own amusement.

His "Choice" exhibits a system of life adapted to common notions and equal to common expectations; such a state as affords plenty and tranquillity, without exclusion of intellectual pleasures. Perhaps no composition in our language has been oftener perused than Pomfret's "Choice."

In his other poems there is an easy volubility, the pleasure of smooth metre is afforded to the ear, and the mind is not oppressed with ponderous or entangled with intricate sentiment. He pleases many; and he who pleases many must have some species of merit.

DORSET.

Of the Earl of Dorset the character has been drawn so largely and so elegantly by Prior, to whom he was familiarly known, that nothing can be added by a casual hand; and, as its author is so generally read, it would be useless officiousness to transcribe it.

Charles Sackville was born January 24, 1637. Having been educated under a private tutor, he travelled into Italy, and returned a little before the Restoration. He was chosen into the first parliament that was called, for East Grinstead, in Sussex, and soon became a favourite of Charles the Second; but undertook no public employment, being too eager of the riotous and licentious pleasures which young men of high rank, who aspired to be thought wits, at that time imagined themselves entitled to indulge.

One of these frolics has, by the industry of Wood, come down to posterity. Sackville, who was then Lord Buckhurst, with Sir Charles Sedley and Sir Thomas Ogle, got drunk at the Cock, in Bow-street, by Covent-garden, and, going into the balcony, exposed themselves to the populace in very indecent postures. At last, as they grew warmer, Sedley stood forth naked, and harangued the populace in such profane language, that the public indignation was awakened; the crowd attempted to force the door, and, being repulsed, drove in the performers with stones, and broke the windows of the house.

For this misdemeanour they were indicted, and Sedley was fined five hundred pounds: what was the sentence of the others is not known. Sedley employed Killigrew and ano-

* He was of Queen's College there, and, by the university register, appears to have taken his bachelor's degree in 1684, and his master's, 1098. H. His father was of Trinity.—C.

ther to procure a remission from the King; but (mark the friendship of the dissolute!) they begged the fine for themselves, and exacted it to the last groat.

In 1665, Lord Buckhurst attended the Duke of York as a volunteer in the Dutch war; and was in the battle of June 3, when eighteen great Dutch ships were taken, fourteen others were destroyed, and Opdam, the admiral, who engaged the Duke, was blown up beside him, with all his crew.

On the day before the battle, he is said to have composed the celebrated song, "To all you ladies now at land," with equal tranquillity of mind and promptitude of wit. Seldom any splendid story is wholly true. I have heard, from the late Earl of Orrery, who was likely to have good hereditary intelligence, that Lord Buckhurst had been a week employed upon it, and only retouched or finished it on the memorable evening. But even this, whatever it may subtract from his facility, leaves him his courage.

He was soon after made a gentleman of the bed-chamber, and sent on short embassies to France.

In 1674, the estate of his uncle James Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex, came to him by its owner's death, and the title was conferred on him the year after. In 1677, he became, by the death of his father, Earl of Dorset, and inherited the estate of his family.

In 1684, having buried his first wife of the family of Bagot, who left him no child, he married a daughter of the Earl of Northampton, celebrated both for beauty and understanding.

He received some favourable notice from King James; but soon found it necessary to oppose the violence of his innovations, and, with some other lords, appeared in Westminster Hall to countenance the bishops at their trial.

As enormities grew every day less supportable, he found it necessary to concur in the Revolution. He was one of those lords who sat every day in council to preserve the public peace after the King's departure; and, what is no the most illustrious action of his life, was employed to conduct the Princess Anne to Nottingham with a guard, such as might alarm the populace as they passed, with false apprehensions of her danger. Whatever end may be designed there is always something despicable in a trick.

He became, as may be easily supposed, a favourite of King William, who, the day after his accession, made him lord-chamberlain of the household, and gave him afterwards the garter. He happened to be among those that were tossed with the King in an open boat sixteen hours in very rough and cold weather, on the coast of Holland. His health afterwards declined; and on January 19, 1705-6, he died at Bath.

He was a man whose elegance and judgment were universally confessed, and whose bounty to the learned and witty was generally known. To the indulgent affection of the public, Lord Rochester bore ample testimony in this remark—"I know not how it is, but Lord Buckhurst may do what he will, yet is never in the wrong."

If such a man attempted poetry, we cannot wonder that his works were praised. Dryden, whom, if Prior tells truth, he distinguished by his beneficence, and who lavished his blandishments on those who are not known to have so well deserved them, undertaking to produce authors of our own country superior to those of antiquity, says, "I would instance your Lordship in satire, and Shakspeare in tragedy." Would it be imagined that, of this rival to antiquity, all the satires were little personal invectives, and that his longest composition was a song of eleven stanzas?

The blame, however, of this exaggerated praise falls on the encomiast, not upon the author; whose performances are, what they pretend to be, the effusions of a man of wit; gay, vigorous, and airy. His verses to Howard show great fertility of mind; and his Dorinda has been imitated by Pope.

STEPNEY.

George Stepney, descended from the Stepneys of Pendigrast, in Pembrokeshire, was born at Westminster, in 1663. Of his father's condition or fortune I have no account.* Having received the first part of his education at Westminster, where he passed six years in the Col-

* It has been conjectured that our Poet was either son or grandson of Charles, third son of Sir John Stepney, the first baronet of that family. See Granger's History, vol. ii. p. 396, edit. 8vo. 1775. Mr. Cole says, the Poet's father was a grocer. Cole's MSS. in Brit. Mus.—C.

lege, he went at nineteen to Cambridge,* where he continued a friendship begun at school with Mr. Montague, afterwards Earl of Halifax. They came to London together, and are said to have been invited into public life by the Earl of Dorset.

His qualifications recommended him to many foreign employments, so that his time seems to have been spent in negociations. In 1692, he was sent envoy to the Elector of Brandenburgh; in 1693, to the Imperial Court; in 1694, to the Elector of Saxony; in 1696, to the Electors of Mentz and Cologne, and the Congress at Francfort; in 1698, a second time to Brandenburgh; in 1699, to the King of Poland; in 1701, again to the Emperor; and in 1706, to the States-general. In 1697, he was made one of the commissioners of trade. His life was busy, and not long. He died in 1707; and is buried in Westminster Abbey, with this epitaph, which Jacob transcribed:—

H. S. E.
GEORGIUS STEPNEIUS, Armiger,
Vir
Ob Ingenii acumen,
Literarum Scientiam,
Morum Suavitatem,
Rerum Usum,
Virorum Amplissimorum Consuetudinem,
Linguæ, Styli, ac Vitæ Elegantiam,
Præclara Officia cum Britanniæ tum Europæ
præstita,
Suâ ætate multum celebratus,
Apud posteros semper celebrandus;
Plurimas Legationes obiit
Eâ Fide, Diligentiâ, ac Felicitate,
Ut Augustissimorum Principum
Gulielmi et Annæ
Spem in illo repositam
Nunquam fefellerit,
Haud rarò superaverit.
Post longum honorum Curfum
Brevi Temporis Spatio confectum,
Cum Naturæ parum, Famæ satis vixerat,
Animam ad altiora aspirantem placidè efflavit.

On the left hand.

G. S.
Ex Equestri Familiâ Stepneiorum,
De Pendegrast, in Comitatu
Pembrochiensi oriundus,
Westmonasterii natus est, A. D. 1663.
Electus in Collegium
Sancti Petri Westmonast. A. 1676.
Sancti Trinitatis Cantab. 1682.
Consiliariorum quibus Commercii
Cura commissa est 1697.
Chelsciæ mortuus, et, comitante
Magnâ Procerum
Frequentiâ, huc elatus, 1707.

It is reported that the juvenile compositions of Stepney made grey authors blush. I know not whether his poems will appear such wonders to the present age. One cannot always easily find the reason for which the world has sometimes conspired to squander praise. It is not very unlikely that he wrote very early as well as he ever wrote; and the performances of youth have many favourers, because the authors yet lay no claim to public honours, and are therefore not considered as rivals by the distributors of fame.

He apparently professed himself a poet, and added his name to those of the other wits in the version of Juvenal; but he is a very licentious translator, and does not recompense his neglect of the author by beauties of his own. In his original poems, now and then, a happy line may perhaps be found, and now and then a short composition may give pleasure. But there is, in the whole, little either of the grace of wit, or the vigour of nature.

J. PHILIPS.

JOHN PHILIPS was born on the 30th of December, 1676, at Bampton, in Oxfordshire; of which place his father, Dr. Stephen Philips, archdeacon of Salop, was minister. The first part of his education was domestic; after which he was sent to Winchester, where, as we are told by Dr. Sewel, his biographer, he was soon distinguished by the superiority of his exercises; and what is less easily to be credited, so much endeared himself to his schoolfellows, by his civility and good-nature, that they, without murmur or ill-will, saw him indulged by the master with particular immunities. It is related, that when he was at school, he seldom mingled in play with the other boys, but retired to his chamber; where his sovereign pleasure

* He was entered of Trinity College, and took his master's degree in 1689.—*H.*

was to sit hour after hour, while his hair was combed by somebody, whose services he found means to procure.*

At school he became acquainted with the poets, ancient and modern, and fixed his attention particularly on Milton.

In 1694, he entered himself at Christ-church, a college at that time in the highest reputation, by the transmission of Busby's scholars to the care first of Fell, and afterwards of Aldrich. Here he was distinguished as a genius eminent among the eminent, and for friendship particularly intimate with Mr. Smith, the author of "Phædra and Hippolytus." The profession which he intended to follow was that of physic; and he took much delight in natural history, of which botany was his favourite part.

His reputation was confined to his friends and to the University; till about 1703, he extended it to a wider circle by the "Splendid Shilling," which struck the public attention with a mode of writing new and unexpected.

This performance raised him so high, that, when Europe resounded with the victory of Blenheim, he was, probably with an occult opposition to Addison, employed to deliver the acclamation of the Tories. It is said that he would willingly have declined the task, but that his friends urged it upon him. It appears that he wrote this poem at the house of Mr. St. John.

"Blenheim" was published in 1705. The next year produced his great work, the poem upon "Cider," in two books; which was received with loud praises, and continued long to be read, as an imitation of Virgil's "Georgic," which needed not shun the presence of the original.

He then grew probably more confident of his own abilities, and began to meditate a poem on the "Last Day;" a subject on which no mind can hope to equal expectation.

This work he did not live to finish; his diseases, a slow consumption and an asthma, put a stop to his studies, and on Feb. 15, 1708, at the beginning of his thirty-third year, put an end to his life.

He was buried in the cathedral of Hereford; and Sir Simon Harcourt, afterwards lord-chancellor, gave him a monument in Westminster Abbey. The inscription at Westminster was written, as I have heard, by Dr. Atterbury, though commonly given to Dr. Freind.

HIS EPITAPH AT HEREFORD:

JOHANNES PHILIPS

Obiit 15 die Feb. Anno. { Dom. 1708. Ætat. suæ 32.

Cujus
Ossa si requiras, hanc Urnam inspice:
Si Ingenium nescias, ipsius Opera consule;
Si Tumulum desideras,
Templum adi Westmonasteriense:
Qualis quantusque Vir fuecit,
Dicat elegans illa & præclara,
Quæ cenotaphium ibi decorat,
Inscriptio.
Quâm interim erga Cognatos pius & officiosus,
Testetur hoc saxum
A Maria Philips Matre ipsius pientissimâ,
Dilecti Filii Memoriæ non sine Lacrymis dicatum.

HIS EPITAPH AT WESTMINSTER.

Herefordiæ conduntur Ossa,
Hoc in Delubro statuitur Imago,
Britanniam omnem pervagatur Fama,
JOHANNIS PHILIPS:
Qui Viris bonis doctisque juxta charus,
Immortale sunm Ingenium,
Eruditione multiplici excultum,
Miro animi candore,
Eximiâ morum simplicitate,
Honestavit.
Litterarum Amœniorum sitim,
Quam Wintoniæ Puer sentire cœperat,
Inter Ædis Christi Alumnos jugiter explevit,
In illo Musarum Domicilio
Præclaris Æmulorum studiis excitatus,
Optimis scribendi Magistris semper intentus,
Carmina sermone Patrio composuit
A Græcis Latinisque fontibus feliciter deducta,
Atticis Romanisque auribus omnino digna,
Versuum quippe Harmoniam
Rythmo didicerat.
Antiquo illo, libero, multiformi
Ad res ipsas apto prorsus, et attemperato,
Non numeris in eundem ferè orbem redeuntibus,
Non Clausularum similiter cadentium sono
Metiri:
Uni in hoc laudis genere Miltono secundus,
Primoque pœne par.
Res seu Tenues, seu Grandes, seu Mediocres
Ornandas sumserat,
Nusquam, non quod decuit,
Et videt, & assecutus est,
Egregius, quocunque Stylum verteret,
Fandi author, & Modorum artifex.
Fas sit Huic,

* Isaac Vossius relates, that he also delighted in having his hair combed when he could have it done by barbers, or other persons skilled in the rules of prosody. Of the passage that contains this ridiculous fancy, the following is a translation:—"Many people take delight in the rubbing of their limbs, and the combing of their hair; but these exercises would delight much more, if the servants at the baths, and of the barbers, were so skilful in this art, that they could express any measures with their fingers. I remember that more than once I have fallen into the hands of men of this sort, who could imitate any measure of songs in combing the hair, so as sometimes to express very intelligibly iambics, trochees, dactyls, &c. from whence there arose to me no small delight." See his "Treatise de Poematum cantu et Viribus Rythmi." Oxon. 1673. p. 62.—H.

Auso licèt à tuâ Metrorum Lege discedere,
O Poesis Anglicanæ Pater, atque Conditor, Chaucere,
Alterum tibi latus claudere,
Vatum certe Cineres, tuos undique stipantium
Non dedecebit Chorum.
SIMON HARCOURT, Miles,
Viri benè de se, de Litteris meriti
Quoad viveret Fautor,
Post Obitum piè memor,
Hoc illi Saxum poni voluit.
J. PHILIPS, STEPHANI, S. T. P. Archidiaconi
Salop. Filius, natus est Bamptoniæ
In agro Oxon, Dec. 30, 1676.
Obiit Herefordiæ Feb. 15, 1708.

Philips has been always praised, without contradiction, as a man modest, blameless, and pious; who bore narrowness of fortune without discontent, and tedious and painful maladies without impatience; beloved by those that knew him, but not ambitious to be known. He was probably not formed for a wide circle. His conversation is commended for its innocent gayety, which seems to have flowed only among his intimates; for I have been told, that he was in company silent and barren, and employed only upon the pleasure of his pipe. His addiction to tobacco is mentioned by one of his biographers, who remarks, that in all his writings, except "Blenheim," he has found an opportunity of celebrating the fragrant fume. In common life he was probably one of those who please by not offending, and whose person was loved because his writings were admired. He died honoured and lamented, before any part of his reputation had withered, and before his patron St. John had disgraced him.

His works are few. The "Splendid Shilling" has the uncommon merit of an original design, unless it may be thought precluded by the ancient Centos. To degrade the sounding words and stately construction of Milton, by an application to the lowest and most trivial things, gratifies the mind with a momentary triumph over that grandeur which hitherto held its captives in admiration; the words and things are presented with a new appearance, and novelty is always grateful where it gives no pain.

But the merit of such performances begins and ends with the first author. He that should again adapt Milton's phrase to the gross incidents of common life, and even adapt it with more art, which would not be difficult, must yet expect but a small part of the praise which Philips has obtained; he can only hope to be considered as the repeater of a jest.

"The parody on Milton," says Gildon, "is the only tolerable production of its Author." This is a censure too dogmatical and violent. The poem of "Blenheim" was never denied to be tolerable, even by those who do not allow it supreme excellence. It is indeed the poem of a scholar, "all inexpert of war;" of a man who writes books from books, and studies the world in a college. He seems to have formed his ideas of the field of Blenheim from the battles of the heroic ages, or the tales of chivalry, with very little comprehension of the qualities necessary to the composition of a modern hero, which Addison has displayed with so much propriety. He makes Marlborough behold at a distance the slaughter made by Tallard, then haste to encounter and restrain him, and mow his way through ranks made headless by his sword.

He imitates Milton's numbers indeed, but imitates them very injudiciously. Deformity is easily copied; and whatever there is in Milton which the reader wishes away, all that is obsolete, peculiar, or licentious, is accumulated with great care by Philips. Milton's verse was harmonious, in proportion to the general state of our metre in Milton's age; and, if he had written after the improvements made by Dryden, it is reasonable to believe that he would have admitted a more pleasing modulation of numbers into his work; but Philips sits down with a resolution to make no more music than he found; to want all that his master wanted, though he is very far from having what his master had. Those asperities, therefore, that are venerable in the "Paradise Lost," are contemptible in the "Blenheim."

There is a Latin ode written to his patron, St. John, in return for a present of wine and tobacco, which cannot be passed without notice. It is gay and elegant, and exhibits several artful accommodations of classic expressions to new purposes. It seems better turned than the ode of Hannes.*

To the poem on "Cider," written in imitation of the "Georgics," may be given this peculiar praise, that it is grounded in truth; that the precepts which it contains are exact and just; and that it is therefore, at once, a book of entertainment and of science. This I was told by Miller, the great gardener and botanist, whose expression was, that "there were many books written on the same subject in prose, which do not contain so much truth as that poem."

In the disposition of his matter, so as to interspserse precepts relating to the culture of trees with sentiments more generally alluring, and in

* This ode I am willing to mention, because there seems to be an error in all the printed copies, which is, I find, retained in the last. They all read:

Quam Gratiarum cura decentium
O! O! labellis cui Venus insidet.

The Author probably wrote,

Quam Gratiarum cura decentium
Ornat; labellis cui Venus insidet.—Dr. J.

Hannes was professor of chemistry at Oxford, and wrote one or two poems in the "Musæ Anglicanæ."—J. B

easy and graceful transitions from one subject to another, he has very dillgently imitated his master; but he unhappily pleased himself with blank verse, and supposed that the numbers of Milton, which impress the mind with veneration, combined as they are with subjects of inconceivable grandeur, could be sustained by images which, at most, can rise only to elegance. Contending angels may shake the regions of heaven in blank verse; but the flow of equal measures, and the embellishment of rhyme, must recommend to our attention the art of engrafting, and decide the merit of the redstreak and pearmain.

What study could confer, Philips had obtained: but natural deficience cannot be supplied. He seems not born to greatness and elevation. He is never lofty, nor does he often surprise with unexpected excellence; but, perhaps, to his last poem may be applied what Tully said of the work of Lucretius, that *it is written with much art, though with few blazes of genius.*

The following fragment, written by Edmund Smith, upon the works of Philips, has been transcribed from the Bodleian manuscripts.

" A Prefatory Discourse to the poem on Mr. Philips, with a character of his writings.

" It is altogether as equitable some account should be given of those who have distinguished themselves by their writings, as of those who are renowned for great actions. It is but reasonable they, who contribute so much to the immortality of others, should have some share in it themselves; and since their genius only is discovered by their works, it is just that their virtues should be recorded by their friends. For no modest men (as the person I write of was in perfection) will write their own panegyrics; and it is very hard that they should go without reputation, only because they the more deserve it. The end of writing lives is for the imitation of the readers. It will be in the power of very few to imitate the Duke of Marlborough; we must be content with admiring his great qualities and actions, without hopes of following them. The private and social virtues are more easily transcribed. The life of Cowley is more instructive, as well as more fine, than any we have in our language. And it is to be wished, since Mr. Philips had so many of the good qualities of that poet, that I had some of the abilities of his historian.

" The Grecian philosophers have had their lives written, their morals commended, and their sayings recorded. Mr. Philips had all the virtues to which most of them only pretended, and all their integrity without any of their affectation.

" The French are very just to eminent men in this point; not a learned man nor a poet can dle, but all Europe must be acquainted with his accomplishments. They give praise and expect it in their turns; they commend their Patrus and Molieres as well as their Condés and Turennes; their Pellisons and Racines have their eulogies, as well as the Prince whom they celebrate; and their poems, their mercuries, and orations, nay, their very gazettes, are filled with the praises of the learned.

" I am satisfied, had they a Philips among them, and known how to value him; had they one of his learning, his temper, but above all of that particular turn of humour, that altogether new genius, he had been an example to their poets, and a subject of their panegyrics, and perhaps set in competition with the ancients, to whom only he ought to submit.

" I shall therefore endeavour to do justice to his memory, since nobody else undertakes it. And indeed I can assign no cause why so many of his acquaintance (that are as willing and more able than myself to give an account of him) should forbear to celebrate the memory of one so dear to them, but only that they look upon it as a work entirely belonging to me.

" I shall content myself with giving only a character of the person and his writings, without meddling with the transactions of his life, which was altogether private: I shall only make this known observation of his family, that there was scarcely so many extraordinary men in any one. I have been acquainted with five of his brothers (of which three are still living,) all men of fine parts, yet all of a very unlike temper and genius. So that their fruitful mother, like the mother of the gods, seems to have produced a numerous offspring, all of different though uncommon faculties. Of the living, neither their modesty, nor the humour of the present age, permits me to speak: of the dead, I may say something.

" One of them had made the greatest progress in the study of the law of nature and nations of any one I know. He had perfectly mastered, and even improved, the notions of Grotius, and the more refined ones of Puffendorf. He could refute Hobbes with as much solidity as some of greater name, and expose him with as much wit as Echard. That noble study, which requires the greatest reach of reason and nicety of distinction, was not at all difficult to him. 'Twas a national loss to be deprived of one who understood a science so necessary, and yet so unknown in England. I shall add only, he had the same honesty and sincerity as the person I write of, but more heat: the former was more inclined to argue, the latter to divert: one employed his reason more; the other his imagination: the former had been well qualified for those posts, which the modesty of the latter

made him refuse. His other dead brother would have been an ornament to the College of which he was a member. He had a genius either for poetry or oratory; and, though very young, composed several very agreeable pieces. In all probability he would have written as finely as his brother did nobly. He might have been the Waller, as the other was the Milton of his time. The one might celebrate Marlborough, the other his beautiful offspring. This had not been so fit to describe the actions of heroes as the virtues of private men. In a word, he had been fitter for my place; and while his brother was writing upon the greatest men that any age ever produced, in a style equal to them, he might have served as a panegyrist on him.

"This is all I think necessary to say of his family. I shall proceed to himself and his writings; which I shall first treat of, because I know they are censured by some out of envy, and more out of ignorance.

"The 'Splendid Shilling,' which is far the least considerable, has the more general reputation, and perhaps hinders the character of the rest. The style agreed so well with the burlesque, that the ignorant thought it could become nothing else. Every body is pleased with that work. But to judge rightly of the other requires a perfect mastery of poetry and criticism, a just contempt of the little turns and witticisms now in vogue, and, above all, a perfect understanding of poetical diction and description.

"All that have any taste for poetry will agree, that the great burlesque is much to be preferred to the low. It is much easier to make a great thing appear little, than a little one great: Cotton and others of a very low genius have done the former: but Philips, Garth, and Boileau, only the latter.

"A picture in miniature is every painter's talent; but a piece for a cupola, where all the figures are enlarged, yet proportioned to the eye, requires a master's hand.

"It must still be more acceptable than the low burlesque, because the images of the latter are mean and filthy, and the language itself entirely unknown to all men of good breeding. The style of Billingsgate would not make a very agreeable figure at St. James's. A gentleman would take but little pleasure in language which he would think it hard to be accosted in, or in reading words which he could not pronounce without blushing. The lofty burlesque is the more to be admired, because, to write it, the author must be master of two of the most different talents in nature. A talent to find out and expose what is ridiculous, is very different from that which is to raise and elevate. We must read Virgil and Milton for the one, and Horace and Hudibras for the other. We know that the authors of excellent comedies have often failed in the grave style, and the tragedian as often in comedy. Admiration and laughter are of such opposite natures, that they are seldom created by the same person. The man of mirth is always observing the follies and weaknesses, the serious writer the virtues or crimes, of mankind; one is pleased with contemplating a beau, the other a hero: even from the same object they would draw different ideas: Achilles would appear in very different lights to Thersites and Alexander; the one would admire the courage and greatness of his soul; the other would ridicule the vanity and rashness of his temper. As the satyrist says to Hannibal:

> ——I, curre per Alpes,
> Ut pueris placeas, et declamatio fias.

"The contrariety of style to the subject pleases the more strongly, because it is more surprising; the expectation of the reader is pleasantly deceived, who expects an humble style from the subject, or a great subject from the style. It pleases the more universally, because it is agreeable to the taste both of the grave and the merry; but more particularly so to those who have a relish of the best writers, and the noblest sort of poetry. I shall produce only one passage out of this Poet, which is the misfortune of his galligaskins:

> My galliga-kins, which have long withstood
> The winter's fury and encroaching frosts,
> By time subdu'd (what will not time subdue!)

This is admirably pathetical, and shows very well the vicissitudes of sublunary things. The rest goes on to a prodigious height; and a man in Greenland could hardly have made a more pathetic and terrible complaint. Is it not surprising that the subject should be so mean, and the verse so pompous, that the least things in his poetry, as in a miscroscope, should grow great and formidable to the eye; especially considering that, not understanding French, he had no model for his style? that he should have no writer to imitate, and himself be inimitable? that he should do all this before he was twenty; at an age which is usually pleased with a glare of false thoughts, little turns, and unnatural fustian? at an age, at which Cowley, Dryden, and I had almost said Virgil, were inconsiderable; so soon was his imagination at its full strength, his judgment ripe, and his humour complete.

"This poem was written for his own diversion, without any design of publication. It was communicated but to *me*; but soon spread, and fell into the hands of pirates. It was put out, vilely mangled by Ben Bragge; and impudently said to be *corrected by the author*. This grievance is now grown more epidemical; and no man now has a right to his own thoughts, or

a title to his own writings. Xenophon answered the Persian who demanded his arms, "We have nothing now left but our arms and our valour: if we surrender the one, how shall we make use of the other?" Poets have nothing but their wits and their writings; and if they are plundered of the latter, I don't see what good the former can do them. To pirate, and publicly own it, to prefix their names to the works they steal, to own and avow the theft, I believe, was never yet heard of but in England. It will sound oddly to posterity, that, in a polite nation, in an enlightened age, under the direction of the most wise, most learned, and most generous encouragers of knowledge in the world, the property of a mechanic should be better secured than that of a scholar! that the poorest manual operations should be more valued than the noblest products of the brain! that it should be felony to rob a cobbler of a pair of shoes, and no crime to deprive the best author of his whole subsistence; that nothing should make a man a sure title to his own writings but the stupidity of them! that the works of Dryden should meet with less encouragement than those of his own Flecknoe, or Blackmore! that Tillotson and St. George, Tom Thumb and Temple, should be set on an equal footing! This is the reason why this very paper has been so long delayed; and, while the most impudent and scandalous libels are publicly vended by the pirates, this innocent work is forced to steal abroad as if it were a libel.

"Our present writers are by these wretches reduced to the same condition Virgil was, when the centurion seized on his estate. But I don't doubt but I can fix upon the Mæcenas of the present age, that will retrieve them from it. But, whatever effects this piracy may have upon us, it contributed very much to the advantage of Mr. Philips; it helped him to a reputation which he neither desired nor expected, and to the honour of being put upon a work of which he did not think himself capable; but the event showed his modesty. And it was reasonable to hope, that he, who could raise mean subjects so high, should still be more elevated on greater themes; that he, that could draw such noble ideas from a shilling, could not fail upon such a subject as the Duke of Marlborough, which is capable of heightening even the most low and trifling genius. And, indeed, most of the great works which have been produced in the world have been owing less to the poet than the patron. Men of the greatest genius are sometimes lazy, and want a spur; often modest, and dare not venture in public, they certainly know their faults in the worst things; and even their best things they are not fond of, because the idea of what they ought to be is far above what they are. This induced me to believe that Virgil desired his works might be burnt, had not the same Augustus, that desired him to write them, preserved them from destruction. A scribbling beau may imagine a poet may be induced to write, by the very pleasure he finds in writing; but that is seldom, when people are necessitated to it. I have known men row, and use very hard labour for diversion which, if they had been tied to, they would have thought themselves very unhappy.

"But to return to 'Blenheim,' that work so much admired by some, and censured by others. I have often wished he had wrote it in Latin that he might be out of the reach of the empty critic, who could have as little understood his meaning in that language as they do his beauties in his own.

"False Critics have been the plague of all ages. Milton himself, in a very polite court, has been compared to the rumbling of a wheelbarrow: he had been on the wrong side, and therefore could not be a good poet. And this, perhaps, may be Mr. Philips's case.

"But I take generally the ignorance of his readers to be the occasion of their dislike. People that have formed their taste upon the French writers can have no relish for Philips; they admire points and turns, and consequently have no judgment of what is great and majestic; he must look little in their eyes, when he soars so high as to be almost out of their view. I cannot therefore allow any admirer of the French to be a judge of 'Blenheim,' nor any who takes Bouhours for a complete critic. He generally judges of the ancients by the moderns and not the moderns by the ancients; he takes those passages of their own authors to be really sublime which come the nearest to it; he often calls that a noble and a great thought which is only a pretty and a fine one; and has more instances of the sublime out of 'Ovid de Tristibus,' than he has out of all Virgil.

"I shall allow, therefore, only those to be judges of Philips, who make the ancients, and particularly Virgil, their standard.

"But before I enter on this subject, I shall consider what is particular in the style of Philips and examine what ought to be the style of heroic poetry; and next inquire how far he has come up to that style.

"His style is particular, because he lays aside rhyme, and writes in blank verse, and uses old words, and frequently postpones the adjective to the substantive, and the substantive to the verb, and leaves out little particles, *a* and *the*; *he* and *his*; and uses frequent appositions. Now let us examine whether these alterations of style be conformable to the true sublime."

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WALSH.

William Walsh, the son of Joseph Walsh, Esq. of Abberley, in Worcestershire, was born in 1663, as appears from the account of Wood, who relates that at the age of fifteen he became, in 1678, a gentleman commoner of Wadham College.

He left the University without a degree, and pursued his studies in London and at home; that he studied in whatever place, is apparent from the effect, for he became in Mr. Dryden's opinion the best critic in the nation.

He was not, however, merely a critic or a scholar, but a man of fashion; and, as Dennis remarks, ostentatiously splendid in his dress. He was likewise a member of parliament and a courtier, knight of the shire for his native county in several parliaments; in another the representative of Richmond in Yorkshire; and gentleman of the horse to Queen Anne, under the Duke of Somerset.

Some of his verses show him to have been a zealous friend to the Revolution; but his political ardour did not abate his reverence or kindness for Dryden, to whom he gave a dissertation on Virgil's "Pastorals," in which, however studied, he discovers some ignorance of the laws of French versification.

In 1705, he began to correspond with Mr. Pope, in whom he discovered very early the power of poetry. Their letters are written upon the pastoral comedy of the Italians, and those pastorals which Pope was then preparing to publish.

The kindnesses which are first experienced are seldom forgotten. Pope always retained a grateful memory of Walsh's notice, and mentioned him in one of his latter pieces among those that had encouraged his juvenile studies:

> ——Granville the polite,
> And knowing Walsh, would tell me I could write.

In his "Essay on Criticism" he had given him more splendid praise; and, in the opinion of his more learned commentator, sacrificed a little of his judgment to his gratitude.

The time of his death I have not learned. It must have happened between 1707, when he wrote to Pope, and 1711, when Pope praised him in his "Essay." The epitaph makes him forty-six years old: if Wood's account be right, he died in 1709.

He is known more by his familiarity with greater men, than by any thing done or written by himself.

His works are not numerous. In prose he wrote "Eugenia, a Defence of Women;" which Dryden honoured with a Preface.

"Esculapius, or the Hospital of Fools," published after his death.

"A Collection of Letters and Poems, amorous and gallant," was published in the volumes called Dryden's Miscellany, and some other occasional pieces.

To his Poems and Letters is prefixed a very judicious Preface upon Epistolary Composition and Amorous Poetry.

In his "Golden Age restored," there was something of humour, while the facts were recent; but it now strikes no longer. In his imitation of Horace, the first stanzas are happily turned; and in all his writings there are pleasing passages. He has, however, more elegance than vigour, and seldom rises higher than to be pretty.

DRYDEN.*

Of the great Poet, whose life I am about to delineate, the curiosity which his reputation must excite will require a display more ample than can now be given. His contemporaries, how-

* The Life of Dryden, though in point of composition it is one of the most admirable of Johnson's productions, is in many particulars incorrect. Mr. Malone, in the biography prefixed to his "Prose Works"

ever they reverenced his genius, left his life unwritten; and nothing therefore can be known beyond what casual mention and uncertain tradition have supplied.

JOHN DRYDEN was born August 9, 1631,* at Aldwinkle, near Oundle, the son of Erasmus Dryden, of Titchmersh; who was the third son of Sir Erasmus Dryden, baronet, of Canons Ashby. All these places are in Northamptonshire; but the original stock of the family was in the county of Huntingdon.†

He is reported by his last biographer, Derrick, to have inherited from his father an estate of two hundred a year, and to have been bred, as was said, an anabaptist. For either of these particulars no authority is given.‡ Such a fortune ought to have secured him from that poverty which seems always to have oppressed him; or, if he had wasted it, to have made him ashamed of publishing his necessities. But though he had many enemies, who undoubtedly examined his life with a scrutiny sufficiently malicious, I do not remember that he is ever charged with waste of his patrimony. He was, indeed, sometimes reproached for his first religion. I am therefore inclined to believe that Derrick's intelligence was partly true, and partly erroneous.§

From Westminster School, where he was instructed as one of the King's scholars by Dr. Busby, whom he long after continued to reverence, he was, in 1650, elected to one of the Westminster scholarships at Cambridge.‖

Of his school performances has appeared only a poem on the death of Lord Hastings, composed with great ambition of such conceits as, notwithstanding the reformation begun by Waller and Denham, the example of Cowley still kept in reputation. Lord Hastings died of the small-pox; and his poem has made of the pustules fir rose-buds, and then gems: at last exalts the into stars; and says,

> No comet need fortel his change drew on,
> Whose corpse might seem a constellation.

At the University he does not appear to hav been eager of poetical distinction, or to have le vished his early wit either on fictitious subject or public occasions. He probably considered that he who proposed to be an author ought firs to be a student. He obtained, whatever was th reason, no fellowship in the College. Why h was excluded cannot now be known, and it i vain to guess: had he thought himself injured he knew how to complain. In the Life of Plu tarch he mentions his education in the Colleg with gratitude; but, in a prologue at Oxford he has these lines:

> Oxford to him a dearer name shall be
> Than his own mother university;
> Thebes did his rude unknowing youth engage;
> He chooses Athens in his riper age.

It was not till the death of Cromwell, in 165 that he became a public candidate for fame,* b publishing "Heroic Stanzas on the late Lor Protector;" which, compared with the verse of Sprat and Waller, on the same occasion, wer sufficient to raise great expectations of the risin Poet.

When the King was restored, Dryden, lik the other panegyrists of usurpation, changed h opinion, or his profession, and published "A trea Redux, a Poem on the happy Restoratio and Return of his most sacred Majesty Kin Charles the Second."

The reproach of inconstancy was, on this o casion, shared with such numbers, that it pro duced neither hatred nor disgrace! if he change he changed with the nation. It was, however not totally forgotten when his reputation raise him enemies.

The same year, he praised the new King in second poem on his restoration. In the "A trea" was the line,

> An horrid *stillness* first *invades* the *ear*,
> And in that silence we a tempest fear—

for which he was persecuted with perpetual r dicule, perhaps with more than was deserve *Silence* is indeed mere privation; and, so co sidered, cannot *invade*; but privation likew certainly is *darkness*, and probably *cold*; poetry has never been refused the right of cribing effects or agency to them as to positi

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has collected a much more ample and accurate account; and from that valuable work several dates and other particulars have been here set right.—J. B.

* Mr. Malone has lately proved that there is no satisfactory evidence for this date. The inscription on Dryden's monument says only *natus* 1632. See Malone's Life of Dryden, prefixed to his "Critical and Miscellaneous Prose Works," p. 5, note.—C.

† Of Cumberland. Ibid. p. 10.—C.

‡ Mr. Malone has furnished us with a detailed account of our Poet's circumstances; from which it appears that although he was possessed of a sufficient income in the early part of his life, he was considerably embarrassed at its close.—See Malone's Life, p. 440.—J. B.

§ Mr. Derrick's Life of Dryden was prefixed to a very beautiful and correct edition of Dryden's Miscellanies, published by the Tonsons in 1760, 4 vols. 8vo. Derrick's part, however, was poorly executed, and the edition never became popular.—C.

‖ He went off to Trinity College, and was admitted to a bachelor's degree in Jan. 1653 4, and in 1657 was made master of arts.—C

* This is a mistake. His poem on the death Lord Hastings appeared in a volume entitled "Te of the Muses on the death of Hen y Lord Hastin 8vo. 1649." Malone.—J. B.

powers. No man scruples to say, that *darkness* hinders him from his work; or that *cold* has killed the plants. Death is also privation; yet who has made any difficulty of assigning to death a dart and the power of striking?

In settling the order of his works there is some difficulty; for, even when they are important enough to be formally offered to a patron, he does not commonly date his dedication; the time of writing and publishing is not always the same; nor can the first editions be easily found, if even from them could be obtained the necessary information.*

The time at which his first play was exhibited is not certainly known, because it was not printed till it was, some years afterwards, altered and revived; but since the plays are said to be printed in the order in which they were written, from the dates of some, those of others may be inferred; and thus it may be collected, that in 1663, in the thirty-second year of his life, he commenced a writer for the stage; compelled undoubtedly by necessity, for he appears never to have loved that exercise of his genius, or to have much pleased himself with his own dramas.

Of the stage, when he had once invaded it, he kept possession for many years; not indeed without the competition of rivals who sometimes prevailed, or the censure of critics, which was often poignant and often just; but with such a degree of reputation, as made him at least secure of being heard, whatever might be the final determination of the public.

His first piece was a comedy called "The Wild Gallant."† He began with no happy auguries; for his performance was so much disapproved, that he was compelled to recal it, and change it from its imperfect state to the form in which it now appears, and which is yet sufficiently defective to vindicate the critics.

I wish that there were no necessity of following the progress of his theatrical fame, or tracing the meanders of his mind through the whole series of his dramatic performances; it will be fit, however, to enumerate them, and to take especial notice of those that are distinguished by any peculiarity, intrinsic or concomitant; for the composition and fate of eight-and-twenty dramas include too much of a poetical life to be omitted.

In 1664, he published "The Rival Ladies," which he dedicated to the Earl of Orrery, a man of high reputation both as a writer and as a statesman. In this play he made his essay of dramatic rhyme, which he defends, in his dedication, with sufficient certainty of a favourable hearing; for Orrery was himself a writer of rhyming tragedies.

He then joined with Sir Robert Howard in "The Indian Queen," a tragedy in rhyme. The parts which either of them wrote are not distinguished.

"The Indian Emperor" was published in 1667. It is a tragedy in rhyme, intended for a sequel to Howard's "Indian Queen." Of this connection notice was given to the audience by printed bills, distributed at the door; an expedient supposed to be ridiculed in "The Rehearsal," where Bayes tells how many reams he has printed, to instil into the audience some conception of his plot.

In this play is the description of Night, which Rymer has made famous by preferring it to those of all other poets.

The practice of making tragedies in rhyme was introduced soon after the Restoration, as it seems by the Earl of Orrery, in compliance with the opinion of Charles the Second, who had formed his taste by the French theatre; and Dryden, who wrote, and made no difficulty of declaring that he wrote only to please, and who perhaps knew that by his dexterity of versification he was more likely to excel others in rhyme than without it, very readily adopted his master's preference. He therefore made rhyming tragedies, till, by the prevalence of manifest propriety, he seems to have grown ashamed of making them any longer.

To this play is prefixed a vehement defence of dramatic rhyme, in confutation of the preface to "The Duke of Lerma," in which Sir Robert Howard had censured it.

In 1667, he published "Annus Mirabilis, the Year of Wonders," which may be esteemed one of his most elaborate works.

It is addressed to Sir Robert Howard by a letter, which is not properly a dedication; and writing to a poet, he has interspersed many critical observations, of which some are common, and some perhaps ventured without much consideration. He began, even now, to exercise the domination of conscious genius, by recommending his own performance: "I am satisfied that as the Prince and General" [Rupert and Monk] "are incomparably the best subjects I ever had, so what I have written on them is much better than what I have performed on any other. As I have endeavoured to adorn my poem with noble thoughts, so much more to express those thoughts with elocution."

It is written in quatrains, or heroic stanzas of four lines; a measure which he had learned from the "Gondibert" of Davenant, and which he then thought the most majestic that the English language affords. Of this stanza he mentions the incumbrances, increased as they were by the exactness which the age required. It was throughout his life, very much his cus-

* The order of his plays has been accurately ascertained by Mr. Malone.—C.

† The "Duke of Guise" was his first attempt in the drama, but laid aside and afterwards new modelled. —See Malone, p. 51.—J. B.

tom to recommend his works by representation of the difficulties that he had encountered, without appearing to have sufficiently considered, that where there is no difficulty, there is no praise.

There seems to be, in the conduct of Sir Robert Howard and Dryden towards each other, something that is not now easily to be explained.* Dryden, in his dedication to the Earl of Orrery, had defended dramatic rhyme; and Howard, in a preface to a collection of plays, had censured his opinion. Dryden vindicated himself in his "Dialogue on Dramatic Poetry:" Howard, in his preface to "the Duke of Lerma," animadverted on the vindication; and Dryden, in a preface to "The Indian Emperor," replied to the animadversions with great asperity, and almost with contumely. The dedication to this play is dated the year in which the "Annus Mirabilis" was published. Here appears a strange inconsistency; but Langbaine affords some help, by relating that the answer to Howard was not published in the first edition of the play, but was added when it was afterwards reprinted: and as "The Duke of Lerma" did not appear till 1668, the same year in which the dialogue was published, there was time enough for enmity to grow up between authors, who, writing both for the theatre, were naturally rivals.

He was now so much distinguished, that in 1668† he succeeded Sir William Davenant as poet-laureat. The salary of the laureat had been raised in favour of Johnson, by Charles the First, from a hundred marks to one hundred pounds a year, and a tierce of wine: a revenue in those days not inadequate to the conveniences of life.

The same year, he published his Essay on Dramatic Poetry, an elegant and instructive dialogue, in which we are told, by Prior, that the principal character is meant to represent the Duke of Dorset. This work seems to have given Addison a model for his Dialogues upon Medals.

"Secret Love, or the Maiden Queen" (1668) is a tragi-comedy. In the preface he discusses a curious question, whether a poet can judge well of his own productions? and determines very justly, that, of the plan and disposition, and all that can be reduced to principles of science, the author may depend upon his own opinion; but that, in those parts where fancy predominates, self-love may easily deceive. He might have observed, that what is good only because it pleases, cannot be pronounced good till it has been found to please.

"Sir Martin Mar-all" (1668) is a comedy, published without preface or dedication, and at first without the name of the author. Langbaine charges it, like most of the rest, with plagiarism; and observes, that the song is translated from Voiture, allowing however that both the sense and measure are exactly observed.

"The Tempest" (1670) is an alteration of Shakspeare's play, made by Dryden in conjunction with Davenant; "whom," says he, "I found of so quick a fancy, that nothing was proposed to him in which he could not suddenly produce a thought extremely pleasant and surprising; and those first thoughts of his, contrary to the Latin proverb, were not always the least happy; and as his fancy was quick, so likewise were the products of it remote and new. He borrowed not of any other; and his imaginations were such as could not easily enter into any other man."

The effect produced by the conjunction of these two powerful minds was, that to Shakspeare's monster, Caliban, is added a sister monster, Sycorax; and a woman, who, in the original play, had never seen a man, is in this brought acquainted with a man that had never seen a woman.

About this time, in 1673, Dryden seems to have had his quiet much disturbed by the success of "The Empress of Morocco," a tragedy written in rhyme by Elkanah Settle; which was so much applauded, as to make him think his supremacy of reputation in some danger. Settle had not only been prosperous on the stage, but, in the confidence of success, had published his play with sculptures and a preface of defiance. Here was one offence added to another; and, for the last blast of inflammation, it was acted at Whitehall by the court ladies.

Dryden could not now repress those emotions, which he called indignation, and others jealousy; but wrote upon the play and the dedication such criticism as malignant impatience could pour out in haste.

Of Settle he gives this character: "He's an animal of a most deplored understanding, without reading and conversation. His being is in a twilight of sense, and some glimmering of thought which he never can fashion into wit or English. His style is boisterous and rough hewn, his rhyme incorrigibly lewd, and his numbers perpetually harsh and ill-sounding. The little talent which he has, is fancy. He sometimes labours with a thought; but, with the pudder he makes to bring it into the world, 'tis commonly still-born; so that, for want of learning and elocution, he will never be able to express any thing either naturally or justly."

This is not very decent; yet this is one of the pages in which criticism prevails over brutal fury. He proceeds: "He has a heavy hand at fools, and a great felicity in writing nonsense

* See Malone, p. 91.—J. B.

† He did not succeed Davenant till Aug. 18, 1670; but Mr. Malone informs us, that the patent had a retrospect, and the salary commenced from the Midsummer after D'Avenant's death.—C.

for them. Fools they will be in spite of him. His king, his two empresses, his villain, and his sub-villain, nay, his hero, have all a certain natural cast of the father—their folly was born and bred in them, and something of the Elkanah will be visible."

This is Dryden's general declamation; I will not withhold from the reader a particular remark. Having gone through the first act, he says, "to conclude this act with the most rumbling piece of nonsense spoken yet:

To flattering lightning our feign'd smiles conform,
Which, back'd with thunder, do but gild a storm.

Conform a smile to lightning, make a *smile* imitate *lightning*, and *flattering lightning*; lightning sure is a threatening thing. And this lightning must *gild a storm*. Now, if I must conform my smiles to lightning, then my smiles must gild a storm too: to *gild* with *smiles* is a new invention of gilding. And gild a storm by being *backed with thunder*. Thunder is part of the storm; so one part of the storm must help to *gild* another part, and help by *backing*; as if a man would gild a thing the better for being backed, or having a load upon his back. So that here is *gilding* by *conforming, smiling, lightning, backing*, and *thundering*. The whole is as if I should say thus: I will make my counterfeit smiles look like a flattering stone-horse, which, being backed with a trooper, does but gild the battle. I am mistaken if nonsense is not here pretty thick sown. Sure the poet writ these two lines a-board some smack in a storm, and, being sea-sick, spewed up a good lump of clotted nonsense at once."

Here is perhaps a sufficient specimen; but as the pamphlet, though Dryden's, has never been thought worthy of republication, and is not easily to be found, it may gratify curiosity to quote it more largely:

—Whene'er she bleeds,
He no severer a damnation needs,
Than dares pronounce the sentence of her death,
Than the infection that attends that breath.

"*That attends that breath.*—The poet is at *breath* again; *breath* can never 'scape him; and here he brings in a *breath* that must be *infectious* with *pronouncing* a sentence; and this sentence is not to be pronounced till the condemned party *bleeds*; that is, she must be executed first, and sentenced after; and the *pronouncing* of this *sentence* will be infectious; that is, others will catch the disease of that sentence, and this infecting of others will torment a man's self. The whole is thus: *when she bleeds, thou needest no greater hell or torment to thyself, than infecting of others by pronouncing a sentence upon her.* What hodge-podge does he make here! Never was Dutch grout such clogging, thick, indigestible stuff. But this is but a taste to stay the stomach; we shall have a more plentiful mess presently.

"Now to dish up the poet's broth, that I promised:

For when we're dead, and our freed souls enlarged,
Of nature's grosser burden we're discharged,
Then, gentle as a happy lover's sigh,
Like wand'ring meteors through the air we'll fly
And in our airy walk, as subtle guests,
We'll steal into our cruel fathers' breasts,
There read their souls, and track each passion's sphere,
See how Revenge moves there, Ambition here;
And in their orbs view the dark characters
Of sieges, ruins, murders, blood, and wars.
We'll blot out all those hideous draughts, and write
Pure and white forms; then with a radiant light
Their breasts encircle, till their passions be
Gentle as nature in its infancy;
Till, soften'd by our charms, their furies cease,
And their revenge resolves into a peace.
Thus by our death their quarrel ends,
Whom living we made foes, dead we'll make friends.

"If this be not a very liberal mess, I will refer myself to the stomach of any moderate guest. And a rare mess it is, far excelling any Westminster white-broth. It is a kind of giblet porridge, made of the giblets of a couple of young geese, stodged full of *meteors, orbs, spheres, track, hideous draughts, dark characters, white forms*, and *radiant lights*, designed not only to please appetite, and indulge luxury; but it is also physical, being an approved medicine to purge choler; for it is propounded, by Morena, as a recipe to cure their fathers of their choleric humours; and, were it written in characters as barbarous as the words, might very well pass for a doctor's bill. To conclude; it is porridge, 'tis a recipe, 'tis a pig with a pudding in the belly, 'tis I know not what: for, certainly, never any one that pretended to write sense had the impudence before to put such stuff as this into the mouths of those that were to speak it before an audience, whom he did not take to be all fools; and after that to print it too, and expose it to the examination of the world. But let us see what we can make of this stuff:

For when we're dead, and our freed souls enlarged—

"Here he tells what it is to be *dead*; it is to have *our freed souls set free*. Now, if to have a soul set free, is to be dead; then, to have a *freed soul* set free, is to have a dead man die.

Then, gentle as a happy lover's sigh——

"They two like one *sigh*, and that one *sigh* like two wandering meteors,

—Shall fly through the air—

"That is, they shall mount above like falling stars, or else they shall skip like two Jacks with lanthorns, or Will with a wisp, and Madge with a candle."

"*And in the airy walk steal into their cruel fathers' breasts, like subtle guests.* So, that their *fathers' breasts* must be in an *airy walk*, an airy *walk* of a *flier*. *And there they will read their souls, and track the spheres of their passions.* That is, these walking fliers, Jack with a lanthorn, &c. will put on his spectacles, and fall a *reading souls;* and put on his pumps, and fall a *tracking of spheres:* so that he will read and run, walk and fly, at the same time! Oh! nimble Jack! *Then he will see, how revenge here, how ambition there*——The birds will hop about. *And then view the dark characters of sieges, ruins, murders, blood, and wars, in their orbs: track the characters* to their forms! Oh! rare sport for Jack! Never was place so full of game as these breasts! You cannot stir, but flush a sphere, start a character, or unkennel an orb!"

Settle's is said to have been the first play embellished with sculptures; those ornaments seem to have given poor Dryden great disturbance. He tries however to ease his pain by venting his malice in a parody.

"The poet has not only been so imprudent to expose all this stuff, but so arrogant to defend it with an epistle; like a saucy booth-keeper, that, when he had put a cheat upon the people, would wrangle and fight with any that would not like it, or would offer to discover it; for which arrogance our poet receives this correction; and, to jerk him a little the sharper, I will not transpose his verse, but by the help of his own words transnonsense sense, that by my stuff, people may judge the better what his is:

Great Boy, thy tragedy and sculptures done,
From press and plates, in fleets do homeward run;
And, in ridiculous and humble pride,
Their course in ballad-singers' baskets guide,
Whose greasy twigs do all new beauties take,
From the gay shows thy dainty sculptures make.
Thy lines a mess of rhyming nonsense yield,
A senseless tale, with flattering fustian fill'd.
No grain of sense does in one line appear,
Thy words big bulks of boisterous bombast bear.
With noise they move, and from players' mouths rebound,
When their tongues dance to thy words' empty sound,
By thee inspir'd the rumbling verses roll,
As if that rhyme and bombast lent a soul;
And with that soul they seem taught duty too;
To huffing words does humble nonsense bow,
As if it would thy worthless worth enhance,
To th' lowest rank of fops thy praise advance,
To whom, by instinct, all thy stuff is dear:
Their loud claps echo to the theatre.
From breaths of fools thy commendation spreads,
Fame sings thy praise with mouths of logger-heads.
With noise and laughing each thy fustian greets,
'Tis clapt by choirs of empty-headed cits,
Who have their tribute sent, and homage given,
As men in whispers send loud noise to heaven.

"Thus I have daubed him with his own puddle: and now we are come from aboard his dancing, masking, rebounding, breathing fleet: and, as if we had landed at Gotham, we meet nothing but fools and nonsense."

Such was the criticism to which the genius of Dryden could be reduced, between rage and terror; rage with little provocation, and terror with little danger. To see the highest mind thus levelled with the meanest, may produce some solace to the consciousness of weakness, and some mortification to the pride of wisdom. But let it be remembered that minds are not levelled in their powers but when they are first levelled in their desires. Dryden and Settle had both placed their happiness in the claps of multitudes.

"An Evening's Love, or the Mock astrologer," a comedy (1671,) is dedicated to the illustrious Duke of Newcastle, whom he courts by adding to his praises those of his lady, not only as a lover but a partner of his studies. It is unpleasing to think how many names, once celebrated, are since forgotten. Of Newcastle's works nothing is now known but his Treatise on Horsemanship.

The preface seems very elaborately written, and contains many just remarks on the fathers of the English drama. Shakspeare's plots, he says, are in the hundred novels of Cinthio; those of Beaumont and Fletcher in Spanish stories; Jonson only made them for himself. His criticisms upon tragedy, comedy, and farce, are judicious and profound. He endeavours to defend the immorality of some of his comedies by the example of former writers; which is only to say that he was not the first, nor perhaps the greatest offender. Against those that accused him of plagiarism he alleges a favourable expression of the King: "He only desired that they, who accuse me of thefts, would steal him plays like mine;" and then relates how much labour he spends in fitting for the English stage what he borrows from others.

"Tyrannic Love, or the Virgin Martyr" (1672) was another tragedy in rhyme, conspicuous for many passages of strength and elegance, and many of empty noise and ridiculous turbulence. The rants of Maximin have been always the sport of criticism; and were at length, if his own confession may be trusted, the shame of the writer.

Of this play he has taken care to let the reader know, that it was contrived and written in seven weeks. Want of time was often his excuse, or perhaps shortness of time was his private boast in the form of an apology.

It was written before "The Conquest of Granada," but published after it. The design is to

recommend piety. "I considered that pleasure was not the only end of poesy; and that even the instructions of morality were not so wholly the business of a poet, as that the precepts and examples of piety were to be omitted; for to leave that employment altogether to the clergy, were to forget that religion was first taught in verse, which the laziness or dulness of succeeding priesthood turned afterwards into prose." Thus foolishly could Dryden write, rather than not show his malice to the parsons.

The two parts of "The Conquest of Granada" (1672) are written with a seeming determination to glut the public with dramatic wonders, to exhibit in its highest elevation a theatrical meteor of incredible love and impossible valour, and to leave no room for a wilder flight to the extravagance of posterity. All the rays of romantic heat, whether amorous or warlike, glow in Almanzor by a kind of concentration. He is above all laws; he is exempt from all restraints; he ranges the world at will, and governs wherever he appears. He fights without inquiring the cause, and loves in spite of the obligations of justice, of rejection by his mistress, and of prohibition from the dead. Yet the scenes are, for the most part, delightful; they exhibit a kind of illustrious depravity, and majestic madness, such as, if it is sometimes despised, is often reverenced, and in which the ridiculous is mingled with the astonishing.

In the epilogue to the second part of "The Conquest of Granada," Dryden indulges his favourite pleasure of discrediting his predecessors; and this epilogue he has defended by a long postscript. He had promised a second dialogue, in which he should more fully treat of the virtues and faults of the English poets, who have written in the dramatic, epic, or lyric way. This promise was never formally performed; but, with respect to the dramatic writers, he has given us in his prefaces, and in this postscript, something equivalent; but his purpose being to exalt himself by the comparison, he shows faults distinctly, and only praises excellence in general terms.

A play thus written, in professed defiance of probability, naturally drew upon itself the vultures of the theatre. One of the critics that attacked it was Martin Clifford, to whom Sprat addressed the Life of Cowley, with such veneration of his critical powers as might naturally excite great expectations of instruction from his remarks. But let honest credulity beware of receiving characters from contemporary writers. Clifford's remarks, by the favour of Dr. Percy, were at last obtained; and, that no man may ever want them more, I will extract enough to satisfy all reasonable desire.

In the first letter his observation is only general: "You do live," says he, "in as much ignorance and darkness as you did in the womb; your writings are like a Jack-of-all-trades' shop; they have a variety, but nothing of value; and if thou art not the dullest plant-animal that ever the earth produced, all that I have conversed with are strangely mistaken in thee."

In the second he tells him that Almanzor is not more copied from Achilles than from ancient Pistol. "But I am," says he, "strangely mistaken if I have not seen this very Almanzor of yours in some disguise about this town, and passing under another name. Pr'ythee tell me true, was not this huffcap once the Indian Emperor? and at another time did he not call himself Maximin? Was not Lyndaraxa once called Almeria? I mean, under Montezuma, the Indian Emperor. I protest and vow they are either the same, or so alike, that I cannot, for my heart, distinguish one from the other. You are therefore a strange unconscionable thief; thou art not content to steal from others, but dost rob thy poor wretched self too."

Now was Settle's time to take his revenge. He wrote a vindication of his own lines; and, if he is forced to yield any thing, makes his reprisals upon his enemy. To say that his answer is equal to the censure, is no high commendation. To expose Dryden's method of analyzing his expressions, he tries the same experiment upon the same description of the ships in "The Indian Emperor," of which however he does not deny the excellence; but intends to show, that by studied misconstruction every thing may be equally represented as ridiculous. After so much of Dryden's elegant animadversions, justice requires that something of Settle's should be exhibited. The following observations are therefore extracted from a quarto pamphlet of ninety-five pages:

> "Fate after him below with pain did move,
> And victory could scarce keep pace above.

"These two lines, if he can show me any sense or thought in, or any thing but bombast and noise, he shall make me believe every word in his observations on 'Morocco' sense."

"In the 'Empress of Morocco' were these lines:

> I'll travel then to some remoter sphere,
> Till I find out new worlds, and crown you there."

On which Dryden made this remark:

"I believe our learned author takes a sphere for country; the sphere of Morocco; as if Morocco were the globe of earth and water; but a globe is no sphere neither, by his leave," &c. "So *sphere* must not be sense, unless it relates to a circular motion about a globe, in which sense the astronomers use it. I would desire him to expound those lines in 'Granada:

I'll to the turrets of the palace go,
And add new fire to those that fight below.
Thence, hero-like, with torches by my side,
(Far be the omen though) my love I'll guide.
No, like his better fortune I'll appear,
With open arms, loose veil, and flowing hair,
Just flying forward from my rolling sphere.

I wonder if he be so strict, how he dares make so bold with the *sphere* himself, and to be so critical in other men's writings. Fortune is fancied standing on a globe, not on a *sphere*, as he told us in the first act.

" Because ' Elkanah's Similes are the most unlike things to what they are compared in the world," I'll venture to start a simile in his ' Annus Mirabilis:' he gives this poetical description of the ship called The London:

The goodly London in her gallant trim,
The phœnix-daughter of the vanquished old,
Like a rich bride does on the ocean swim,
And on her shadow rides in floating gold.
Her flag aloft spread ruffling in the wind,
And sanguine streamers seem'd the flood to fire:
The weaver, charm'd with what his loom design'd,
Goes on to sea, and knows not to retire.
With roomy decks her guns of mighty strength,
Whose low-laid mouths each mounting billow laves,
Deep in her draught, and warlike in her length,
She seems a sea-wasp flying in the waves.

What a wonderful pother is here, to make all these poetical beautifications of a ship; that is, a *phœnix* in the first stanza, and but a *wasp* in the last; nay, to make his humble comparison of a *wasp* more ridiculous, he does not say it flies upon the waves as nimbly as a wasp, or the like, but it seemed a *wasp*. But our author at the writing of this was not in his altitudes, to compare ships to floating palaces: a comparison to the purpose was a perfection he did not arrive to till the *Indian Emperor's* days. But perhaps his similitude has more in it than we imagine; this ship had a great many guns in her, and they, put all together, made the sting in the wasp's tail; for this is all the reason I can guess, why it seemed a wasp. But because we will allow him all we can to help out, let it be a *phœnix sea-wasp*, and the rarity of such an animal may do much towards heightening the fancy.

" It had been much more to his purpose, if he had designed to render the senseless play little, to have searched for some such pedantry as this:

Two ifs scarce make one possibility.
If justice will take all, and nothing give,
Justice, methinks, is not distributive.
To die or kill you is the alternative.
Rather than take your life, I will not live.

' Observe how prettily our author chops logic in heroic verse. Three such fustian canting words as *distributive*, *alternative*, and *two ifs*, no man but himself would have come within the noise of. But he's a man of general learning and all comes into his play.

" 'Twould have done well too if he could ha met with a rant or two, worth the observatio such as,

Move swiftly, Sun, and fly a lover's pace;
Leave months and weeks behind thee in thy ra

" But surely the sun, whether he flies a lover or not a lover's pace, leaves weeks and month nay years too behind him in his race.

" Poor Robin, or any other of the philo-m thematics, would have given him satisfaction the point.

If I could kill thee now, thy fate's so low,
That I must stoop, ere I can give the blow.
But mine is fixed so far above thy crown,
That all thy men,
Piled on thy back, can never pull it down.

" Now where that is, Almanzor's fate is fi ed, I cannot guess: but, wherever it is, I b lieve Almanzor, and think that all Abdalla subjects, piled upon one another, might not p down his fate so well as without piling; beside I think Abdalla so wise a man, that if Alma zor had told him that piling his men upon b back might do the feat, he would scarcely be such a weight, for the pleasure of the exploi but it is a huff, and let Abdalla do it if he dar

The people like a headlong torrent go,
And every dam they break or overflow.
But, unopposed, they either lose their force,
Or wind in volumes to their former course.

A very pretty allusion, contrary to all sense reason. Torrents, I take it, let them wi never so much, can never return to their form course, unless he can suppose that fountains c go upwards, which is impossible; nay more, the foregoing page he tells us so too; a trick a very unfaithful memory.

But can no more than fountains upward flow.

Which of a torrent, which signifies a rapid strea is much more impossible. Besides, if he goes quibble, and say, that it is possible by art wa may be made return, and the same water r twice in one and the same channel; then quite confutes what he says: for it is by bei opposed, that it runs into its former course; all engines that make water so return, do it compulsion and opposition. Or, if he means headlong torrent for a tide, which would be diculous, yet they do not wind in volumes b come fore-right back (if their upright l straight to their former course), and that by o position of the sea-water, that drives them ba again.

" And for fancy, when he lights of any thi like it, 'tis a wonder if it be not borrowed. here, for example of, I find this fanciful thoug in his ' Ann. Mirab.'

Old father Thames rais'd up his reverend head:
But fear'd the fate of Simoeis would return;
Deep in his ooze he sought his sedgy bed;
And shrunk his waters back into his urn.

This is stolen from Cowley's 'Davideis,' p. 9.

Swift Jordan started, and straight backward fled,
Hiding amongst thick reeds his aged head.
And when the Spaniards their assault begin,
At once beat those without and those within.

"This Almanzor speaks of himself; and sure for one man to conquer an army within the city, and another without the city, at once, is something difficult: but this flight is pardonable to some we meet with in 'Granada;' Osmin, speaking of Almanzor,

Who, like a tempest that outrides the wind,
Made a just battle, ere the bodies join'd.

Pray, what does this honourable person mean by a *tempest that outrides the wind!* a tempest that outrides itself? To suppose a tempest without wind, is as bad as supposing a man to walk without feet; for if he supposes the tempest to be something distinct from the wind, yet, as being the effect of wind only, to come before the cause is a little preposterous; so that if he takes it one way, or if he takes it the other, those two ifs will scarcely make one *possibility.*" Enough of Settle.

"Marriage a-la-mode" (1673) is a comedy dedicated to the Earl of Rochester; whom he acknowledges not only as the defender of his poetry, but the promoter of his fortune. Langbaine places this play in 1673. The Earl of Rochester, therefore, was the famous Wilmot, whom yet tradition always represents as an enemy to Dryden, and who is mentioned by him with some disrespect in the preface to 'Juvenal.'

"The Assignation, or Love in a Nunnery," a comedy (1673) was driven off the stage, *against the opinion,* as the Author says, *of the best judges.* It is dedicated in a very elegant address to Sir Charles Sedley; in which he finds an opportunity for his usual complaint of hard treatment and unreasonable censure.

"Amboyna" (1673) is a tissue of mingled dialogue in verse and prose, and was perhaps written in less time than "The Virgin Martyr;" though the Author thought not fit, either ostentatiously or mournfully, to tell how little labour it cost him, or at how short a warning he produced it. It was a temporary performance, written in the time of the Dutch war, to inflame the nation against their enemies; to whom the hopes, as he declares in his epilogue, to make his poetry not less destructive than that by which Tyrtæus of old animated the Spartans. This play was written in the second Dutch war, in 1673.

"Troilus and Cressida" (1679) is a play altered from Shakspeare; but so altered, that, even in Langbaine's opinion, "the last scene in the third act is a masterpiece." It is introduced by a discourse on "the Grounds of Criticism in Tragedy," to which I suspect that Rymer's book had given occasion.

"The Spanish Friar" (1681) is a tragi-comedy, eminent for the happy coincidence and coalition of the two plots. As it was written against the papists, it would naturally at that time have friends and enemies; and partly by the popularity which it obtained at first, and partly by the real power both of the serious and risible part, it continued long a favourite of the public.

It was Dryden's opinion, at least for some time, and he maintains it in the dedication of this play, that the drama required an alternation of comic and tragic scenes; and that it is necessary to mitigate by alleviations of merriment the pressure of ponderous events, and the fatigue of toilsome passions. "Whoever," says he, "cannot perform both parts is but half a writer for the stage."

"The Duke of Guise," a tragedy (1683) written in conjunction with Lee, as "Oedipus" had been before, seems to deserve notice only for the offence which it gave to the remnant of the covenanters, and in general to the enemies of the court who attacked him with great violence, and were answered by him; though at last he seems to withdraw from the conflict, by transferring the greater part of the blame or merit to his partner. It happened that a contract had been made between them, by which they were to join in writing a play: and "he happened," says Dryden, "to claim the promise just upon the finishing of a poem, when I would have been glad of a little respite.—*Two*-thirds of it belonged to him; and to me only the first scene of the play, the whole fourth act, and the first half, or somewhat more, of the fifth."

This was a play written professedly for the party of the Duke of York, whose succession was then opposed. A parallel is intended between the leaguers of France and the covenanters of England: and this intention produced the controversy.

"Albion and Albanius" (1685) is a musical drama or opera, written, like "The Duke of Guise," against the republicans. With what success it was performed, I have not found.*

"The State of Innocence and Fall of Man" (1675) is termed by him an opera: it is rather a tragedy in heroic rhyme, but of which the personages are such as cannot decently be exhibited on the stage. Some such production was foreseen by Marvel, who writes thus to Milton:

* Downes says, it was performed on a very unlucky day; viz. that on which the Duke of Monmouth landed in the west: and he intimates, that the consternation into which the kingdom was thrown by this event was a reason why it was performed but six times, and was in general ill received.—H.

"Or if a work so infinite be spann'd,
Jealous I was lest some less skilful hand
(Such as disquiet always what is well,
And by ill-imitating would excel,)
Might hence presume the whole creation's day
To change in scenes, and show it in a play."

It is another of his hasty productions: for the heat of his imagination raised it in a month.

This composition is addressed to the Princess of Modena, then Dutchess of York, in a strain of flattery which disgraces genius, and which it was wonderful that any man that knew the meaning of his own words could use without self-detestation. It is an attempt to mingle earth and heaven, by praising human excellence in the language of religion.

The preface contains an apology for heroic verse and poetic license; by which is meant not any liberty taken in contracting or extending words, but the use of bold fictions and ambitious figures.

The reason which he gives for printing what was never acted cannot be overpassed: "I was induced to it in my own defence, many hundred copies of it being dispersed abroad without my knowledge or consent; and every one gathering new faults, it became at length a libel against me." These copies, as they gathered faults, were apparently manuscript, and he lived in an age very unlike ours, if many hundred copies of fourteen hundred lines were likely to be transcribed. An author has a right to print his own works, and need not seek an apology in falsehood; but he that could bear to write the dedication felt no pain in writing the preface.

"Aureng Zebe" (1676) is a tragedy founded on the actions of a great prince then reigning, but over nations not likely to employ their critics upon the transactions of the English stage. If he had known and disliked his own character, our trade was not in those times secure from his resentment. His country is at such a distance, that the manners might be safely falsified, and the incidents feigned: for the remoteness of place is remarked, by Racine, to afford the same conveniences to a poet as length of time.

This play is written in rhyme, and has the appearance of being the most elaborate of all the dramas. The personages are imperial; but the dialogue is often domestic, and therefore susceptible of sentiments accommodated to familiar incidents. The complaint of life is celebrated; and there are many other passages that may be read with pleasure.

This play is addressed to the Earl of Mulgrave, afterwards Duke of Buckingham, himself, if not a poet, yet a writer of verses, and a critic. In this address Dryden gave the first hints of his intention to write an epic poem. He mentions his design in terms so obscure, that he seems afraid lest his plan should be purloined, as, he says, happened to him when he told it more plainly in his preface to "Juvenal." "The design," says he, "you know is great: the story English, and neither too near the present times, nor too distant from them."

"All for Love, or the World well Lost," (1678) a tragedy founded upon the story of Antony and Cleopatra, he tells us, "is the only play which he wrote for himself:" the rest were given to the people. It is by universal consent accounted the work in which he has admitted the fewest improprieties of style or character; but it has one fault equal to many, though rather moral than critical, that, by admitting the romantic omnipotence of Love, he has recommended, as laudable and worthy of imitation, that conduct which, through all ages, the good have censured as vicious, and the bad despised as foolish.

Of this play the prologue and the epilogue, though written upon the common topics of malicious and ignorant criticisms, and without any particular relation to the characters or incidents of the drama, are deservedly celebrated for their elegance and sprightliness.

"Limberham, or the kind Keeper," (1680) is a comedy, which, after the third night, was prohibited as too indecent for the stage. What gave offence was in the printing, as the Author says, altered or omitted. Dryden confesses that its indecency was objected to; but Langbaine, who yet seldom favours him, imputes its expulsion to resentment, because it "so much exposed the keeping part of the town."

"Oedipus" (1679) is a tragedy formed by Dryden and Lee, in conjunction, from the work of Sophocles, Seneca, and Corneille. Dryden planned the scenes, and composed the first and third acts.

"Don Sebastian" (1690) is commonly esteemed either the first or second of his dramatic performances. It is too long to be all acted, and has many characters and many incidents: and though it is not without sallies of frantic dignity, and more noise than meaning, yet, as it makes approaches to the possibilities of real life, and has some sentiments which leave a strong impression, it continued long to attract attention. Amidst the distresses of princes, and the vicissitudes of empire, are inserted several scenes which the writer intended for comic; but which I suppose, that age did not much commend, as this would not endure. There are, however, passages of excellence universally acknowledged; the dispute and the reconciliation of Dorax and Sebastian has always been admired.

This play was first acted in 1690, after Dryden had for some years discontinued dramatic poetry.

"Amphytrion" is a comedy derived from Plautus and Moliere. The dedication is dated Oct. 1690. This play seems to have succeed-

its first appearance; and was, I think, long considered as a very diverting entertainment.

"Cleomenes" (1692) is a tragedy, only remarkable as it occasioned an incident related in the "Guardian," and allusively mentioned by Dryden in his preface. As he came out from the representation, he was accosted thus by some airy stripling: "Had I been left alone with a young beauty, I would not have spent my time like your Spartan." "That, Sir," said Dryden, "perhaps is true; but give me leave to tell you that you are no hero."

"King Arthur" (1691) is another opera. It was the last work that Dryden performed for King Charles, who did not live to see it exhibited, and it does not seem to have been ever brought upon the stage.* In the dedication to the Marquis of Halifax, there is a very elegant character of Charles, and a pleasing account of his latter life. When this was first brought upon the stage, news that the Duke of Monmouth had landed was told in the theatre; upon which the company departed, and "Arthur" was exhibited no more.

His last drama was "Love Triumphant," a tragi-comedy. In his dedication to the Earl of Salisbury, he mentions "the lowness of fortune to which he has voluntarily reduced himself, and of which he has no reason to be ashamed."

This play appeared in 1694. It is said to have been unsuccessful. The catastrophe, proceeding merely from a change of mind, is confessed by the Author to be defective. Thus he began and ended his dramatic labours with ill success.

From such a number of theatrical pieces, it will be supposed, by most readers, that he must have improved his fortune; at least that such diligence with such abilities must have set penury at defiance. But in Dryden's time the drama was very far from that universal approbation which it has now obtained. The playhouse was abhorred by the puritans, and avoided by those who desired the character of seriousness or decency. A grave lawyer would have debased his dignity, and a young trader would have impaired his credit, by appearing in those mansions of dissolute licentiousness. The profits of the theatre, when so many classes of the people were deducted from the audience, were not great: and the poet had, for a long time, but a single night. The first that had two nights was Southern: and the first that had three was Rowe. There were, however, in those days, arts of improving a poet's profit, which Dryden forbore to practise; and a play therefore seldom produced him more than a hundred pounds by the accumulated gain of the third night, the dedication, and the copy.

* This is a mistake. It was set to music by Purcell, and well received, and is yet a favourite entertainment.—H.

Almost every piece had a dedication, written with such elegance and luxuriance of praise, as neither haughtiness nor avarice could be imagined able to resist. But he seems to have made flattery too cheap. That praise is worth nothing of which the price is known.

To increase the value of his copies, he often accompanied his work with a preface of criticism; a kind of learning then almost new in English language, and which he, who had considered with great accuracy the principles of writing, was able to distribute copiously as occasions arose. By these dissertations the public judgment must have been much improved; and Swift, who conversed with Dryden, relates that he regretted the success of his own instructions, and found his readers made suddenly too skilful to be easily satisfied.

His prologues had such reputation, that for some time a play was considered as less likely to be well received, if some of his verses did not introduce it. The price of a prologue was two guineas, till, being asked to write one for Mr. Southern, he demanded three: "Not," said he, "young man, out of disrespect to you: but the players have had my goods too cheap."*

Though he declares that in his own opinion his genius was not dramatic, he had great confidence in his own fertility; for he is said to have engaged, by contract, to furnish four plays a year.

It is certain that in one year, 1678,† he published "All for Love," "Assignation," two parts of the "Conquest of Granada," "Sir Martin Mar-all," and the "State of Innocence;" six complete plays, with a celerity of performance, which, though all Langbaine's charges of plagiarism should be allowed, shows such facility of composition, such readiness of language, and such copiousness of sentiment, as, since the time of Lopez de Vega, perhaps no other author has ever possessed.

He did not enjoy his reputation, however great, nor his profits, however small, without molestation. He had critics to endure, and rivals to oppose. The two most distinguished wits of the nobility, the Duke of Buckingham and Earl of Rochester declared themselves his enemies.

* Johnson has here quoted from memory. Warburton is the original relator of this anecdote, who says he had it from Southern himself. According to him, Dryden's usual price had been four guineas, and he made Southern pay *six*. In the edition of Southern's plays, 1764, we have a different deviation from the truth, *five* and *ten* guineas. MALONE.—J. B.

† Dr. Johnson in this assertion was misled by Langbaine. Only one of these plays appeared in 1678. Nor were there more than three in any one year. The dates are now added from the original editions.—R.

Buckingham characterised him, in 1671, by the name of Bayes in "The Rehearsal;" a farce which he is said to have written with the assistance of Butler, the author of "Hudibras;" Martin Clifford, of the Charter-house; and Dr. Sprat, the friend of Cowley, then his chaplain. Dryden and his friends laughed at the length of time, and the number of hands, employed upon this performance; in which, though by some artifice of action it yet keeps possession of the stage, it is not possible now to find any thing that might not have been written without so long delay, or a confederacy so numerous.

To adjust the minute events of literary history is tedious and troublesome; it requires indeed no great force of understanding, but often depends upon inquiries which there is no opportunity of making, or is to be fetched from books and pamphlets not always at hand.

"The Rehearsal" was played in 1671,* and yet is represented as ridiculing passages in "The Conquest of Granada" and "Assignation," which were not published till 1678; in "Marriage a-la-mode," published in 1673; and in "Tyrannic Love," in 1677. These contradictions show how rashly satire is applied.†

It is said that this farce was originally intended against Davenant, who, in the first draught, was characterised by the name of *Bilboa*. Davenant had been a soldier and an adventurer.

There is one passage in "The Rehearsal" still remaining, which seems to have related originally to Davenant. Bayes hurts his nose, and comes in with brown paper applied to the bruise; how this affected Dryden does not appear. Davenant's nose had suffered such diminution by mishaps among the women, that a patch upon that part evidently denoted him.

It is said likewise that Sir Robert Howard was once meant. The design was probably to ridicule the reigning poet, whoever he might be.

Much of the personal satire, to which might owe its first reception, is now lost obscured. Bayes probably imitated the dress and mimicked the manner of Dryden: the cant words which are so often in his mouth may be supposed to have been Dryden's habitual phrases, or customary exclamations. Bayes, when he is to write, is blooded and purged; this, Lamotte relates himself to have heard, was the real practice of the poet.

There were other strokes in "The Rehearsal" by which malice was gratified; the debate between Love and Honour, which keeps Prince Volscius in a single boot, is said to have alluded to the misconduct of the Duke of Ormond, who lost Dublin to the rebels while he was toying with a mistress.

The Earl of Rochester, to suppress the reputation of Dryden, took Settle into his protection and endeavoured to persuade the public that his approbation had been to that time misplaced. Settle was a while in high reputation; his "Empress of Morocco," having first delighted the town, was carried in triumph to Whitehall and played by the ladies of the court. Now was the poetical meteor at the highest: the next moment began its fall. Rochester withdrew his patronage: seemingly resolved, says one of his biographers, "to have a judgment contrary to that of the town;" perhaps being unable to endure any reputation beyond a certain height even when he had himself contributed to raise it.

Neither critics nor rivals did Dryden much mischief, unless they gained from his own temper the power of vexing him, which his frequent bursts of resentment give reason to suspect. He is always angry at some past, or afraid of some future censure; but he lessens the smart of his wounds by the balm of his own approbation and endeavours to repel the shafts of criticism by opposing a shield of adamantine confidence.

The perpetual accusation produced against him, was that of plagiarism, against which he never attempted any vigorous defence; for though he was perhaps sometimes injuriously censured he would, by denying part of the charge, have confessed the rest; and, as his adversaries had the proof in their own hands, he, who knew that wit had little power against fact, wisely left, in that perplexity which it generally produces, a question which it was his interest to suppress, and which, unless provoked by vindication, few were likely to examine.

Though the life of a writer, from about thirty-five to sixty-three, may be supposed to have been sufficiently busied by the composition of eight-and-twenty pieces for the stage, Dryden found room in the same space for many other undertakings.

But, how much soever he wrote, he was

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* It was published in 1672.—R.

† There is no contradiction, according to Mr. Malone, but what arises from Dr. Johnson's having copied the erroneous dates assigned to these plays by Langbaine.—C.

This remark, as Mr. Malone observes, is founded upon the erroneous dates with which Johnson was supplied by Langbaine. "The Rehearsal" was played in 1671, but not published till the next year. 'The Wild Gallant" was printed in 1669; "The Maiden Queen" in 1668: "Tyrannic Love" in 1670; the two parts of "Granada" were performed in 1669 and 1670, though not printed till 1672. Additions were afterwards made to "The Rehearsal," and among these are the "Parodies on Assignation," which are not to be found in Buckingham's play, as it originally appeared. Mr. Malone denies that there is any allusion to "Marriage a-la-mode." See MALONE, p. 100.—J. B.

least once suspected of writing more: for, in 1679, a paper of verses, called "An Essay on Satire," was shown about in manuscript; by which the Earl of Rochester, the Dutchess of Portsmouth, and others, were so much provoked that, as was supposed (for the actors were never discovered), they procured Dryden, whom they suspected as the author, to be waylaid and beaten. This incident is mentioned by the Duke of Buckinghamshire,* the true writer, in his "Art of Poetry;" where he says of Dryden,

> Though praised and beaten for another's rhymes,
> His own deserve as great applause sometimes.

His reputation in time was such, that his name was thought necessary to the success of every poetical or literary performance, and therefore he was engaged to contribute something, whatever it might be, to many publications. He prefixed the Life of Polybius to the translation of Sir Henry Sheers: and those of Lucian and Plutarch, to versions of their works by different hands. Of the English Tacitus he translated the first book: and, if Gordon be credited, translated it from the French. Such a charge can hardly be mentioned without some degree of indignation; but it is not, I suppose, so much to be inferred, that Dryden wanted the literature necessary to the perusal of Tacitus, as that, considering himself as hidden in a crowd, he had no awe of the public; and, writing merely for money, was contented to get it by the nearest way.

In 1680, the Epistles of Ovid being translated by the poets of the time, among which one was the work of Dryden,† and another of Dryden and Lord Mulgrave, it was necessary to introduce them by a preface; and Dryden, who on such occasions was regularly summoned, prefixed a discourse upon translation, which was then struggling for the liberty that it now enjoys. Why it should find any difficulty in breaking the shackles of verbal interpretation, which must for ever debar it from elegance, it would be difficult to conjecture, were not the power of prejudice every day observed. The authority of Jonson, Sandys, and Holiday, had fixed the judgment of the nation; and it was not easily believed that a better way could be found than they had taken, though Fanshaw, Denham, Waller, and Cowley, had tried to give examples of a different practice.

In 1681, Dryden became yet more conspicuous by uniting politics with poetry, in the memorable satire called "Absalom and Achitophel," written against the faction which, by Lord Shaftesbury's incitement, set the Duke of Monmouth at its head.

Of this poem, in which personal satire was applied to the support of public principles, and in which therefore every mind was interested, the reception was eager, and the sale so large, that my father, an old bookseller, told me he had not known it equalled but by Sacheverell's Trial.

The reason of this general perusal Addison has attempted to derive from the delight which the mind feels in the investigation of secrets: and thinks that curiosity to decipher the names procured readers to the poem. There is no need to inquire why those verses were read, which, to all the attractions of wit, elegance, and harmony, added the co-operation of all the factious passions, and filled every mind with triumph or resentment.

It could not be supposed that all the provocation given by Dryden would be endured without resistance or reply. Both his person and his party were exposed in their turns to the shafts of satire, which, though neither so well pointed, nor perhaps so well aimed, undoubtedly drew blood.

One of these poems is called "Dryden's Satire on his Muse;" ascribed, though, as Pope says, falsely, to Somers, who was afterwards chancellor. The poem, whosesoever it was, has much virulence, and some sprightliness. The writer tells all the ill that he can collect both of Dryden and his friends.

The poem of "Absalom and Achitophel" had two answers now both forgotten; one called "Azaria and Hushai;"* the other, "Absalom Senior." Of these hostile compositions, Dryden apparently imputes "Absalom Senior" to Settle, by quoting in his verse against him the second line. "Azaria and Hushai" was, as Wood says, imputed to him, though it is somewhat unlikely that he should write twice on the same occasion. This is a difficulty which I cannot remove, for want of a minuter knowledge of poetical transactions.

The same year he published "The Medal," of which the subject is a medal struck on Lord Shaftesbury's escape from a prosecution, by the *ignoramus* of a grand jury of Londoners.

In both poems he maintains the same principles, and saw them both attacked by the same antagonist. Elkanah Settle, who had answered "Absalom," appeared with equal courage in opposition to "The Medal;" and published an answer called "The Medal reversed," with so much success in both encounters, that he left

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* Mentioned by A. Wood, Athen. Oxon. vol. ii. 804. 2d ed.—C.

† Dryden translated two entire epistles, "Canace to Macareus," and "Dido to Æneas." "Helen to Paris" was translated by him and Lord Mulgrave. Malone.—J. B.

* "Azaria and Hushai" was written by Samuel Pordage, a dramatic writer of that time.—C.

the palm doubtful, and divided the suffrages of the nation. Such are the revolutions of fame, or such is the prevalence of fashion, that the man, whose works have not yet been thought to deserve the care of collecting them, who died forgotten in an hospital, and whose latter years were spent in contriving shows for fairs, and carrying an elegy or epithalamium, of which the beginning and end were occasionally varied, but the intermediate parts were always the same, to every house where there was a funeral or a wedding, might with truth have had inscribed upon his stone,

Here lies the Rival and Antagonist of Dryden.

Settle was, for his rebellion, severely chastised by Dryden, under the name of "Doeg," in the second part of "Absalom and Achitophel;" and was, perhaps, for his factious audacity made the city poet, whose annual office was to describe the glories of the Mayor's day. Of these bards he was the last, and seems not much to have deserved even this degree of regard, if it was paid to his political opinions: for he afterwards wrote a panegyric on the virtues of Judge Jefferies; and what more could have been done by the meanest zealot for prerogative?

Of translated fragments, or occasional poems, to enumerate the titles, or settle the dates, would be tedious, with little use. It may be observed that, as Dryden's genius was commonly excited by some personal regard, he rarely writes upon a general topic.

Soon after the accession of King James, when the design of reconciling the nation to the church of Rome became apparent, and the religion of the court gave the only efficacious title to its favours, Dryden declared himself a convert to popery. This at any other time might have passed with little censure. Sir Kenelm Digby embraced popery; the two Reynolds's reciprocally converted one another;* and Chillingworth himself was awhile so entangled in the wilds of controversy, as to retire for quiet to an infallible church. If men of argument and study can find such difficulties, or such motives as may either unite them to the church of Rome, or detain them in uncertainty, there can be no wonder that a man who perhaps never inquired why he was a protestant, should by an artful and experienced disputant be made a papist, overborne by the sudden violence of new and unexpected arguments, or deceived by a representation which shows only the doubts on one part, and only the evidence on the other.

That conversion will always be suspected that apparently concurs with interest. He that never finds his error till it hinders his progress towards wealth or honour, will not be thought to love truth only for herself. Yet it may easily happen, that information may come at a commodious time; and as truth and interest are not by any fatal necessity at variance, that one may by accident introduce the other. When opinions are struggling into popularity, the arguments by which they are opposed or defended become more known; and he that changes his profession would perhaps have changed it before, with the like opportunities of instruction. This was the then state of popery; every artifice was used to show it in its fairest form; and it must be owned to be a religion of external appearance sufficiently attractive.

It is natural to hope that a comprehensive is likewise an elevated soul, and that whoever is wise is also honest. I am willing to believe that Dryden, having employed his mind, active as it was, upon different studies, and filled it, capacious as it was, with other materials, came unprovided to the controversy, and wanted rather skill to discover the right, than virtue to maintain it. But inquiries into the heart are not for man; we must now leave him to his Judge.

The priests, having strengthened their cause by so powerful an adherent, were not long before they brought him into action. They engaged him to defend the controversial papers found in the strong box of Charles II.; and, what yet was harder, to defend them against Stillingfleet.

With hopes of promoting popery, he was employed to translate Maimbourg's History of the League; which he published with a large introduction. His name is likewise prefixed to the English Life of Francis Xavier; but I know not that he ever owned himself the translator. Perhaps the use of his name was a pious fraud; which, however, seems not to have had much effect; for neither of the books, I believe, were ever popular.

The version of Xavier's Life is commended by Brown, in a pamphlet not written to flatter; and the occasion of it is said to have been, that the Queen, when she solicited a son, made vows to him as her tutelary saint.

He was supposed to have undertaken to translate Yarillas's "History of Heresies;" and when Burnet published remarks upon it, to have written an Answer;* upon which Burnet makes the following observation:

"I have been informed from England, that a gentleman who is famous both for poetry and several other things, had spent three months in

* Dr. John Reynolds, who lived temp. Jac. I. was at first a zealous papist, and his brother William as earnest a protestant; but, by mutual disputation, each converted the other. See Fuller's Church History, p. 47, Book X.—H.

* This is a mistake. See Malone, p. 194, &c.—C.

translating M. Varillas's History; but that, as soon as my Reflections appeared, he discontinued his labour, finding the credit of his author was gone. Now, if he thinks it is recovered by his Answer, he will perhaps go on with his translation; and this may be, for aught I know, as good an entertainment for him as the conversation that he had set on between the Hinds and Panthers, and all the rest of animals, for whom M. Varillas may serve well enough as an author; and this history and that poem are such extraordinary things of their kind, that it will be but suitable to see the author of the worst poem become likewise the translator of the worst history that the age has produced. If his grace and his wit improve both proportionably, he will hardly find that he has gained much by the change he has made, from having no religion, to choose one of the worst. It is true, he had somewhat to sink from in matter of wit; but, as for his morals, it is scarcely possible for him to grow a worse man than he was. He has lately wreaked his malice on me for spoiling his three months' labour; but in it he has done me all the honour that any man can receive from him, which is to be railed at by him. If I had ill-nature enough to prompt me to wish a very bad wish for him, it should be, that he would go on and finish his translation. By that it will appear, whether the English nation, which is the most competent judge in this matter, has, upon the seeing our debate, pronounced in M. Varillas's favour, or in mine. It is true, Mr. D. will suffer a little by it; but, at least, it will serve to keep him in from other extravagances; and if he gains little honour by this work, yet he cannot lose so much by it as he has done by his last employment."

Having probably felt his own inferiority in theological controversy, he was desirous of trying whether, by bringing poetry to aid his arguments, he might become a more efficacious defender of his new profession. To reason in verse was, indeed, one of his powers; but subtilty and harmony, united, are still feeble, when opposed to truth.

Actuated therefore by zeal for Rome, or hope of fame, he published "The Hind and Panther," a poem in which the church of Rome, figured by the "milk-white Hind," defends her tenets against the church of England, represented by the *Panther*, a beast beautiful, but spotted.

A fable, which exhibits two beasts talking theology, appears at once full of absurdity; and it was accordingly ridiculed in the "City Mouse and Country Mouse," a parody, written by Montague, afterwards Earl of Halifax, and Prior, who then gave the first specimen of his abilities.

The conversion of such a man, at such a time, was not likely to pass uncensured. Three dialogues were published by the facetious Thomas Brown, of which the two first were called "Reasons of Mr. Bayes's changing his Religion;" and the third, "The Reasons of Mr. Hains the Player's Conversion and Re-conversion." The first was printed in 1688, the second not till 1690, the third in 1691. The clamour seems to have been long continued, and the subject to have strongly fixed the public attention.

In the two first dialogues Bayes is brought into the company of Crites and Eugenius, with whom he had formerly debated on dramatic poetry. The two talkers in the third are Mr. Bayes and Mr. Hains.

Brown was a man not deficient in literature nor destitute of fancy; but he seems to have thought it the pinnacle of excellence to be a merry fellow; and therefore laid out his powers upon small jests or gross buffoonery; so that his performances have little intrinsic value, and were read only while they were recommended by the novelty of the event that occasioned them.

These dialogues are like his other works: what sense or knowledge they contained is disgraced by the garb in which it is exhibited. One great source of pleasure is to call Dryden *little Bayes*. Ajax, who happens to be mentioned, is "he that wore as many cow-hides upon his shield as would have furnished half the King's army with shoe-leather."

Being asked whether he had seen the "Hind and Panther," Crites answers; "Seen it! Mr. Bayes, why I can stir no where but it pursues me; it haunts me worse than a pewter-buttoned sergeant does a decayed cit. Sometimes I meet it in a bandbox, when my laundress brings home my linen; sometimes, whether I will or no, it lights my pipe at a coffee-house; sometimes it surprises me in a trunk-maker's shop; and sometimes it refreshes my memory for me on the back side of a Chancery-lane parcel. For your comfort too, Mr. Bayes, I have not only seen it, as you may perceive, but have read it too, and can quote it as freely upon occasion as a frugal tradesman can quote that noble treatise, 'The Worth of a Penny,' to his extravagant 'prentice, that revels in stewed apples and penny custards."

The whole animation of these compositions arises from a profusion of ludicrous and affected comparisons. "To secure one's chastity," says Bayes, "little more is necessary than to leave off a correspondence with the other sex, which, to a wise man, is no greater a punishment than it would be to a fanatic person to forbid seeing *The Cheats* and *The Committee*; or for my Lord Mayor and Aldermen to be interdicted the sight of *The London Cuckolds*." This is the general strain, and therefore I shall be easily excused the labour of more transcription.

Brown does not wholly forget past transactions: "You began," says Crites to Bayes, "a very different religion, and have not mended the matter in your last choice. It was but reason that your Muse, which appeared first in a tyrant's quarrel, should employ her last efforts to justify the usurpation of the *Hind*."

Next year the nation was summoned to celebrate the birth of the Prince. Now was the time for Dryden to rouse his imagination, and strain his voice. Happy days were at hand, and he was willing to enjoy and diffuse the anticipated blessings. He published a poem, filled with predictions of greatness and prosperity; predictions, of which it is not necessary to tell how they have been verified.

A few months passed after these joyful notes, and every blossom of Popish Hope was blasted for ever by the Revolution. A papist now could be no longer laureat. The revenue, which he had enjoyed with so much pride and praise, was transferred to Shadwell, an old enemy, whom he had formerly stigmatized by the name of *Og*. Dryden could not decently complain that he was deposed; but seemed very angry that Shadwell succeeded him, and has therefore celebrated the intruder's inauguration in a poem exquisitely satirical, called "Mac Flecknoe;"* of which the "Dunciad," as Pope himself declares, is an imitation, though more extended in its plan, and more diversified in its incidents.

It is related by Prior, that Lord Dorset, when as chamberlain he was constrained to eject Dryden from his office, gave him from his own purse an allowance equal to the salary. This is no romantic or incredible act of generosity; a hundred a year is often enough given to claims less cogent by men less famed for liberality. Yet Dryden always represented himself as suffering under a public infliction; and once particularly demands respect for the patience with which he endured the loss of his little fortune. His patron might, indeed, enjoin him to suppress his bounty; but, if he suffered nothing, he should not have complained.

During the short reign of King James, he had written nothing for the stage,† being, in his opinion, more profitably employed in controversy and flattery. Of praise he might, perhaps, have been less lavish without inconvenience, for James was never said to have much regard for poetry; he was to be flattered only by adopting his religion.

Times were now changed: Dryden was no longer the court poet, and was to look back for support to his former trade; and having waited about two years, either considering himself as discountenanced by the public, or perhaps expecting a second revolution, he produced "Don Sebastian" in 1690; and in the next four years four dramas more.

In 1693 appeared a new version of Juvenal and Persius. Of Juvenal he translated the first, third, sixth, tenth, and sixteenth satires; and of Persius the whole work. On this occasion he introduced his two sons to the public, as nurselings of the Muses. The fourteenth of Juvenal was the work of John, and the seventh of Charles Dryden. He prefixed a very ample preface, in the form of a dedication to Lord Dorset; and there gives an account of the design which he had once formed to write an epic poem on the actions either of Arthur, or the Black Prince. He considered the epic as necessarily including some kind of supernatural agency, and had imagined a new kind of contest between the guardian angels of kingdoms, of whom he conceived that each might be represented zealous for his charge, without any intended opposition to the purposes of the Supreme Being, of which all created minds must in part be ignorant.

This is the most reasonable scheme of celestial interposition that ever was formed. The surprises and terrors of enchantments, which have succeeded to the intrigues and oppositions of pagan deities, afford very striking scenes, and open a vast extent to the imagination; but, as Boileau observes (and Boileau will be seldom found mistaken), with this incurable defect, that, in a contest between Heaven and Hell, we know at the beginning which is to prevail; for this reason we follow Rinaldo to the enchanted wood with more curiosity than terror.

In the scheme of Dryden, there is one great difficulty, which yet he would, perhaps, have had address enough to surmount. In a war justice can be but on one side; and, to entitle the hero to the protection of angels, he must fight in defence of indubitable right. Yet some of the celestial beings, thus opposed to each other, must have been represented as defending guilt.

That this poem was never written, is reasonably to be lamented. It would doubtless have improved our numbers, and enlarged our language; and might perhaps have contributed by pleasing instructions to rectify our opinions, and purify our manners.

What he required as the indispensable condition of such an undertaking, a public stipend, was not likely in these times to be obtained. Riches were not become familiar to us; nor had the nation yet learned to be liberal.

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* All Dryden's biographers have misdated this poem, which Mr. Malone's more accurate researches prove to have been published on the 4th of October, 1682.—C.

† "Albion and Albanius" must however be excepted.—R.

This plan he charged Blackmore with stealing; "only," says he, "the guardian angels of kingdoms were machines too ponderous for him to manage."

In 1694, he began the most laborious and difficult of all his works, the translation of Virgil; from which he borrowed two months, that he might turn Fresnoy's "Art of Painting" into English prose. The preface, which he boasts to have written in twelve mornings, exhibits a parallel of poetry and painting, with a miscellaneous collection of critical remarks, such as cost a mind stored like his no labour to produce them.

In 1697, he published his version of the works of Virgil; and, that no opportunity of profit might be lost, dedicated the "Pastorals" to the Lord Clifford, the "Georgics" to the Earl of Chesterfield, and the "Æneid" to the Earl of Mulgrave. This economy of flattery, at once lavish and discreet, did not pass without observation.

This translation was censured by Milbourne, a clergyman, styled by Pope "the fairest of critics," because he exhibited his own version to be compared with that which he condemned.

His last work was his "Fables," published in consequence, as is supposed, of a contract now in the hands of Mr. Tonson: by which he obliged himself, in consideration of three hundred pounds, to finish for the press ten thousand verses.

In this volume is comprised the well-known "Ode on St. Cecilia's Day," which, as appeared by a letter communicated to Dr. Birch, he spent a fortnight in composing and correcting. But what is this to the patience and diligence of Boileau, whose "Equivoque," a poem of only three hundred and forty-six lines, took from his life eleven months to write it, and three years to revise it?

Part of his book of "Fables" is the first "Iliad" in English, intended as a specimen of a version of the whole. Considering into what hands Homer was to fall, the reader cannot but rejoice that this project went no further.

The time was now at hand which was to put an end to all his schemes and labours. On the first of May, 1701, having been some time, as he tells us, a cripple in his limbs, he died, in Gerard Street, of a mortification in his leg.

There is extant a wild story relating to some vexatious events that happened at his funeral, which, at the end of Congreve's Life, by a writer of I know not what credit, are thus related, as I find the account transferred to a biographical dictionary:

"Mr. Dryden dying on the Wednesday morning, Dr. Thomas Sprat, then bishop of Rochester and dean of Westminster, sent the next day to the Lady Elizabeth Howard, Mr. Dryden's widow, that he would make a present of the ground, which was forty pounds, with all the other Abbey-fees. The Lord Halifax likewise sent to the Lady Elizabeth, and Mr. Charles Dryden her son, that, if they would give him leave to bury Mr. Dryden, he would inter him with a gentleman's private funeral, and afterwards bestow five hundred pounds on a monument in the Abbey; which, as they had no reason to refuse, they accepted. On the Saturday following the company came; the corpse was put into a velvet hearse; and eighteen mourning coaches, filled with company, attended. When they were just ready to move, the Lord Jefferies, son of the Lord Chancellor Jefferies, with some of his rakish companions, coming by, asked whose funeral it was: and, being told Mr. Dryden's, he said, 'What, shall Dryden, the greatest honour and ornament of the nation, be buried after this private manner! No, gentlemen, let all that loved Mr. Dryden, and honour his memory, alight and join with me in gaining my Lady's consent to let me have the honour of his interment, which shall be after another manner than this; and I will bestow a thousand pounds on a monument in the Abbey for him.' The gentlemen in the coaches, not knowing of the Bishop of Rochester's favour, nor of the Lord Halifax's generous design (they both having, out of respect to the family, enjoined the Lady Elizabeth, and her son, to keep their favour concealed to the world, and let it pass for their own expense), readily came out of their coaches, and attended Lord Jefferies up to the Lady's bedside, who was then sick. He repeated the purport of what he had before said; but she absolutely refusing, he fell on his knees, vowing never to rise till his request was granted. The rest of the company by his desire kneeled also; and the Lady, being under a sudden surprise, fainted away. As soon as she recovered her speech, she cried, *No, no:* 'Enough, gentlemen,' replied he; 'my Lady is very good, she says, *Go, go.*' She repeated her former words with all her strength, but in vain, for her feeble voice was lost in their acclamations of joy; and the Lord Jefferies ordered the hearsemen to carry the corpse to Mr. Russel's, an undertaker in Cheapside, and leave it there till he should send orders for the embalmment, which, he added, should be after the royal manner. His directions were obeyed, the company dispersed, and Lady Elizabeth and her son remained inconsolable. The next day Mr. Charles Dryden waited on the Lord Halifax and the Bishop, to excuse his mother and himself, by relating the real truth. But neither his Lordship nor the Bishop would admit of any plea; especially the latter, who had the Abbey lighted, the ground opened, the choir attending, an anthem ready set, and himself wait-

ing for some time without any corpse to bury. The undertaker, after three days expectance of orders for embalment without receiving any, waited on the Lord Jefferies; who, pretending ignorance of the matter, turned it off with an ill-natured jest, saying, that those who observed the orders of a drunken frolic deserved no better; he remembered nothing at all of it; and that he might do what he pleased with the corpse. Upon this, the undertaker waited upon the Lady Elizabeth and her son, and threatened to bring the corpse home, and set it before the door. They desired, a day's respite, which was granted. Mr. Charles Dryden wrote a handsome letter to the Lord Jefferies, who returned it with this cool answer: That he knew nothing of the matter, and would be troubled no more about it. He then addressed the Lord Halifax and the Bishop of Rochester, who absolutely refused to do any thing in it. In this distress Dr. Garth sent for the corpse to the College of Physicians, and proposed a funeral by subscription, to which himself set a most noble example. At last a day, about three weeks after Mr. Dryden's decease, was appointed, for the interment. Dr. Garth pronounced a fine Latin oration, at the College, over the corpse; which was attended to the Abbey by a numerous train of coaches. When the funeral was over, Mr. Charles Dryden sent a challenge to the Lord Jefferies, who refusing to answer it, he sent several others and went often himself; but could neither get a letter delivered nor admittance to speak to him; which so incensed him, that he resolved, since his Lordship refused to answer him like a gentleman, that he would watch an opportunity to meet and fight off-hand, though with all the rules of honour; which his Lordship hearing, left the town: and Mr. Charles Dryden could never have the satisfaction of meeting him, though he sought it till his death with the utmost application."

This story I once intended to omit, as it appears with no great evidence; nor have I met with any confirmation, but in a letter of Farquhar; and he only relates that the funeral of Dryden was tumultuary and confused.*

Supposing the story true, we may remark, that the gradual change of manners, though imperceptible in the process, appears great when different times, and those not very distant, are compared. If at this time a young drunken Lord should interrupt the pompous regularity of a magnificent funeral, what would be the event but that he would be justled out of the way, and compelled to be quiet? If he should thrust himself into a house he would be sent roughly away; and what is yet more to the honour of the present time, I believe that those, who had subscribed to the funeral of a man like Dryden, would not, for such an accident, have withdrawn their contributions.*

He was buried among the poets in Westminster Abbey, where, though the Duke of Newcastle had, in a general dedication prefixed by Congreve to his dramatic works, accepted thanks for his intention of erecting him a monument, he lay long without distinction, till the duke of Buckinghamshire gave him a tablet, inscribed only with the name of DRYDEN.

He married the Lady Elizabeth Howard, daughter to the Earl of Berkshire, with circumstances, according to the satire imputed to Lord Somers, not very honourable to either party: by her he had three sons, Charles, John, and Henry. Charles was usher of the palace to Pope Clement the XIth; and visiting England in 1704, was drowned in an attempt to swim across the Thames at Windsor.

John was author of a comedy called "The Husband his own Cuckold." He is said to have died at Rome. Henry entered into some religious order. It is some proof of Dryden's sincerity, in his second religion, that he taught it to his sons. A man, conscious of hypocritical profession in himself, is not likely to convert others; and, as his sons were qualified, in 1698, to appear among the translators of Juvenal, they must have been taught some religion before their father's change.

Of the person of Dryden I know not any account; of his mind, the portrait, which has been left by Congreve, who knew him with great familiarity, is such as adds our love of his manners to our admiration of his genius. "He was, we are told, "of a nature exceedingly humane

* An earlier account of Dryden's funeral than that above cited, though without the circumstances that preceded it, is given by Edward Ward, who in his "London Spy," published in 1706, relates, that on the occasion there was a performance of solemn music at the College, and that at the procession, which himself saw, standing at the end of Chancery lane, Fleet-street, there was a concert of hautboys and trumpets. The day of Dryden's interment, he says, was Monday, the 13th of May, which, according to Johnson, was twelve days after his decease, and shows how long his funeral was in suspense. Ward knew not that the expense of it was defrayed by subscription; but compliments Lord Jefferies for so pious an undertaking. He also says, that the cause of Dryden's death was an inflammation in his toe, occasioned by the flesh growing over the nail, which, being neglected, produced a mortification in his leg.—H.

* In the Register of the College of Physicians, the following entry: "May 3, 1700. Comitiis Collegii ordinariis. At the request of several persons of quality, that Mr. Dryden might be carried from the College of Physicians to be interred at Westminster, it was unanimously granted by the President and Censors."

This entry is not calculated to afford any credit to the narrative concerning Lord Jefferies.—R.

and compassionate, ready to forgive injuries, and capable of a sincere reconciliation with those who had offended him. His friendship, where he professed it, went beyond his profession. He was of a very easy, of very pleasing access; but somewhat slow, and, as it were, diffident in his advances to others: he had that in nature which abhorred intrusion into any society whatever. He was therefore less known, and consequently his character became more liable to misapprehensions and misrepresentations: he was very modest, and very easily to be discountenanced in his approaches to his equals or superiors. As his reading had been very extensive, so was he very happy in a memory tenacious of every thing that he had read. He was not more possessed of knowledge than he was communicative of it; but then his communication was by no means pedantic, or imposed upon the conversation, but just such, and went so far, as, by the natural turn of the conversation in which he was engaged, it was necessarily promoted or required. He was extremely ready and gentle in his correction of the errors of any writer who thought fit to consult him, and full as ready and patient to admit the reprehensions of others, in respect of his own oversights or mistakes."

To this account of Congreve nothing can be objected but the fondness of friendship; and to have excited that fondness in such a mind is no small degree of praise. The disposition of Dryden, however, is shown in this character rather as it exhibited itself in cursory conversation, than as it operated on the more important parts of life. His placability and his friendship indeed were solid virtues; but courtesy and good-humour are often found with little real worth. Since Congreve, who knew him well, has told us no more, the rest must be collected as it can from other testimonies, and particularly from those notices which Dryden has very liberally given us of himself.

The modesty which made him so slow to advance, and so easy to be repulsed, was certainly no suspicion of deficient merit, or unconciousness of his own value: he appears to have known, in its whole extent, the dignity of his own character, and to have set a very high value on his own powers and performances. He probably did not offer his conversation, because he expected it to be solicited; and he retired from a cold reception, not submissive but indignant, with such deference of his own greatness as made him unwilling to expose it to neglect or violation.

His modesty was by no means inconsistent with ostentatiousness; he is diligent enough to remind the world of his merit, and expresses with very little scruple his high opinion of his own powers; but his self-commendations are read without scorn or indignation; we allow his claims, and love his frankness.

Tradition, however, has not allowed that his confidence in himself exempted him from jealousy of others. He is accused of envy and insidiousness; and is particularly charged with inciting Creech to translate Horace that he might lose the reputation which Lucretius had given him.

Of this charge we immediately discover that it is merely conjectural; the purpose was such as no man would confess; and a crime that admits no proof, why should we believe?

He has been described as magisterially presiding over the younger writers, and assuming the distribution of poetical fame; but he who excels has a right to teach, and he whose judgment is incontestible may without usurpation examine and decide.

Congreve represents him as ready to advise and instruct; but there is reason to believe that his communication was rather useful than entertaining. He declares of himself that he was saturnine, and not one of those whose sprightly sayings diverted company; and one of his censurers makes him say,

> Nor wine nor love could ever see me gay;
> To writing bred, I knew not what to say.

There are men whose powers operate only at leisure and in retirement, and whose intellectual vigour deserts them in conversation; whom merriment confuses, and objection disconcerts: whose bashfulness restrains their exertion, and suffers them not to speak till the time of speaking is past; or whose attention to their own character makes them unwilling to utter at hazard what has not been considered, and cannot be recalled.

Of Dryden's sluggishness in conversation it is vain to search or to guess the cause. He certainly wanted neither sentiments nor language; his intellectual treasures were great, though they were locked up from his own use. "His thoughts," when he wrote, "flowed in upon him so fast, that his only care was which to choose, and which to reject." Such rapidity of composition naturally promises a flow of talk; yet we must be content to believe what an enemy says of him, when he likewise says it of himself. But, whatever was his character as a companion, it appears that he lived in familiarity with the highest persons of his time. It is related, by Carte, of the Duke of Ormond, that he used often to pass a night with Dryden, and those with whom Dryden consorted; who they were, Carte has not told, but certainly the convival table at which Ormond sat was not surrounded with a plebeian society. He was indeed reproached with boasting of his familiarity with the great: and Horace will support him in the opinion that to please superiors is not the lowest kind of merit.

The merit of pleasing must, however, be estl-

mated by the means. Favour is not always gained by good actions or laudable qualities. Caresses and preferments are often bestowed on the auxiliaries of vice, the procurers of pleasure, or the flatterers of vanity. Dryden has never been charged with any personal agency unworthy of a good character: he abetted vice and vanity only with his pen. One of his enemies has accused him of lewdness in his conversation; but if accusation without proof be credited, who shall be innocent?

His works afford too many examples of dissolute licentiousness, and abject adulation; but they were probably, like his merriment, artificial and constrained; the effects of study and meditation, and his trade rather than his pleasure.

Of the mind that can trade in corruption, and can deliberately pollute itself with ideal wickedness for the sake of spreading the contagion in society, I wish not to conceal or excuse the depravity. Such degradation of the dignity of genius, such abuse of superlative abilities, cannot be contemplated but with grief and indignation. What consolation can be had, Dryden has afforded, by living to repent, and to testify his repentance.

Of dramatic immorality he did not want examples among his predecessors, or companions among his contemporaries; but, in the meanness and servility of hyperbolical adulation, I know not whether, since the days in which the Roman emperors were deified, he has been ever equalled, except by Afra Behn in an address to Eleanor Gwyn. When once he has undertaken the task of praise, he no longer retains shame in himself, nor supposes it in his patron. As many odoriferous bodies are observed to diffuse perfumes from year to year, without sensible diminution of bulk or weight, he appears never to have impoverished his mint of flattery by his expenses, however lavish. He had all the forms of excellence, intellectual and moral, combined in his mind, with endless variation; and, when he had scattered on the hero of the day the golden shower of wit and virtue, he had ready for him, whom he wished to court on the morrow, new wit and virtue with another stamp. Of this kind of meanness he never seems to decline the practice, or lament the necessity: he considers the great as entitled to encomiastic homage, and brings praise rather as a tribute than a gift, more delighted with the fertility of his invention, than mortified by the prostitution of his judgment. It is indeed not certain, that on these occasions his judgment much rebelled against his interest. There are minds which easily sink into submission, that look on grandeur with undistinguishing reverence, and discover no defect where there is elevation of rank and affluence of riches.

With his praises of others and of himself is always intermingled a strain of discontent a lamentation, a sullen growl of resentment, o querulous murmur of distress. His works undervalued, his merit is unrewarded, and " has few thanks to pay his stars that he w born among Englishmen." To his critics is sometimes contemptuous, sometimes rese ful, and sometimes submissive. The wri who thinks his works formed for duration, n takes his interest when he mentions his enemi He degrades his own dignity by showing t he was affected by their censures, and gives la ing importance to names, which left to the selves, would vanish from remembrance. Fr this principle Dryden did not often depart; complaints are for the greater part general; seldom pollutes his pages with an adverse nam He condescended indeed to a controversy w Settle, in which he perhaps may be consider rather as assaulting than repelling; and sin Settle is sunk into oblivion, his libel remai injurious only to himself.

Among answers to critics no poetical attac or altercations, are to be included; they are l other poems, effusions of genius, produced much to obtain praise as to obviate censu These Dryden practised, and in these he celled.

Of Collier, Blackmore, and Milbourne, has made mention in the preface of his " F bles." To the censure of Collier, whose remar may be rather termed admonitions than cri cisms, he makes little reply; being, at the a of sixty-eight, attentive to better things th the claps of a playhouse. He complains of C lier's rudeness, and the " horse-play of his r lery;" and asserts, that, " in many places he perverted by his glosses the meaning" of wh he censures; but in other things he confes that he is justly taxed; and says, with gr calmness and candour, " I have pleaded gui to all thoughts or expressions of mine that be truly accused of obscenity, immorality, profaneness, and retract them. If he be enemy, let him triumph; if he be my frie he will be glad of my repentance." Yet as best dispositions are imperfect, he left stand in the same book a reflection on Collier of gr asperity, and indeed of more asperity than w

Blackmore he represents as made his ene by the poem of " Absalom and Achitophe which " he thinks a little hard upon his fam patrons:" and charges him with borrowing plan of his " Arthur" from the Preface to venal, " though he had," says he, " the ba ness not to acknowledge his benefactor, but stead of it to traduce me in a libel."

The libel in which Blackmore traduced H was a " Satire upon Wit;" in which, hav lamented the exuberance of false wit and deficiency of true, he proposes that all should be recoined before it is current, and

points masters of assay, who shall reject all that is light or debased.

'Tis true, that when the coarse and worthless dross
Is purged away, there will be mighty loss:
E'en Congreve, Southern, manly Wycherly,
When thus refined, will grievous sufferers be.
Into the melting pot when Dryden comes,
What horrid stench will rise, what noisome fumes!
How will he shrink, when all his lewd allay
And wicked mixture, shall be purged away!

Thus stands the passage in the last edition; but in the original there was an abatement of the censure, beginning thus:

But what remains will be so pure, 'twill bear
Th' examination of the most severe.

Blackmore, finding the censure resented, and the civility disregarded, ungenerously omitted the softer part. Such variations discover a writer who consults his passions more than his virtue; and it may be reasonably supposed that Dryden imputes his enmity to its true cause.

Of Milbourne he wrote only in general terms, such as are always ready at the call of anger, whether just or not: a short extract will be sufficient. "He pretends a quarrel to me, that I have fallen foul upon priesthood; if I have, I am only to ask pardon of good priests, and am afraid his share of the reparation will come to little. Let him be satisfied that he shall never be able to force himself upon me for an adversary; I contemn him too much to enter into competition with him.

As for the rest of those who have written against me, they are such scoundrels that they deserve not the least notice to be taken of them; Blackmore and Milbourne are only distinguished from the crowd by being remembered to their infamy."

Dryden indeed discovered, in many of his writings, an affected and absurd malignity to priests and priesthood, which naturally raised him many enemies, and which was sometimes as unseasonably resented as it was exerted. Trapp is angry that he calls the sacrificer in the "Georgics" *the holy butcher:* the translation is not indeed ridiculous; but Trapp's anger arises from his zeal, not for the Author, but the priest; as if any reproach of the follies of paganism could be extended to the preachers of truth.

Dryden's dislike of the priesthood is imputed by Langbaine, and I think by Brown, to a repulse which he suffered when he solicited ordination; but he denies, in the preface to his "Fables," that he ever designed to enter into the church; and such a denial he would not have hazarded, if he could have been convicted of falsehood.

Malevolence to the clergy is seldom at a great distance from irreverence of religion, and Dryden affords no exception to this observation. His writings exhibit many passages, which, with all the allowance that can be made for characters and occasions, are such as piety would not have admitted, and such as may vitiate light and unprincipled minds. But there is no reason for supposing that he disbelieved the religion which he disobeyed. He forgot his duty rather than disowned it. His tendency to profaneness is th effect of levity, negligence, and loose conversation, with a desire of accommodating himself to the corruption of the times, by venturing to be wicked as far as he durst. When he professed himself a convert to popery, he did not pretend to have received any new conviction of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity.

The persecution of critics was not the worst of his vexations; he was much more disturbed by the importunities of want. His complaints of poverty are so frequently repeated, either with the dejection of weakness sinking in helpless misery, or the indignation of merit claiming its tribute from mankind, that it is impossible not to detest the age which could impose on such a man the necessity of such solicitations, or not to despise the man who could submit to such solicitations without necessity.

Whether by the world's neglect, or his own imprudence, I am afraid that the greatest part of his life was passed in exigencies. Such outcries were surely never uttered but in severe pain. Of his supplies or his expenses no probable estimate can now be made. Except the salary of the laureat, to which King James added the office of Historiographer, perhaps with some additional emoluments, his whole revenue seems to have been casual; and it is well known that he seldom lives frugally who lives by chance. Hope is always liberal; and they that trust her promises make little scruple of revelling to-day on the profits of the morrow.

Of his plays the profit was not great; and of the produce of his other works very little intelligence can be had. By discoursing with the late amiable Mr. Tonson, I could not find that any memorials of the transactions between his predecessor and Dryden had been preserved, except the following papers:

"I do hereby promise to pay John Dryden Esq. or order, on the 25th of March, 1699, the sum of two hundred and fifty guineas, in consideration of ten thousand verses, which the said John Dryden, Esq. is to deliver to me, Jacob Tonson, when finished, whereof seven thousand five hundred verses, more or less, are already in the said Jacob Tonson's possession. And I do hereby farther promise, and engage myself to make up the said sum of two hundred and fifty guineas three hundred pounds sterling to the said John Dryden, Esq. his executors, administrators, or assigns, at the beginning of the second impression of the said ten thousand verses.

"In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this 20th day of March, 1698-9.

"Jacob Tonson.

"Sealed and delivered, being first duly stamped, pursuant to the acts of Parliament for that purpose, in the presence of

"Ben. Portlock,
Will. Congreve."

"March 24, 1698.

"Received then of Mr. Jacob Tonson the sum of two hundred sixty-eight pounds fifteen shillings, in pursuance of an agreement for ten thousand verses, to be delivered by me to the said Jacob Tonson, whereof I have already delivered to him about seven thousand five hundred, more or less: he the said Jacob Tonson being obliged to make up the foresaid sum of two hundred sixty-eight pounds fifteen shillings three hundred pounds, at the beginning of the second impression of the foresaid ten thousand verses;

"I say, received by me,

"John Dryden.

"Witness, Charles Dryden."

Two hundred and fifty guineas, at 1*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.* is 268*l.* 15*s.*

It is manifest, from the dates of this contract, that it relates to the volume of "Fables," which contains about twelve thousand verses, and for which therefore the payment must have been afterwards enlarged.

I have been told of another letter yet remaining, in which he desires Tonson to bring him money, to pay for a watch which he had ordered for his son, and which the maker would not leave without the price.

The inevitable consequence of poverty is dependence. Dryden had probably no recourse in his exigencies but to his bookseller. The particular character of Tonson I do not know; but the general conduct of traders was much less liberal in those times than in our own; their views were narrower, and their manners grosser. To the mercantile ruggedness of that race, the delicacy of the poet was sometimes exposed. Lord Bolingbroke, who in his youth had cultivated poetry, related to Dr. King, of Oxford, that one day when he visited Dryden, they heard, as they were conversing, another person entering the house. "This," said Dryden, "is Tonson. You will take care not to depart before he goes away: for I have not completed the sheet which I promised him; and if you leave me unprotected, I must suffer all the rudeness to which his resentment can prompt his tongue."

What rewards he obtained for his poems, besides the payment of the bookseller, cannot be known. Mr. Derrick, who consulted some of his relations, was informed that his "Fables" obtained five hundred pounds from the Dutchess of Ormond; a present not unsuitable to the magnificence of that splendid family; and he quotes Moyle, as relating that forty pounds were paid by a musical society for the use of "Alexander's Feast."

In those days the economy of government was yet unsettled, and the payments of the Exchequer were dilatory and uncertain; of this disorder there is reason to believe that the laureat sometimes felt the effects; for, in one of his prefaces, he complains of those, who, being entrusted with the distribution of the Prince's bounty, suffer those that depend upon it to languish in penury.

Of his petty habits or slight amusements, tradition has retained little. Of the only two men whom I have found, to whom he was personally known, one told me that at the house which he frequented, called Will's Coffee-house, the appeal upon any literary dispute was made to him: and the other related, that his armed chair, which in the winter had a settled and prescriptive place by the fire, was in the summer placed in the balcony, and that he called the two places his winter and his summer seat. This is all the intelligence which his two survivors afforded me.

One of his opinions will do him no honour in the present age, though in his own time, at least in the beginning of it, he was far from having it confined to himself. He put great confidence in the prognostications of judicial astrology. In the Appendix to the Life of Congreve is a narrative of some of his predictions wonderfully fulfilled; but I know not the writer's means of information, or character of veracity. That he had the configurations of the horoscope in his mind, and considered them as influencing the affairs of men, he does not forbear to hint.

> The utmost malice of the stars is past.—
> Now frequent *trines* the happier lights among,
> And *high-rais'd Jove*, from his dark prison freed,
> Those weights took off that on his planet hung,
> Will gloriously the new laid works succeed.

He has elsewhere shown his attention to the planetary powers; and in the preface to his "Fables" has endeavoured obliquely to justify his superstition by attributing the same to some of the ancients. The letter, added to this narrative, leaves no doubt of his notions or practice.

So slight and so scanty is the knowledge which I have been able to collect concerning the private life and domestic manners of a man whom every English generation must mention with reverence as a critic and a poet.

DRYDEN may be properly considered as the father of English criticism, as the writer

who first taught us to determine upon princ-ples the merit of composition. Of our former poets, the greatest dramatist wrote without rules, conducted through life and nature by a genius that rarely misled, and rarely deserted him. Of the rest, those who knew the laws of propriety had neglected to teach them.

Two Arts of English Poetry were written in the days of Elizabeth by Webb and Puttenham, from which something might be learned, and a few hints had been given by Jonson and Cowley; but Dryden's "Essay on Dramatic Poetry" was the first regular and valuable treatise on the art of writing.

He who, having formed his opinions in the present age of English literature, turns back to peruse this dialogue, will not perhaps find much increase of knowledge, or much novelty of instruction; but he is to remember, that critical principles were then in the hands of a few, who had gathered them partly from the ancients, and partly from the Italians and French. The structure of dramatic poems was then not generally understood. Audiences applauded by instinct; and poets perhaps often pleased by chance.

A writer who has obtained his full purpose loses himself in his own lustre. Of an opinion which is no longer doubted, the evidence ceases to be examined. Of an art universally practised, the first teacher is forgotten. Learning once made popular is no longer learning; it has the appearance of something which we have betowed upon ourselves, as the dew appears to rise from the field which it refreshes.

To judge rightly of an author, we must transport ourselves to his time, and examine what were the wants of his contemporaries, and what were his means of supplying them. That which is easy at one time was difficult at another. Dryden at least imported his science, and gave his country what it wanted before; or rather, he imported only the materials, and manufactured them by his own skill.

The dialogue on the drama was one of his first essays of criticism, written when he was yet a timorous candidate for reputation, and therefore laboured with that diligence which he might allow himself somewhat to remit, when his name gave sanction to his positions, and his love of the public was abated, partly by custom, and partly by success. It will not be easy to find, in all the opulence of our language, a treatise so skilfully variegated with successive representations of opposite probabilities, so enlivened with imagery, so brightened with illustrations. His portraits of the English dramatists are wrought with great spirit and diligence. The account of Shakspeare may stand as a perpetual model of encomiastic criticism; exact without minuteness, and lofty without exaggeration. The praise lavished by Longinus, on the attestation of the heroes of Marathon by Demosthenes, fades away before it. In a few lines is exhibited a character, so extensive in its comprehension, and so curious in its limitations, that nothing can be added, diminished, or reformed; nor can the editors and admirers of Shakspeare, in all their emulation of reverence, boast of much more than of having diffused and paraphrased this epitome of excellence, of having changed Dryden's gold for baser metal, of lower value, though of greater bulk.

In this, and in all his other essays on the same subject, the criticism of Dryden is the criticism of a poet; not a dull collection of theorems, nor a rude detection of faults, which perhaps the censor was not able to have committed; but a gay and vigorous dissertation, where delight is mingled with instruction, and where the author proves his right of judgment by his power of performance.

The different manner and effect with which critical knowledge may be conveyed, was perhaps never more clearly exemplified than in the performances of Rymer and Dryden. It was said of a dispute between two mathematicians, "malim cum Scaligero errare, quam cum Clavio recte sapere;" that "it was more eligible to go wrong with one, than right with the other." A tendency of the same kind every mind must feel at the perusal of Dryden's prefaces and Rymer's discourses. With Dryden we are wandering in quest of Truth; whom we find, if we find her at all, dressed in the graces of elegance: and, if we miss her, the labour of the pursuit rewards itself; we are led only through fragrance and flowers. Rymer, without taking a nearer, takes a rougher way; every step is to be made through thorns and brambles; and Truth, if we meet her, appears repulsive by her mien, and ungraceful by her habit. Dryden's criticism has the majesty of a queen; Rymer's has the ferocity of a tyrant.

As he had studied with great diligence the art of poetry, and enlarged or rectified his notions, by experience perpetually increasing, he had his mind stored with principles and observations; he poured out his knowledge with little labour; for of labour, notwithstanding the multiplicity of his productions, there is sufficient reason to suspect that he was not a lover. To write *con amore*, with fondness for the employment, with perpetual touches and retouches, with unwillingness to take leave of his own idea, and an unwearied pursuit of unattainable perfection, was, I think, no part of his character.

His criticism may be considered as general or occasional. In his general precepts, which depend upon the nature of things, and the structure of the human mind, he may doubtless be safely recommended to the confidence of the reader; but his occasional and particular posi-

tions were sometimes interested, sometimes negligent, and sometimes capricious. It is not without reason that Trapp, speaking of the praises which he bestows on Palamon and Arcite, says, "Novimus judicium Drydeni de poemate quodam Chauceri, pulchro sane illo, et admodum laudando, nimirum quod non modo vere epicum sit, set Iliada etiam atque Æneada æquet, imo superet. Sed novimus eodem tempore viri illius maximi non semper accuratissimas esse censuras, nec ad severissimam critices normam exactas; illo judice id plerumque optimum est, quod nunc præ manibus habet, et in quo nunc occupatur."

He is therefore by no means constant to himself. His defence and desertion of dramatic rhyme is generally known. Spence, in his remarks on Pope's "Odyssey," produced what he thinks an unconquerable quotation from Dryden's preface to the "Æneid," in favour of translating an epic poem into blank verse; but he forgets that when his author attempted the "Iliad," some years afterward, he departed from his own decision, and translated into rhyme.

When he has any objection to obviate, or any license to defend, he is not very scrupulous about what he asserts, nor very cautious, if the present purpose be served, not to entangle himself in his own sophistries. But, when all arts are exhausted, like other hunted animals, he sometimes stands at bay; when he cannot disown the grossness of one of his plays, he declares that he knows not any law that prescribes morality to a comic poet.

His remarks on ancient or modern writers are not always to be trusted. His parallel of the versification of Ovid with that of Claudian has been very justly censured by Sewel.* His comparison of the first line of Virgil with the first of Statius is not happier. Virgil, he says, is soft and gentle, and would have thought Statius mad, if he had heard him thundering out

Quæ superimposito moles geminata colosso.

Statius perhaps heats himself, as he proceeds, to exaggeration somewhat hyperbolical; but undoubtedly Virgil would have been too hasty, if he had condemned him to straw for one sounding line. Dryden wanted an instance, and the first that occurred was impressed into the service.

What he wishes to say, he says at hazard; he cited Gorbuduc, which he had never seen; gives a false account of Chapman's versification; and discovers, in the preface to his "Fables," that he translated the first book of the "Iliad" without knowing what was in the second.

* Preface to Ovid's "Metamorphoses."—Dr. J.

It will be difficult to prove that Dryden ev made any great advances in literature. A having distinguished himself at Westminst under the tution of Busby, who advanced h scholars to a height of knowledge very rare attained in grammar-schools, he resided afte wards at Cambridge; it is not to be suppose that his skill in the ancient languages was de cient, compared with that of common student but his scholastic acquisitions seem not propo tionate to his opportunities and abilities. H could not, like Milton or Cowley, have ma his name illustrious merely by his learning. H mentions but a few books, and those such as in the beaten track of regular study; fro which, if ever he departs, he is in danger losing himself in unknown regions.

In his dialogue on the drama, he pronounc with great confidence that the Latin tragedy "Medea" is not Ovid's, because it is not suf ciently interesting and pathetic. He mig have determined the question upon surer ev dence; for it is quoted by Quintilian as t work of Seneca; and the only line which r mains in Ovid's play, for one line is left us, not there to be found. There was therefore n need of the gravity of conjecture, or the discu sion of plot or sentiment, to find what was a ready known upon higher authority than su discussions can ever reach.

His literature, though not always free fro ostentation, will be commonly found either c vious, and made his own by the art of dressi it. or superficial, which by what he gives, sho what he wanted: or erroneous, hastily c lected, and negligently scattered.

Yet it cannot be said that his genius is ev unprovided of matter, or that his fancy la guishes in penury of ideas. His works abou with knowledge, and sparkle with illustratio There is scarcely any science or faculty th does not supply him with occasional images a lucky similitudes; every page discovers a m very widely acquainted both with art and t ture, and in full possession of great stores of tellectual wealth. Of him that knows muc is natural to suppose that he has read with c gence: yet I rather believe that the knowle of Dryden was gleaned from accidental int gence and various conversations, by a quick prehension, a judicious selection, and a ha memory, a keen appetite of knowledge, an powerful digestion; by vigilance that perm nothing to pass without notice, and a hab reflection that suffered nothing useful to be A mind like Dryden's, always curious, alw active, to which every understanding was p to be associated, and of which every one soli the regard, by an ambitious display of hin had a more pleasant, perhaps a nearer w knowledge than by the silent progress of sol reading. I do not suppose that he de

books, or intentionally neglected them; but that he was carried out, by the impetuosity of his genius, to more vivid and speedy instructors; and that his studies were rather desultory and fortuitous than constant and systematical.

It must be confessed that he scarcely ever appears to want book-learning but when he mentions books; and to him may be transferred the praise which he gives his master Charles:

> His conversation, wit, and parts,
> His knowledge in the noblest useful arts
> Were such, dead authors could not give,
> But habitudes of those that live:
> Who, lighting him, did greater lights receive;
> He drain'd from all, and all they knew,
> His apprehensions quick, his judgment true;
> That the most learn'd with shame confess,
> His knowledge more, his reading only less.

Of all this, however, if the proof be demanded, I will not undertake to give it; the atoms of probability, of which my opinion has been formed, lie scattered over all his works: and by him who thinks the question worth his notice, his works must be perused with very close attention.

Criticism, either didactic or defensive, occupies almost all his prose, except those pages which he has devoted to his patrons; but none of his prefaces were ever thought tedious. They have not the formality of a settled style, in which the first half of the sentence betrays the other. The pauses are never balanced, nor the periods modelled; every word seems to drop by chance, though it falls into its proper place. Nothing is cold or languid; the whole is airy, animated, and vigorous; what is little, is gay; what is great, is splendid. He may be thought to mention himself too frequently; but, while he forces himself upon our esteem, we cannot refuse him to stand high in his own. Every thing is excused by the play of images, and the sprightliness of expression. Though all is easy, nothing is feeble: though all seems careless, there is nothing harsh; and though since his earlier works more than a century has passed, they have nothing yet uncouth or obsolete.

He who writes much will not easily escape a manner—such a recurrence of particular modes as may be easily noted. Dryden is always *another and the same;* he does not exhibit a second time the same elegances in the same form, nor appears to have any art other than that of expressing with clearness what he thinks with vigour. His style could not easily be imitated, either seriously or ludicrously; for, being always equable and always varied, it has no prominent or discriminative characters. The beauty who is totally free from disproportion of parts and features, cannot be ridiculed by an overcharged resemblance.

From his prose, however, Dryden derives only his accidental and secondary praise; the veneration with which his name is pronounced by every cultivator of English literature, is paid to him as he refined the language, improved the sentiments, and tuned the numbers of English poetry.

After about half a century of forced thoughts, and rugged metre, some advances towards nature and harmony had been already made by Waller and Denham; they had shown that long discourses in rhyme grew more pleasing when they were broken into couplets, and that verse consisted not only in the number but the arrangement of syllables.

But though they did much, who can deny that they left much to do? Their works were not many, nor were their minds of very ample comprehension. More examples of more modes of composition were necessary for the establishment of regularity, and the introduction of propriety in word and thought.

Every language of a learned nation necessarily divides itself into diction, scholastic and popular, grave and familiar, elegant and gross; and from a nice distinction of these different parts arises a great part of the beauty of style. But, if we except a few minds, the favourites of nature, to whom their own original rectitude was in the place of rules, this delicacy of selection was little known to our authors; our speech lay before them in a heap of confusion; and every man took for every purpose what chance might offer him.

There was therefore before the time of Dryden no poetical diction, no system of words at once refined from the grossness of domestic use, and free from the harshness of terms appropriated to particular arts. Words too familiar, or too remote, defeat the purpose of a poet. From those sounds which we hear on small or on coarse occasions, we do not easily receive strong impressions, or delightful images; and words to which we are nearly strangers, whenever they occur, draw that attention on themselves which they should transmit to things.

Those happy combinations of words which distinguished poetry from prose had been rarely attempted: we had few elegances or flowers of speech; the roses had not yet been plucked from the bramble, or different colours had not been joined to enliven one another.

It may be doubted whether Waller and Denham could have over-borne the prejudices which had long prevailed, and which even then were sheltered by the protection of Cowley. The new versification, as it was called, may be considered as owing its establishment to Dryden; from whose time it is apparent that English poetry has had no tendency to relapse to its former savageness.

The affluence and comprehension of our lan-

guage is very illustriously displayed in our poetical translations of ancient writers; a work which the French seem to relinquish in despair, and which we were long unable to perform with dexterity. Ben Jonson thought it necessary to copy Horace almost word by word; Feltham, his contemporary and adversary, considers it as indispensably requisite in a translation to give line for line. It is said that Sandys, whom Dryden calls the best versifier of the last age, has struggled hard to comprise every book of the English "Metamorphoses" in the same number of verses with the original. Holiday had nothing in view but to show that he understood his author, with so little regard to the grandeur of his diction, or the volubility of his numbers, that his metres can hardly be called verses; they cannot be read without reluctance, nor will the labour always be rewarded by understanding them. Cowley saw that such copiers were a servile race: he asserted his liberty, and spread his wings so boldly that he left his authors. It was reserved for Dryden to fix the limits of poetical liberty, and give us just rules and examples of translation.

When languages are formed upon different principles, it is impossible that the same modes of expression should always be elegant in both. While they run on together, the closest translation may be considered as the best; but when they divaricate, each must take its natural course. Where correspondence cannot be obtained, it is necessary to be content with something equivalent. "Translation, therefore," says Dryden, "is not so loose as paraphrase, nor so close as metaphrase."

All polished languages have different styles; the concise, the diffuse, the lofty, and the humble. In the proper choice of style consists the resemblance which Dryden principally exacts from the translator. He is to exhibit his author's thoughts in such a dress of diction as the author would have given them, had his language been English: rugged magnificence is not to be softened; hyperbolical ostentation is not to be repressed; nor sententious affectation to have its point blunted. A translator is to be like his author; it is not his business to excel him.

The reasonableness of these rules seems sufficient for the vindication; and the effects produced by observing them were so happy, that I know not whether they were ever opposed but by Sir Edward Sherburne, a man whose learning was greater than his powers of poetry, and who, being better qualified to give the meaning than the spirit of Seneca, has introduced his version of three tragedies by a defence of close translation. The authority of Horace which the new translators cited in defence of their practice, he has, by a judicious explanation, taken fairly from them; but reason wants not Horace to support it.

It seldom happens that all the necessary causes concur to any great effect: will is wanting to power, or power to will, or both are impeded by external obstructions. The exigencies in which Dryden was condemned to pass his life are reasonably supposed to have blasted his genius, to have driven out his works in a state of immaturity, and to have intercepted the full blown elegance which longer growth would have supplied.

Poverty, like other rigid powers, is sometimes too hastily accused. If the excellence of Dryden's works was lessened by his indigence, the number was increased: and I know not how it will be proved, that if he had written less he would have written better; or that indeed he would have undergone the toil of an author, if he had not been solicited by something more pressing than the love of praise.

But, as is said by his "Sebastian,"

> What had been, is unknown; what is, appears.

We know that Dryden's several productions were so many successive expedients for his support; his plays were therefore often borrowed, and his poems were almost all occasional.

In an occasional performance no height of excellence can be expected from any mind, however fertile in itself, and however stored with acquisitions. He whose work is general and arbitrary has the choice of his matter, and takes that which his inclination and his studies have best qualified him to display and decorate. He is at liberty to delay his publication till he has satisfied his friends and himself, till he has reformed his first thoughts by subsequent examination, and polished away those faults which the precipitance of ardent composition is likely to leave behind it. Virgil is related to have poured out a great number of lines in the morning, and to have passed the day in reducing them to fewer.

The occasional poet is circumscribed by the narrowness of his subject. Whatever can happen to man has happened so often that little remains for fancy or invention. We have been all born; we have most of us been married, and so many have died before us, that our death can supply but few materials for a poet. To the fate of princes the public has an interest, and what happens to them, of good or evil, the poets have always considered a business for the Muse. But after so many inauguratory gratulations, nuptial hymns, and funeral dirges, he must be highly favoured by nature, or by fortune, who says any thing not said before. Even war and conquest, however splendid, suggest no new images; the triumphant chariot of a victorious monarch can be decked only with those ornaments that have graced his predecessors.

Not only matter but time is wanting. The poem must not be delayed till the occasion is forgotten. The lucky moments of animated imagination cannot be attended; elegances and illustrations cannot be multiplied by gradual accumulation; the composition must be despatched, while conversation is yet busy, and admiration fresh; and haste is to be made, lest some other event should lay hold upon mankind.

Occasional compositions may however secure to a writer the praise both of learning and facility; for they cannot be the effect of long study, and must be furnished immediately from the treasures of the mind.

The death of Cromwell was the first public event which called forth Dryden's poetical powers. His heroic stanzas have beauties and defects; the thoughts are vigorous, and, though not always proper, show a mind replete with ideas; the numbers are smooth; and the diction, if not altogether correct, is elegant and easy.

Davenant was perhaps at this time his favourite author, though "Gondibert" never appears to have been popular; and from Davenant he learned to please his ear with the stanza of four lines alternately rhymed.

Dryden very early formed his versification; there are in this early production no traces of Donne's or Jonson's ruggedness; but he did not so soon free his mind from the ambition of forced conceits. In his verses on the Restoration, he says of the King's exile,

> He, toss'd by fate—
> Could taste no sweets of youth's desired age,
> But found his life too true a pilgrimage.

And afterwards, to show how virtue and wisdom are increased by adversity, he makes this remark:

> Well might the ancient poets then confer,
> On Night the honour'd name of *counsellor*,
> Since struck with rays of prosperous fortune blind,
> We light alone in dark afflictions find.

His praise of Monk's dexterity comprises such a cluster of thoughts unallied to one another, as will not elsewhere be easily found:

> 'Twas Monk, whom Providence design'd to loose
> Those real bonds false freedom did impose.
> The blessed saints that watch'd this turning scene
> Did from their stars with joyful wonder lean,
> To see small clues draw vastest weights along,
> Not in their bulk, but in their order strong.
> Thus pencils can by one slight touch restore
> Smiles to that changed face that wept before.
> With ease such fond chimeras we pursue,
> As fancy frames, for fancy to subdue:
> But, when ourselves to action we betake,
> It shuns the mint like gold that chemists make.
> How hard was then his task, at once to be
> What in the body natural we see!
> Man's Architect distinctly did ordain
> The charge of muscles, nerves, and of the brain,
> Through viewless conduits spirits to dispense
> The springs of motion from the seat of sense:
> 'Twas not the hasty product of a day,
> But the well ripened fruit of wise delay.
> He, like a patient angler, ere he strook,
> Would let them play awhile upon the hook.
> Our healthful food the stomach labours thus,
> At first embracing what it straight doth crush.
> Wise leaches will not vain receipts obtrude,
> While growing pains pronounce the humours crude;
> Deaf to complaints they wait upon the ill,
> Till some safe crisis authorize their skill.

He had not yet learned, indeed he never learned well, to forbear the improper use of mythology. After having rewarded the heathen deities for their care,

> With Alga who the sacred altar strows?
> To all the sea-gods Charles an offering owes;
> A bull to thee, Portunus, shall be slain;
> A ram to you, ye Tempests of the Main.

He tells us, in the language of religion,

> Prayer storm'd the skies, and ravish'd Charles from thence,
> As heav'n itself is took by violence.

And afterwards mentions one of the most awful passages of Sacred History.

Other conceits there are, too curious to be quite omitted; as,

> For, by example most we sinn'd before,
> And, glass-like, clearness mix'd with frailty bore.

How far he was yet from thinking it necessary to found his sentiments on nature, appears from the extravagance of his fictions and hyperboles:

> The winds, that never moderation knew,
> Afraid to blow too much, too faintly blew;
> Or, out of breath with joy, could not enlarge
> Their straiten'd lungs.——
> It is no longer motion cheats your view;
> As you meet it, the land approacheth you;
> The land returns, and in the white it wears
> The marks of penitence and sorrow bears.

I know not whether this fancy, however little be its value, was not borrowed. A French poet read to Malherbe some verses, in which he represents France as moving out of its place to receive the King. "Though this," said Malherbe, "was in my time, I do not remember it."

His poem on the "Coronation" has a more even tenor of thought. Some lines deserve to be quoted:

> You have already quench'd sedition's brand;
> And zeal, that burnt it, only warms the land;

The jealous sects that durst not trust their cause,
So far from their own will as to the laws,
Him for their umpire and their synod take,
And their appeal alone to Cæsar make.

Here may be found one particle of that old versification, of which, I believe, in all his works, there is not another:

Nor is it duty, or our hope alone,
Creates that joy, but full *fruition*.

In the verses to the Lord Chancellor Clarendon, two years afterwards, is a conceit so hopeless at the first view, that few would have attempted it; and so successfuly laboured, that though at last it gives the reader more perplexity than pleasure, and seems hardly worth the study that it costs, yet it must be valued as a proof of a mind at once subtle and comprehensive:

In open prospect nothing bounds our eye,
Until the earth seems join'd unto the sky:
So in this hemisphere our utmost view
Is only bounded by our king and you:
Our sight is limited where you are join'd,
And beyond that no farther heaven can find.
So well your virtues do with his agree,
That though your orbs of different greatness be,
Yet both are for each other's use disposed,
His to inclose, and yours to be inclosed.
Nor could another in your room have been,
Except an emptiness had come between.

The comparison of the Chancellor of the Indies leaves all resemblance too far behind it:

And as the Indies were not found before
Those rich perfumes which from the happy shore
The winds upon their balmy wings convey'd,
Whose guilty sweetness first their world betray'd;
So by your counsels we are brought to view
A new and undiscover'd world in you.

There is another comparison, for there is little else in the poem, of which, though perhaps it cannot be explained into plain prosaic meaning, the mind perceives enough to be delighted, and readily forgives its obscurity for its magnificence:

How strangely active are the arts of peace,
Whose restless motions less than wars do cease!
Peace is not freed from labour, but from noise;
And war more force, but not more pains employs.
Such is the mighty swiftness of your mind,
That, like the earth's, it leaves our sense behind:
While you so smoothly turn and roll our sphere,
That rapid motion does but rest appear.
For as in nature's swiftness, with the throng
Of flying orbs while ours is borne along,
All seems at rest to the deluded eye,
Mov'd by the soul of the same harmony:
So, carried on by your unwearied care,
We rest in peace, and yet in motion share.

To this succeed four lines, which perhaps afford Dryden's first attempt at those penetrating remarks on human nature, for which he seems to have been peculiarly formed:

Let envy then those crimes within you see,
From which the happy never must be free;
Envy, that does with misery reside,
The joy and the revenge of ruin'd pride.

Into this poem he seems to have collected all his powers; and after this he did not often bring upon his anvil such stubborn and unmalleable thoughts; but, as a specimen of his abilities to unite the most unsociable matter, he has concluded with lines, of which I think not myself obliged to tell the meaning:

Yet unimpair'd with labours, or with time,
Your age but seems to a new youth to climb.
Thus heavenly bodies do our time beget,
And measure change, but share no part of it:
And still it shall without a weight increase,
Like this new year, whose motions never cease.
For since the glorious course you have begun
Is led by Charles, as that is by the Sun,
It must both weightless and immortal prove,
Because the centre of it is above.

In the "Annus Mirabilis" he returned to the quatrain, which from that time he totally quitted, perhaps from experience of its inconvience, for he complains of its difficulty. This is one of his greatest attempts. He had subjects equal to his abilities, a great naval war, and the fire of London. Battles have always been described in heroic poetry; but a sea-fight and artillery had yet something of novelty. New arts are long in the world before poets describe them; for they borrow every thing from their predecessors, and commonly derive very little from nature or from life. Boileau was the first French writer that had ever hazarded in verse the mention of modern war, or the effects of gunpowder. We, who are less afraid of novelty, had already possession of those dreadful images. Waller had described a sea-fight. Milton had not yet transferred the invention of fire-arms to the rebellious angels.

This poem is written with great diligence yet does not fully answer the expectation raised by such subjects and such a writer. With the stanza of Davenant he has sometimes his vein of parenthesis and incidental disquisition, and stops his narrative for a wise remark.

The general fault is, that he affords more sentiment than description, and does not so much impress scenes upon the fancy, as deduce consequences and make comparisons.

The initial stanzas have rather too much resemblance to the first lines of Waller's poem on the war with Spain; perhaps such a beginning is natural, and could not be avoided without affectation. Both Waller and Dryden might take their hint from the poem on the civil war of Rome, "Orbem jam totum," &c.

Of the King collecting his navy, he says,

It seems, as every ship their sovereign knows,
His awful summons they so soon obey:
So hear the scaly herds when Proteus blows,
And so to pasture follow through the sea.

It would not be hard to believe that Dryden had written the two first lines seriously, and that some wag had added the two latter in burlesque. Who would expect the lines that immediately follow, which are indeed perhaps indecently hyperbolical, but certainly in a mode totally different?

To see this fleet upon the ocean move,
Angels drew wide the curtains of the skies;
And Heaven, as if there wanted lights above,
For tapers made two glaring comets rise.

The description of the attempt at Bergen will afford a very complete specimen of the descriptions in this poem:

And now approach'd their fleet from India, fraught
With all the riches of the rising sun:
And precious sand from southern climates brought,
The fatal regions where the war begun.

Like hunted castors, conscious of their store,
Their way-laid wealth to Norway's coast they bring:
Then first the North's cold bosom spices bore,
And Winter brooded on the Eastern Spring.

By the rich scent we found our perfumed prey,
Which, flank'd with rocks, did close in covert lie:
And round about their murd'ring cannon lay
At once to threaten and invite the eye.

Fiercer than cannon, and than rocks more hard,
The English undertake th' unequal war.
Seven ships alone, by which the port is barr'd,
Besiege the Indies, and all Denmark dare.

These fight like husbands, but like lovers those;
These fain would keep, and those more fain enjoy:
And to such height their frantic passion grows,
That what both love, both hazard to destroy:

Amidst whole heaps of spices lights a ball,
And now their odours arm'd against them fly;
Some preciously by shatter'd porcelain fall,
And some by aromatic splinters die:

And, though by tempests of the prize bereft,
In Heaven's inclemency some ease we find;
Our foes we vanquish'd by our valour left,
And only yielded to the seas and wind.

In this manner is the sublime too often mingled with the ridiculous. The Dutch seek a shelter for a wealthy fleet: this surely needed no illustration; yet they must fly, not like all the rest of mankind on the same occasion, but "like hunted castors;" and they might with strict propriety be hunted; for we winded them by our noses — their perfumes betrayed them. The *husband* and the *lover*, though of more dignity than the castor, are images too domestic to mingle properly with the horrors of war. The two quatrains that follow are worthy of the Author.

The account of the different sensations with which the two fleets retired, when the night parted them, is one of the fairest flowers of English poetry;

The night comes on, we eager to pursue
The combat still, and they ashamed to leave;
Till the last streaks of dying day withdrew,
And doubtful moonlight did our rage deceive.

In th' English fleet each ship resounds with joy,
And loud applause of their great leader's fame;
In fiery dreams the Dutch they still destroy,
And, slumbering, smile at the imagin'd flame.

Not so the Holland fleet, who tired and done,
Stretch'd on their decks, like weary oxen lie;
Faint sweats all down their mighty members run,
(Vast bulks, which little souls but ill supply.)

In dreams they fearful precipices tread,
Or, shipwreck'd, labour to some distant shore:
Or, in dark churches, walk among the dead;
They wake with horror, and dare sleep no more.

It is a general rule in poetry, that all appropriated terms of art should be sunk in general expressions, because poetry is to speak a universal language. This rule is still stronger with regard to arts not liberal, or confined to few; and therefore far removed from common knowledge; and of this kind, certainly, is technical navigation. Yet Dryden was of opinion, that a sea-fight ought to be described in the nautical language; "and certainly," says he, "as those, who in a logical disputation keep to general terms, would hide a fallacy, so those who do it in poetical description would veil their ignorance."

Let us then appeal to experience: for by experience at last we learn as well what will please as what will profit. In the battle, his terms seem to have been blown away; but he deals them liberally in the dock:

So here some pick out bullets from the side,
Some drive old okum through each seam and rift:
Their left hand does the calking-iron guide,
The rattling mallet with the right they lift.

With boiling pitch another near at hand
(From friendly Sweden brought) the seams instops;
Which, well laid o'er, the salt-sea waves withstand,
And shake them from the rising beak in drops.

Some the gall'd ropes with dauby marling bind,
Or sear-cloth masts with strong tarpawling coats:
To try new shrouds one mounts into the wind,
And one below their ease or stiffness notes.

I suppose there is not one term which every reader does not wish away.

His digression to the original and progress of

navigation, with his prospect of the advancement which it shall receive from the Royal Society, then newly instituted, may be considered as an example seldom equalled of seasonable excursion and artful return.

One line, however, leaves me discontented; he says, that, by the help of the philosophers,

> Instructed ships shall sail to quick commerce,
> By which remotest regions are allied.—

Which he is constrained to explain in a note "by a more exact measure of longitude." It had better become Dryden's learning and genius to have laboured science into poetry, and have shown, by explaining longitude, that verse did not refuse the ideas of philosophy.

His description of the fire is painted by resolute meditation, out of a mind better formed to reason than to feel. The conflagration of a city, with all its tumults of concomitant distress, is one of the most dreadful spectacles which this world can offer to human eyes; yet it seems to raise little emotion in the breast of the poet; he watches the flame coolly from street to street, with now a reflection, and now a simile, till at last he meets the King, for whom he makes a speech, rather tedious in a time so busy; and then follows again the progress of the fire.

There are, however, in this part some passages that deserve attention; as in the beginning;

> The diligence of trades and noiseful gain,
> And luxury, more late, asleep were laid!
> All was the Night's, and in her silent reign
> No sound the rest of Nature did invade
> In this deep quiet——

The expression "All was the Night's," is taken from Seneca, who remarks on Virgil's line,

Omnia noctis erant, placida composta quiete,

that he might have concluded better,

Omnia noctis erant.

The following quatrain is vigorous and animated:

> The ghosts of traitors from the bridge descend
> With bold fanatic spectres to rejoice;
> About the fire into a dance they bend,
> And sing their sabbath notes with feeble voice.

His prediction of the improvements which shall be made in the new city is elegant and poetical, and with an event which poets cannot always boast has been happily verified. The poem concludes with a simile that might have better been omitted.

Dryden, when he wrote this poem, seems not yet fully to have formed his versification, or settled his system of propriety.

From this time he addicted himself almost wholly to the stage, "to which," says he, "my genius never much inclined me," merely as the most profitable market for poetry. By writing tragedies in rhyme, he continued to improve his diction and his numbers. According to the opinion of Harte, who had studied his works with great attention, he settled his principles of versification in 1676, when he produced the play of "Aureng Zebe;" and, according to his own account of the short time in which he wrote "Tyrannic Love," and "The State of Innocence," he soon obtained the full effect of diligence, and added facility to exactness.

Rhyme has been so long banished from the theatre, that we know not its effects upon the passions of an audience: but it has this convenience, that sentences stand more independent on each other, and striking passages are therefore easily selected and retained. Thus the description of night in "The Indian Emperor," and the rise and fall of empire in "The Conquest of Granada," are more frequently repeated than any lines in "All for Love," or "Don Sebastian."

To search his plays for vigorous sallies and sententious elegances, or to fix the dates of any little pieces which he wrote by chance, or by solicitation, were labour too tedious and minute.

His dramatic labours did not so wholly absorb his thoughts, but that he promulgated the laws of translation in a preface to the English Epistles of Ovid; one of which he translated himself, and another in conjunction with the Earl of Mulgrave.

"Absalom and Achitophel" is a work so well known, that a particular criticism is superfluous. If it be considered as a poem political and controversial, it will be found to comprise all the excellences of which the subject is susceptible; acrimony of censure, elegance of praise, artful delineation of characters, variety and vigour of sentiment, happy turns of language, and pleasing harmony of numbers; and all these raised to such a height as can scarcely be found in any other English composition.

It is not, however, without faults; some lines are inelegant or improper, and too many are irreligiously licentious. The original structure of the poem was defective; allegories drawn to great length will always break; Charles could not run continually parallel with David.

The subject had likewise another inconvenience; it admitted little imagery or description; and a long poem of mere sentiments easily becomes tedious; though all the parts are forcible; and every line kindles new rapture, the reader, if not relieved by the interposition of something that soothes the fancy, grows weary of admiration, and defers the rest.

As an approach to the historical truth was necessary, the action and catastrophe were not in the Poet's power; there is therefore an unpleasing disproportion between the beginning and the end. We are alarmed by a faction formed of many sects, various in their principles, but agreeing in their purpose of mischief; formidable for their numbers, and strong by their supports; while the King's friends are few and weak. The chiefs on either part are set forth to view; but, when expectation is at the height, the King makes a speech, and

Henceforth a series of new times began.

Who can forbear to think of an enchanted castle, with a wide moat and lofty battlements, walls of marble and gates of brass, which vanishes at once into air, when the destined knight blows his horn before it?

In the second part, written by Tate, there is a long insertion, which, for its poignancy of satire, exceeds any part of the former. Personal resentment, though no laudable motive to satire, can add great force to general principles. Self-love is a busy prompter.

"The Medal," written upon the same principles with "Absalom and Achitophel," but upon a narrower plan, gives less pleasure, though it discovers equal abilities in the writer. The superstructure cannot extend beyond the foundation; a single character or incident cannot furnish as many ideas as a series of events, or multiplicity of agents. This poem, therefore, since time has left it to itself, is not much read, nor perhaps generally understood; yet it abounds with touches both of humorous and serious satire. The picture of a man whose pretensions to mischief are such that his best actions are but inability of wickedness, is very skilfully delineated and strongly coloured:

Power was his aim; but, thrown from that pretence,
The wretch turn'd loyal in his own defence,
And malice reconcil'd him to his prince.
Him, in the anguish of his soul, he served;
Rewarded faster still than he deserved:
Behold him now exalted into trust;
His counsels oft convenient, seldom just;
E'en in the most sincere advice he gave,
He had a grudging still to be a knave.
The frauds, he learn'd in his fanatic years,
Made him uneasy in his lawful gears,
At least as little honest as he could,
And, like white witches, mischievously good.
To this first bias, longingly, he leans:
And rather would be great by wicked means.

The "Threnodia," which, by a term I am afraid neither authorized nor analogical, he calls "Augustalis," is not among his happiest productions. Its first and obvious defect is the irregularity of its metre, to which the ears of that age, however, were accustomed. What is worse, it has neither tenderness nor dignity; it is neither magnificent nor pathetic. He seems to look round him for images which he cannot find, and what he has he distorts by endeavouring to enlarge them. "He is," he says, "petrified with grief;" but the marble sometimes relents, and trickles in a joke:

The sons of art all med'cines tried,
And every noble remedy applied:
With emulation each essay'd
His utmost skill: *nay, more, they pray'd:*
Was never losing game with better conduct play'd.

He had been a little inclined to merriment before, upon the prayers of a nation for their dying sovereign: nor was he serious enough to keep heathen fables out of his religion:

With him the innumerable crowd of armed prayers
Knock'd at the gates of heaven, and knock'd aloud
The first well-meaning rude petitioners
All for his life assail'd the throne,
All would have bribed the skies by offering up their own

So great a throng not Heaven itself could bar
'Twas almost borne by force as in the giants' war.
The prayers, at least, for his reprieve, were heard;
His death, like Hezekiah's, was deferred.

There is throughout the composition a desire of splendour without wealth. In the conclusion he seems too much pleased with the prospect of the new reign to have lamented his old master with much sincerity.

He did not miscarry in this attempt for want of skill either in lyric or elegiac poetry. His poem on the death of Mrs. Killegrew is undoubtedly the noblest ode that our language ever has produced. The first part flows with a torrent of enthusiasm. *Fervet immensusque ruit.* All the stanzas indeed are not equal. An imperial crown cannot be one continued diamond: the gems must be held together by some less valuable matter.

In his first "Ode for Cecilia's Day," which is lost in the splendour of the second, there are passages which would have dignified any other poet. The first stanza is vigorous and elegant, though the word *diapason* is too technical, and the rhymes are too remote from one another.

From harmony, from heavenly harmony,
This universal frame began;
When Nature underneath a heap of jarring atoms lay;
And could not heave her head,
The tuneful voice was heard from high,
Arise, ye more than dead.
Then cold and hot, and moist and dry,
In order to their stations leap,
And music's power obey.
From harmony, from heavenly harmony,
This universal frame began:
From harmony to harmony

Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
The *diapason* closing full in man.

The conclusion is likewise striking; but it includes an image so awful in itself, that it can owe little to poetry: and I could wish the antithesis of music untuning had found some other place.

As from the power of sacred lays
The spheres began to move,
And sung the great Creator's praise
To all the bless'd above:

So, when the last and dreadful hour
This crumbling pageant shall devour,
The trumpet shall be heard on high,
The dead shall live, the living die,
And music shall untune the sky.

Of his skill in elegy he has given a specimen in his *Eleonora*, of which the following lines discover their Author:

Though all these rare endowments of the mind
Were in a narrow space of life confined,
The figure was with full perfection crown'd,
Though not so large an orb, as truly round:
As when in glory, through the public place,
The spoils of conquer'd nations were to pass,
And but one day for triumph was allow'd,
The consul was constrain'd his pomp to crowd;
And so the swift procession hurry'd on,
That all, though not distinctly, might be shown:
So, in the straiten'd bounds of life confined
She gave but glimpses of her glorious mind;
And multitudes of virtues pass'd along;
Each pressing foremost in the mighty throng,
Ambitious to be seen, and then make room
For greater multitudes that were to come.
Yet unemployed no minute slipp'd away;
Moments were precious in so short a stay.
The haste of Heaven to have her was so great,
That some were single acts, though each complete;
And every act stood ready to repeat.

This piece, however, is not without its faults; there is so much likeness in the initial comparison, that there is no illustration. As a king would be lamented, Eleonora was lamented:

As, when some great and gracious monarch dies,
Soft whispers, first, and mournful murmurs, rise
Among the sad attendants; then the sound
Soon gathers voice, and spreads the news around,
Through town and country, till the dreadful blast
Is blown to distant colonies at last,
Who then, perhaps, were offering vows in vain
For his long life, and for his happy reign:
So slowly, by degrees, unwilling Fame
Did matchless Eleonora's fate proclaim,
Till public as the loss the news became.

This is little better than to say in praise of a shrub, that it is as green as a tree; or of a brook, that it waters a garden, as a river waters a country.

Dryden confesses that he did not know the lady whom he celebrates: the praise beir therefore inevitably general, fixes no impressio upon the reader, nor excites any tendency love, nor much desire of imitation. Knowled of the subject is to the poet what durable ma terials are to the architect.

The "Religio Laici," which borrows i title from the "Religio Medici" of Browne, almost the only work of Dryden which can b considered as a voluntary effusion; in thi therefore, it might be hoped, that the full effu gence of his genius would be found. But u happily the subject is rather argumentativ than poetical; he intended only a specimen metrical disputation:

And this unpolish'd rugged verse I chose,
As fittest for discourse, and nearest prose.

This, however, is a composition of great excel lence in its kind, in which the familiar is ver properly diversified with the solemn, and th grave with the humorous; in which metre h neither weakened the force, nor clouded the pe spicuity of argument; nor will it be easy to fin another example equally happy of this middl kind of writing, which, though prosaic in som parts, rises to high poetry in others, and ne ther towers to the skies, nor creeps along th ground.

Of the same kind, or not far distant from i is "The Hind and Panther," the longest all Dryden's original poems; an allegory in tended to comprise and to decide the controvers been the Romanists and Protestants. Th scheme of the work is injudicious and incon modious; for what can be more absurd tha that one beast should counsel another to rest he faith upon a pope and council? He seems wel enough skilled in the usual topics of argumen endeavours to show the necessity of an infallibl judge, and reproaches the reformers with wan of unity: but is weak enough to ask, why since we see without knowing how, we ma not have an infallible judge without knowin where?

The Hind at one time is afraid to drink the common brook, because she may be wor ried; but walking home with the Panthe talks by the way of the Nicene fathers, and last declares herself to be of the catholic church

This absurdity was very properly ridiculed i the "City Mouse" and "Country Mouse" Montague and Prior; and in the detection an censure of the incongruity of the fiction chief consists the value of their performance, whic whatever reputation it might obtain by the hel of temporary passions, seems, to readers almost century distant, not very forcible or animated.

Pope, whose judgment was perhaps a litt bribed by the subject, used to mention th poem as the most correct specimen of Dryden

versification. It was indeed written when he had completely formed his manner, and may be supposed to exhibit, negligence excepted, his deliberate and ultimate scheme of metre.

We may therefore reasonably infer, that he did not approve the perpetual uniformity which confines the sense to couplets, since he has broken his lines in the initial paragraph.

A milk-white Hind, immortal and unchanged
Fed on the lawns, and in the forest ranged:
Without unspotted, innocent within
She feared no danger, for she knew no sin.
Yet had she oft been chased with horns and hounds,
And Scythian shafts, and many-winged wounds
Aim'd at her heart; was often forced to fly,
And doom'd to death, though fated not to die.

These lines are lofty, elegant, and musical, notwithstanding the interruption of the pause, of which the effect is rather increase of pleasure by variety, than offence by ruggedness.

To the first part it was his intention, he says, "to give the majestic turn of heroic poesy:" and perhaps he might have executed his design not unsuccessfully, had not an opportunity of satire, which he cannot forbear, fallen sometimes in his way. The character of a presbyterian, whose emblem is the Wolf, is not very heroically majestic:

More haughty than the rest, the wolfish race
Appear with belly gaunt and famish'd face;
Never was so deform'd a beast of grace.
His ragged tail betwixt his legs he wears,
Close clapp'd for shame; but his rough crest he rears,
And pricks up his predestinating ears.

His general character of the other sorts of beasts that never go to church, though sprightly and keen, has, however, not much of heroic poesy:

These are the chief; to number o'er the rest,
And stand like Adam naming every beast,
Were weary-work; nor will the Muse describe
A slimy-born, and sun-begotten tribe,
Who, far from steeples and their sacred sound,
In fields their sullen conventicles found.
These gross, half-animated lumps I leave;
Nor can I think what thoughts they can conceive;
But, if they think at all, 'tis sure no higher
Than matter, put in motion, may aspire:
Souls that can scarce ferment their mass of clay,
So drossy, so divisible are they,
As would but serve pure bodies for allay;
Such souls as shards produce, such beetle things
As only buz to Heaven with evening wings;
Strike in the dark, offending but by chance:
Such are the blindfold blows of ignorance.
They know no being, and but hate a name;
To them the Hind and Panther are the same.

One more instance, and that taken from the narrative part, where style was more in his choice, will show how steadily he kept his resolution of heroic dignity.

For when the herd, sufficed, did late repair
To ferney heaths and to their forest lair,
She made a mannerly excuse to stay,
Proffering the Hind to wait her half the way;
That, since the sky was clear, an hour of talk
Might help her to beguile the tedious walk.
With much good will the motion was embraced,
To chat awhile on their adventures past:
Nor had the grateful Hind so soon forgot
Her friend and fellow-sufferer in the plot.
Yet, wondering how of late she grew estranged,
Her forehead cloudy and her count'nance changed,
She thought this hour th' occasion would present
To learn her secret cause of discontent,
Which well she hoped might be with ease redress'd,
Considering her a well-bred civil beast,
And more a gentlewoman than the rest.
After some common talk what rumours ran,
The lady of the spotted muff began.

The second and third parts he professes to have reduced to diction more familiar and more suitable to dispute and conversation; the difference is not, however, very easily perceived: the first has familiar, and the two others have sonorous, lines. The original incongruity runs through the whole; the King is now Cæsar, and now the Lion; and the name Pan is given to the Supreme Being.

But when this constitutional absurdity is forgiven, the poem must be confessed to be written with smoothness of metre, a wide extent of knowledge, and an abundant multiplicity of images; the controversy is embellished with pointed sentences, diversified by illustrations, and enlivened by sallies of invective. Some of the facts to which allusions are made are now become obscure, and perhaps there may be many satirical passages little understood.

As it was by its nature a work of defiance, a composition which would naturally be examined with the utmost acrimony of criticism, it was probably laboured with uncommon attention, and there are, indeed, few negligences in the subordinate parts. The original impropriety, and the subsequent unpopularity of the subject, added to the ridiculousness of its first elements, has sunk it into neglect; but it may be usefully studied, as an example of poetical ratiocination, in which the argument suffers little from the metre.

In the poem "On the Birth of the Prince of Wales," nothing is very remarkable but the exorbitant adulation and that insensibility of the precipice on which the King was then standing, which the Laureate apparently shared with the rest of the courtiers. A few months cured him of controversy, dismissed him from court, and made him again a play-wright and translator.

Of Juvenal there had been a translation by Stapylton, and another by Holiday; neither of them is very poetical. Stapylton is more smooth; and Holiday's is more esteemed for the learning of his notes. A new version was proposed

to the poets of that time, and undertaken by them in conjunction. The main design was conducted by Dryden, whose reputation was such that no man was unwilling to serve the Muses under him.

The general character of this translation will be given, when it is said to preserve the wit, but to want the dignity of the original. The peculiarity of Juvenal is a mixture of gayety and stateliness, of pointed sentences, and declamatory grandeur. His points have not been neglected; but his grandeur none of the band seemed to consider as necessary to be imitated, except Creech, who undertook the thirteenth satire. It is therefore, perhaps, possible to give a better representation of that great satirist, even in those parts which Dryden himself has translated, some passages excepted, which will never be excelled.

With Juvenal was published Persius, translated wholly by Dryden. This work, though, like all other productions of Dryden, it may have shining parts, seems to have been written merely for wages, in a uniform mediocrity, without any eager endeavour after excellence, or laborious effort of the mind.

There wanders an opinion among the readers of poetry, that one of these satires is an exercise of the school. Dryden says, that he once translated it at school; but not that he preserved or published the juvenile performance.

Not long afterwards he undertook perhaps the most arduous work of its kind, a translation of Virgil, for which he had shown how well he was qualified by his version of the Pollio, and two episodes, one of Nisus and Euryalus, the other of Mezentius and Lausus.

In the comparison of Homer and Virgil, the discriminative excellence of Homer is elevation and comprehension of thought, and that of Virgil is grace and splendour of diction. The beauties of Homer are therefore difficult to be lost, and those of Virgil difficult to be retained. The massy trunk of sentiment is safe by its solidity, but the blossoms of elocution easily drop away. The author, having the choice of his own images, selects those which he can best adorn; the translator must, at all hazards, follow his original, and express thoughts which perhaps he would not have chosen. When to this primary difficulty is added the inconvenience of a language so much inferior in harmony to the Latin, it cannot be expected that they who read the "Georgics" and the "Æneid" should be much delighted with any version.

All these obstacles Dryden saw, and all these he determined to encounter. The expectation of his work was undoubtedly great; the nation considered its honour as interested in the event. One gave him the different editions of his author, another helped him in the subordinate parts. The arguments of the several book were given him by Addison.

The hopes of the public were not disappointed. He produced, says Pope, "the most no ble and spirited translation that I know in any language." It certainly excelled whatever ha appeared in English, and appears to have satisfied his friends, and for the most part to hav silenced his enemies. Milbourne, indeed, clergyman, attacked it; but his outrages seem to be the ebullitions of a mind agitated by stronger resentment than bad poetry can excite and previously resolved not to be pleased.

His criticism extends only to the *Preface Pastorals*, and *Georgics;* and, as he professes t give his antagonist an opportunity of reprisal he has added his own version of the first and fourth Pastorals, and the first Georgic. The world has forgotten his book; but since his attempt has given him a place in literary history I will preserve a specimen of his criticism, by inserting his remarks on the invocation before the first Georgic; and of his poetry, by annexing his own version.

Ver. 1.

" What makes a plenteous harvest, when to turn
The fruitful soil, and when to sow the corn.

It's *unlucky*, they say, *to stumble at the threshold* but what has a *plenteous harvest* to do here Virgil would not pretend to prescribe rules fo *that* which depends not on the *husbandman'* care, but the *disposition of Heaven* altogether Indeed, the *plenteous crop* depends somewhat o the *good method of tillage;* and where the *land* ill-manured, the *corn*, without a miracle, can b but *indifferent:* but the *harvest* may be *good* which is its *properest* epithet, though the *husbandman's skill* were never so *indifferent*. The next *sentence* is *too literal*, and *when to plough* ha been Virgil's meaning, and intelligible to ever body; and *when to sow the corn* is a needles *addition*."

Ver. 3.

" The care of sheep, of oxen, and of kine,
And when to geld the lambs, and shear the swine,

would as well have fallen under the *cura bov qui cultus habendo sit pecori*, as Mr. D.'s *dedu tion* of particulars."

Ver. 5.

" The birth and genius of the frugal bee
I sing, Mæcenas and I sing to thee.

But where did *experientia* ever signify *birth a genius?* or what ground was there for such *figure* in this place? How much more man is Mr. Ogylby's version!"

" What makes rich grounds, in what celestial sign
'Tis good to plough, and marry elms with vines;

What best fits cattle, what with sheep agrees,
And several arts improving frugal bees;
I sing, Mæcenas.

Which four lines, though faulty enough, are yet much more to the purpose than Mr. D.'s six."

Ver. 22.

" From fields and mountains to my song repair,

For *patrium linquens nemus, saltusque Lycæi*—Very well explained!"

Ver. 23, 24.

" Inventor Pallas, of the fattening oil,
Thou founder of the plough, and ploughman's toil!'

Written as if *these* had been *Pallas's invention. The ploughman's toil* 's impertinent."

Ver. 25.

" ——The shroud-like cypress——

Why *shroud-like?* Is a *cypress*, pulled up by the *roots*, which the *sculpture* in the *last Eclogue* fills Silvanus's hand with, so very like a *shroud?* Or did not Mr. D. think of that kind of *cypress* us'd often for *scarves and hatbands* at funerals formerly, or for *widows' veils*, &c.? if so, 'twas a *deep, good thought.*"

Ver. 26.

" ——————That wear
The royal honours and increase the year.

What's meant by *increasing the year?* Did the *gods* or *goddesses* add more *months*, or *days*, or *hours*, to it? Or how can *arva tueri* signify to *wear rural honours?* Is this to *translate*, or *abuse*, an *author?* The next *couplet* is borrowed from Ogylby, I suppose, because *less to the purpose* than ordinary."

Ver. 33.

" The patron of the world, and Rome's peculiar guard.

Idle, and none of Virgil's, no more than the sense of the *precedent couplet;* so again, he *interpolates* Virgil with that and *the round circle of the year to guide powerful of blessings, which thou strew'st around;* a ridiculous *Latinism*, and an *impertinent addition;* indeed the whole *period* is but one piece of *absurdity* and *nonsense*, as those who lay it with the *original* must find."

Ver. 42, 43.

" And Neptune shall resign the fasces of the sea.

Was he *consul* or *dictator* there?

And watery virgins for thy bed shall strive.

Both absurd *interpolations.*"

Ver. 47, 48.

" Where in the void of heaven a place is free,
Ah, happy D———n, *were* that place *for thee.*

But where is *that void?* Or, what does our *translator* mean by it? He knows what Ovid says *God* did to prevent such a *void* in heaven; perhaps this was then forgotten; but Virgil talks more sensibly."

Ver. 49.

" The scorpion ready to receive thy laws

No, he would not then have *gotten out of his way* so fast."

Ver. 56.

" Though Proserpine affects her silent seat.

What made *her* then so *angry* with *Ascalaphus*, for preventing her return? She was now mus'd to *Patience* under the *determinations of Fate*, rather than *fond* of her *residence.*"

Ver. 61, 62, 63.

" Pity the poet's and the ploughman's cares,
Interest thy greatness in our mean affairs,
And use thyself betimes to hear our prayers.

Which is such a wretched *perversion* of Virgil's *noble thought* as *Vicars* would have blush'd at: but Mr. Ogylby makes us some amends by his better lines:

" O wheresoe'er thou art, from thence incline,
And grant assistance to my bold design;
Pity, with me, poor husbandmen's affairs,
And now, as if translated, hear our prayers.

This is *sense*, and *to the purpose:* the other, poor *mistaken stuff.*"

Such were the strictures of Milbourne, who found few abettors, and of whom it may be reasonably imagined, that many who favoured his design were ashamed of his insolence.

When admiration had subsided, the translation was more coolly examined, and found, like all others, to be sometimes erroneous, and sometimes licentious. Those who could find faults, thought they could avoid them; and Dr. Brady attempted in blank verse a translation of the " Æneid," which, when dragged into the world, did not live long enough to cry. I have never seen it; but that such a version there is, or has been, perhaps some old catalogue informed me.

With not much better success, Trapp, when his Tragedy and his Prelections had given him reputation, attempted another blank version of the " Æneid;" to which, notwithstanding the slight regard with which it was treated, he had afterwards perseverance enough to add the

"Eclogues" and "Georgics." His book may continue in existence as long as it is the clandestine refuge of school-boys.

Since the English ear has been accustomed to the mellifluence of Pope's numbers, and the diction of poetry has become more splendid, new attempts have been made to translate Virgil; and all his works have been attempted by men better qualified to contend with Dryden. I will not engage myself in an invidious comparison, by opposing one passage to another; a work of which there would be no end, and which might be often offensive without use.

It is not by comparing line with line that the merit of great works is to be estimated, but by their general effects and ultimate result. It is easy to note a weak line, and write one more vigorous in its place; to find a happiness of expression in the original, and transplant it by force into the version: but what is given to the parts may be subducted from the whole, and the reader may be weary, though the critic may commend. Works of imagination excel by their allurement and delight; by their power of attracting and detaining the attention. That book is good in vain which the reader throws away. He only is the master who keeps the mind in pleasing captivity; whose pages are perused with eagerness, and in hope of new pleasure are perused again; and whose conclusion is perceived with no eye of sorrow, such as the traveller casts upon departing day.

By his proportion of this predomination I will consent that Dryden should be tried; of this, which, in opposition to reason, makes Ariosto the darling and the pride of Italy; of this, which in defiance of criticism, continues Shakspeare the sovereign of the drama.

His last work was his "Fables," in which he gave us the first example of a mode of writing which the Italians call *refaccimento*, a renovation of ancient writers, by modernizing their language. Thus the old poem of "Boiardo" has been new-dressed by Domenichi and Berni. The works of Chaucer, which upon this kind of rejuvenescence has been bestowed by Dryden, require little criticism. The tale of the Cock seems hardly worth revival; and the tory of "Palamon and Arcite," containing an action unsuitable to the times in which it is placed, can hardly be suffered to pass without censure of the hyperbolical commendation which Dryden has given it in the general Preface, and in a poetical Dedication, a piece where his original fondness of remote conceits seems to have revived.

Of the three pieces borrowed from Boccace, "Sigismunda" may be defended by the celebrity of the story. "Theodore and Honoria," though it contains not much moral, yet afforded opportunities of striking description. And "Cymon" was formerly a tale of such reputation, that at the revival of letters it was translated into Latin by one of the Beroalds.

Whatever subjects employed his pen, he was still improving our measures, and embellishing our language.

In this volume are interspersed some short original poems, which, with his prologues, epilogues, and songs, may be comprised in Congreve's remark, that even those, if he had written nothing else, would have entitled him to the praise of excellence in his kind.

One composition must however be distinguished. The "Ode for St. Cecilia's Day," perhaps the last effort of his poetry, has been always considered as exhibiting the highest flight of fancy, and the exactest nicety of art. This is allowed to stand without a rival. I indeed there is any excellence beyond it, in some other of Dryden's works that excellence must be found. Compared with the "Ode on Killegrew," it may be pronounced perhaps superior on the whole, but without any single part equal to the first stanza of the other.

It is said to have cost Dryden a fortnight's labour; but it does not want its negligences; some of the lines are without correspondent rhymes; a defect which I never detected but after an acquaintance of many years, and which the enthusiasm of the writer might hinder him from perceiving.

His last stanza has less emotion than the former; but it is not less elegant in the diction. The conclusion is vitious; the music of "Timotheus," which *raised a mortal to the skies*, has only a metaphorical power; that of "Cecilia," which *drew an angel down*, had a real effect. the crown, therefore, could not reasonably be divided.

In a general survey of Dryden's labours, he appears to have a mind very comprehensive by nature, and much enriched with acquired knowledge. His compositions are the effects of a vigorous genius operating upon large materials.

The power that predominated in his intellectual operations was rather strong reason than quick sensibility. Upon all occasions that were presented he studied rather than felt, and produced sentiments not such as nature enforces but meditation supplies. With the simple and elemental passions, as they spring separate in the mind, he seems not much acquainted; and seldom describes them but as they are complicated by the various relations of society, and confused in the tumults and agitations of life.

What he says of Love may contribute to the explanation of his character:

> Love various minds does variously inspire:
> It stirs in gentle bosoms gentle fire,
> Like that of incense on the altar laid;
> But raging flames tempestuous souls invade.
> A fire which every windy passion blows,
> With pride it mounts, or with revenge it glows

Dryden's was not one of the *gentle bosoms:* Love, as it subsists in itself, with no tendency out to the person loved, and wishing only for orresponding kindness; such Love as shuts out ll other interest, the Love of the Golden Age, vas too soft and subtle to put his faculties in notion. He hardly conceived it but in its turulent effervescence with some other desires; vhen it was inflamed by rivalry, or obstructed y difficulties; when it invigorated ambition, r exasperated revenge.

He is, therefore, with all his variety of excelence, not often pathetic; and had so little sensiility of the power of effusions purely natural, hat he did not esteem them in others: simpliity gave him no pleasure; and for the first art of his life he looked on Otway with conempt, though at last, indeed very late, he conessed that in his play *there* was *Nature, which the chief beauty.*

We do not always know our own motives. am not certain whether it was not rather the ifficulty which he found in exhibiting the genine operations of the heart, than a servile subnission to an injudicious audience, that filled is plays with false magnificence. It was neessary to fix attention; and the mind can be aptivated only by recollection, or by curiosity; y reviving natural sentiments, or impressing ew appearances of things; sentences were eadier at his call than images; he could more asily fill the ear with splendid novelty, than waken those ideas that slumber in the heart.

The favourite exercise of his mind was ratioination; and, that argument might not be too oon at an end, he delighted to talk of liberty nd necessity, destiny and contingence; these e discusses in the language of the school with o much profundity, that the terms which he ses are not always understood. It is indeed earning, but learning out of place.

When once he had engaged himself in disputation thoughts flowed in on either side: he was ow no longer at a loss; he had always objecions and solutions at command; "verbaque rovisam rem"—gave him matter for his verse, nd he finds without difficulty verse for his natter.

In comedy, for which he professes himself not aturally qualified, the mirth which he excites ill perhaps not be found so much to arise from ny original humour, or peculiarity of charac-er nicely distinguished and diligently pursued, from incidents and circumstances, artifices nd surprises; from jests of action rather than f sentiment. What he had of humorous or assionate, he seems to have had not from na-ure, but from other poets; if not always as a lagiary, at least as an imitator.

Next to argument, his delight was in wild and aring sallies of sentiment, in the irregular and ccentric violence of wit. He delighted to tread upon the brink of meaning, where light and darkness begin to mingle; to approach the precipice of absurdity, and hover over the abyss of unideal vacancy. This inclination sometimes produced nonsense which he knew; as,

> Move swiftly, Sun, and fly a lover's pace,
> Leave weeks and months behind thee in thy race,
> Amamel flies
> To guard thee from the demons of the air;
> My flaming sword above them to display,
> All keen, and ground upon the edge of day.

And sometimes it issued in absurdities, of which perhaps he was not conscious:

> Then we upon our orb's last verge shall go
> And see the ocean leaning on the sky:
> From thence our rolling neighbours we shall know,
> And on the lunar world securely pry.

These lines have no meaning; but may we not say, in imitation of Cowley on another book,

> 'Tis so like sense, 'twill serve the turn as well?

This endeavour after the grand and the new produced many sentiments either great or bulky, and many images either just or splendid:

> I am as free as Nature first made man,
> Ere the base laws of servitude began,
> When wild in woods the noble savage ran.

> —'Tis but because the living death ne'er knew,
> They fear to prove it as a thing that's new:
> Let me th' experiment before you try,
> I'll show you first how easy 'tis to die.

> —There with a forest of their darts he strove,
> And stood like Capaneus defying Jove,
> With his broad sword the boldest beating down,
> While Fate grew pale lest he should win the town,
> And turn'd the iron leaves of his dark book
> To make new dooms, or mend what it mistook.

> —I beg no pity for this mouldering clay;
> For if you give it burial, there it takes
> Possession of your earth:
> If burnt, and scatter'd in the air, the winds
> That strew my dust diffuse my royalty,
> And spread me o'er your clime; for where one atom
> Of mine shall light, know there Sebastian reigns.

Of these quotations the two first may be allowed to be great, the two latter only tumid.

Of such selection there is no end. I will add only a few more passages: of which the first, though it may not perhaps be quite clear in prose, is not too obscure for poetry, as the meaning that it has is noble:*

* I cannot see why Johnson has thought there was any want of clearness in this passage even in prose. Addison has given us almost the very same thought in very good prose: "If we look forward to Him (the Deity) for help, we shall never be in danger of

No, there is a necessity in fate,
Why still the brave bold man is fortunate;
He keeps his object ever full in sight;
And that assurance holds him firm and right;
'Irue, 'tis a narrow way that leads to bliss,
But right before there is no precipice;
Fear makes men look aside, and so their footing miss.

Of the images which the two following citations afford, the first is elegant, the second magnificent; whether either be just, let the reader judge:

What precious drops are these,
Which silently each other's track pursue,
Bright as young diamonds in their infant dew!

——Resign your castle——
—Enter, brave Sir: for, when you speak the word,
The gates shall open of their own accord;
The genius of the place its Lord shall meet,
And bow its towery forehead at your feet.

These bursts of extravagance Dryden calls the *Dalilahs of the Theatre;* and owns that many noisy lines of "Maximin and Almanzor" call out for vengeance upon him; "but I knew," says he, "that they were bad enough to please, even when I wrote them." There is surely reason to suspect that he pleased himself as well as his audience; and that these, like the harlots of other men, had his love, though not his approbation.

He had sometimes faults of a less generous and splendid kind. He makes, like almost all other poets, very frequent use of mythology, and sometimes connects religion and fable too closely without distinction.

He descends to display his knowledge with pedantic ostentation; as when, in translating Virgil, he says, *tack to the larboard*—and *veer starboard;* and talks in another work, of *virtue spooning before the wind.*—His vanity now and then betrays his ignorance:

They Nature's king through Nature's optics view'd;
Reversed, they view'd him lessen'd to their eyes.

He had heard of reversing a telescope, and unluckily reverses the object.

He is sometimes unexpectedly mean. When he describes the Supreme Being as moved by prayer to stop the fire of London, what is his expression?

A hollow crystal pyramid he takes,
In firmamental water dipp'd above,
Of this a broad extinguisher he makes
And hoods the flames that to their quarry strove

When he describes the last day, and the decisive tribunal, he intermingles this image:

When rattling bones together fly,
From the four quarters of the sky.

It was indeed never in his power to resist the temptation of a jest. In his "Elegy on Cromwell:"

No sooner was the Frenchman's cause embraced,
Than the light Monsieur the grave Don outweigh'd
His fortune turn'd the scale ——

He had a vanity, unworthy of his abilities to show, as may be suspected, the rank of the company with whom he lived, by the use of French words, which had then crept into conversation: such as *fraicheur* for *coolness*, *fougue* for *turbulence*, and a few more, none of which the language has incorporated or retained. They continue only where they stood first, perpetual warnings to future innovators.

These are his faults of affectation; his faults of negligence are beyond recital. Such is the unevenness of his compositions, that ten lines are seldom found together without something of which the reader is ashamed. Dryden was no rigid judge of his own pages; he seldom struggled after supreme excellence, but snatched in haste what was within his reach; and when he could content others, was himself contented. He did not keep present to his mind an idea of pure perfection; nor compare his works, such as they were, with what they might be made. He knew to whom he should be opposed. He had more music than Waller, more vigour than Denham, and more nature than Cowley; and from his contemporaries he was in no danger. Standing therefore in the highest place, he had no care to rise by contending with himself; but while there was no name above his own, was willing to enjoy fame on the easiest terms.

He was no lover of labour. What he thought sufficient, he did not stop to make better; and allowed himself to leave many parts unfinished in confidence that the good lines would overbalance the bad. What he had once written, he dismissed from his thoughts; and I believe there is no example to be found of any correction or improvement made by him after publication. The hastiness of his productions might be the effect of necessity; but his subsequent neglect could hardly have any other cause than impatience of study.

What can be said of his versification will be little more than a dilatation of the praise given it by Pope:

Waller was smooth: but Dryden taught to join
The varying verse, the full-resounding line,
The long majestic march, and energy divine.

falling down those precipices which our imagination is apt to create. Like those who walk upon a line, if we keep our eye fixed upon one point we may step forward securely; whereas an imprudent or cowardly glance on either side will infallibly destroy us." Spec. No. 615.—J. B.

Some improvements had been already made in English numbers; but the full force of our language was not yet felt; the verse that was smooth was commonly feeble. If Cowley had sometimes a finished line, he had it by chance. Dryden knew how to choose the flowing and the sonorous words; to vary the pauses, and adjust the accents; to diversify the cadence, and yet preserve the smoothness of his metre.

Of triplets and Alexandrines, though he did not introduce the use, he established it. The triplet has long subsisted among us. Dryden seems not to have traced it higher than to Chapman's Homer; but it is to be found in Phaer's Virgil, written in the reign of Mary; and in Hall's "Satires," published five years before the death of Elizabeth.

The Alexandrine was, I believe, first used by Spenser, for the sake of closing his stanza with a fuller sound. We had a longer measure of fourteen syllables, into which the "Æneid" was translated by Phaer, and other works of the ancients by other writers; of which Chapman's "Iliad" was, I believe, the last.

The two first lines of Phaer's third "Æneid" will exemplify this measure:

When Asia's state was overthrown and Priam's kingdom stout,
All guiltless, by the power of gods above was rooted out.

As these lines had their break, or *cæsura*, always at the eighth syllable, it was thought, in time, commodious to divide them: and quarains of lines alternately, consisting of eight and six syllables, make the most soft and pleasing of our lyric measure: as,

Relentless Time, destroying power,
Which stone and brass obey;
Who giv'st to ev'ry flying hour
To work some new decay.

In the Alexandrine, when its power was once felt, some poems, as Drayton's "Polyalbion," were wholly written; and sometimes the measures of twelve and fourteen syllables were interchanged with one another. Cowley was the first that inserted the Alexandrine at pleasure among the heroic lines of ten syllables, and from him Dryden professes to have adopted it.*

The triplet and Alexandrine are not universally approved. Swift always censured them, and wrote some lines to ridicule them. In examining their propriety, it is to be considered, that the essence of verse is regularity, and its ornament is variety. To write verse, is to dispose syllables and sounds harmonically by some known and settled rule; a rule however lax enough to substitute similitude for identity, to admit change without breach of order, and to relieve the ear without disappointing it. Thus a Latin hexameter is formed from dactyls and spondees differently combined; the English heroic admits of acute or grave syllables variously disposed. The Latin never deviates into seven feet, or exceeds the number of seventeen syllables; but the English Alexandrine breaks the lawful bounds, and surprises the reader with two syllables more than he expected.

The effect of the triplet is the same; the ear has been accustomed to expect a new rhyme in every couplet; but is on a sudden surprised with three rhymes together, to which the reader could not accommodate his voice, did he not obtain notice of the change from the braces of the margins. Surely there is something unskilful in the necessity of such mechanical direction.

Considering the metrical art simply as a science, and consequently excluding all casualty, we must allow that triplets and Alexandrines, inserted by caprice, are interruptions of that constancy to which science aspires. And though the variety which they produce may very justly be desired, yet to make poetry exact, there ought to be some stated mode of admitting them.

But till some such regulation can be formed, I wish them still to be retained in their present state. They are sometimes convenient to the poet. Fenton was of opinion, that Dryden was too liberal, and Pope too sparing in their use.

The rhymes of Dryden are commonly just, and he valued himself for his readiness in finding them; but he is sometimes open to objection.

It is the common practise of our poets to end the second line with a weak or grave syllable:

Together o'er the Alps methinks we fly,
Fill'd with ideas of fair Italy.

Dryden sometimes puts the weak rhyme in the first:

Laugh all the powers that favour tyranny,
And all the standing army of the sky.

Sometimes he concludes a period or paragraph with the first line of a couplet, which, though the French seem to do it without irregularity, always displeases in English poetry.

The Alexandrine, though much his favourite, is not always very diligently fabricated by him. It invariably requires a break at the sixth syl-

* This is an error. The Alexandrine inserted among heroic lines of ten syllables is found in many of the writers of Queen Elizabeth's reign. It will be sufficient to mention Hall, who has already been quoted for the use of the triplet:

As though the staring world hanged on his sleeve
Whenever he smiles to laugh, and when he sighs to grieve.
Hall's Sat. Book i. Sat. 7.

Take another instance:

For shame! or better write or Labeo write none.
Ibid. B. ii. Sat. 1.—T. B.

lable; a rule which the modern French poets never violate, but which Dryden sometimes neglected:

And with paternal thunder vindicates his throne."

Of Dryden's works it was said by Pope, that "he could select from them better specimens of every mode of poetry than any other English writer could supply." Perhaps no nation ever produced a writer that enriched his language with such a variety of models. To him we owe the improvement, perhaps the completion, of our metre, the refinement of our language, and much of the correctness of our sentiments. By him we were taught *sapere et fari*, to think naturally and express forcibly. Though Davies has reasoned in rhyme before him, it may be perhaps maintained that he was the first who joined argument with poetry. He showed us the true bounds of a translator's liberty. What was said of Rome, adorned by Augustus, may be applied by an easy metaphor to English poetry embellished by Dryden, *lateritiam invenit, marmoream reliquit*. He found it brick, and he left it marble.

The invocation before the "Georgics" is here inserted from Mr. Milbourne's version, that according to his own proposal, his verses may be compared with those which he censures.

What makes the richest tilth, beneath what signs
To plough, and when to match your elms and vines;
What care with flocks, and what with herds agrees,
And all the management of frugal bees;
I sing, Mæcenas! Ye immensely clear,
Vast orbs of light, which guide the rolling year!
Bacchus, and mother Ceres, if by you
We fatt'ning corn for hungry man pursue;
If, taught by you, we first the cluster prest,
And thin cold streams with sprightly juice refresht;
Ye fawns, the present numens of the field,
Wood-nymphs and fawns, your kind assistance yield;
Your gifts I sing; and thou, at whose fear'd stroke
From rending earth the fiery courser broke,
Great Neptune, O assist my artful song!
And thou to whom the woods and groves belong,
Whose snowy heifers on her flow'ry plains
In mighty herds the Cæan Isle maintains!
Pan, happy shepherd, if thy cares divine,
E'er to improve thy Mænalus incline,
Leave thy Lycæan wood and native grove
And with thy lucky smiles our work approve;
Be Pallas too, sweet oil's inventor, kind;
And he who first the crooked plough design'd,
Sylvanus, god of all the woods, appear,
Whose hands a new-drawn tender cypress bear!
Ye gods and goddesses, who e'er with love
Would guard our pastures, and our fields improve;
Ye, who new plants from unknown lands supply,
And with condensing clouds obscure the sky,
And drop them softly thence in fruitful showers;
Assist my enterprise, ye gentle powers!
And thou, great Cæsar! though we know not yet
Among what gods thou'lt fix thy lofty seat:
Whether thou'lt be the kind tutelar god
Of thy own Rome, or with thy awful nod
Guide the vast world, while thy great hand shall bear
The fruits and seasons of the turning year,
And thy bright brows thy mother's myrtles wear;
Whether thou'lt all the boundless ocean sway,
And seamen only to thyself shall pray;
Thule, the fairest island kneel to thee,
And, that thou may'st her son by marriage be,
Tethys will for the happy purchase yield
To make a dowry of her watery field:
Whether thou'lt add to heaven a brighter sign,
And o'er the summer months serenely shine;
Where between Cancer and Erigone,
There yet remains a spacious room for thee;
Where the hot Scorpion too his arm declines,
And more to thee than half his arch resigns;
Whate'er thou'lt be; for sure the realms below
No just pretence to thy command can show:
No such ambition sways thy vast desires,
Though Greece her own Elysian fields admires.
And now, at last, contented Proserpine,
Can all her mother's earnest prayers decline.
Whate'er thou'lt be, O guide our gentle course;
And with thy smiles our bold attempts enforce;
With me th' unknowing rustics' wants relieve,
And, though on earth, our sacred vows receive.

Mr. Dryden, having received from Rymer his "Remarks on the Tragedies of the last Age," wrote observations on the blank leaves; which, having been in the possession of Mr. Garrick, are by his favour communicated to the public, that no particle of Dryden may be lost.

"That we may less wonder why pity and terror are not now the only springs on which our tragedies move, and that Shakspeare may be more excused, Rapin confesses that the French tragedies now all run on the *tendre*, and gives the reason, because love is the passion which most predominates in our souls, and that therefore the passions represented become insipid, unless they are conformable to the thoughts of the audience. But it is to be concluded, that this passion works not now amongst the French so strongly as the other two did amongst the ancients. Amongst us, who have a stronger genius for writing, the operations from the writing are much stronger; for the raising of Shakspeare's passions is more from the excellency of the words and thoughts, than the justness of the occasion; and, if he has been able to pick single occasions, he has never founded the whole reasonably: yet, by the genius of poetry in writing, he has succeeded.

"Rapin attributes more to the *dictio*, that is to the words and discourse of a tragedy, than Aristotle has done, who places them in the last rank of beauties; perhaps, only last in order, because they are the last product of the design of the disposition or connection of its parts; the characters, of the manners of those characters, and of the thoughts proceeding from the manners. Rapin's words are remarkable: '"] not the admirable intrigue, the surprising event

and extraordinary incidents, that make the beauty of a tragedy: 'tis the discourses, when they are natural and passionate: so are Shakspeare's.'

"The parts of a poem, tragic or heroic, are,

"1. The fable itself.

"2. The order or manner of its contrivance, in relation of the parts to the whole.

"3. The manners, or decency of the characters, in speaking or acting what is proper for them, and proper to be shown by the poet.

"4. The thoughts which express the manners.

"5. The words which express those thoughts.

"In the last of these, Homer excels Virgil: Virgil all the other ancient poets; and Shakspeare all modern poets.

"For the second of these, the order: the meaning is, that a fable ought to have a beginning, middle, and an end, all just and natural; so that that part, *e. g.* which is the middle, could not naturally be the beginning or end, and so of the rest: all depend on one another, like the links of a curious chain. If terror and pity are only to be raised, certainly this author follows Aristotle's rules, and Sophocles and Euripides' example; but joy may be raised too, and that doubly, either by seeing a wicked man punished, or a good man at last fortunate; or perhaps indignation, to see wickedness prosperous, and goodness depressed: both these may be profitable to the end of a tragedy, reformation of manners; but the last improperly, only as it begets pity in the audience; though Aristotle, I confess, places tragedies of this kind in the second form.

"He who undertakes to answer this excellent critique of Mr. Rymer, in behalf of our English poets against the Greek, ought to do it in this manner: either by yielding to him the greatest part of what he contends for, which consists in this, that the *μῦθος*, *i. e.* the design and conduct of it, is more conducing in the Greeks to those ends of tragedy, which Aristotle and he propose, namely, to cause terror and pity; yet the granting this does not set the Greeks above the English poets.

"But the answerer ought to prove two things: First, That the fable is not the greatest masterpiece of a tragedy, though it be the foundation of it.

"Secondly, That other ends as suitable to the nature of tragedy may be found in the English, which were not in the Greek.

"Aristotle places the fable first; not *quoad dignitatem, sed quoad fundamentum:* for a fable never so movingly contrived to those ends of his, pity and terror, will operate nothing on our affections, except the characters, manners, thoughts, and words are suitable.

"So that it remains for Mr. Rymer to prove, that in all those, or the greatest part of them, we are inferior to Sophocles and Euripides; and this he has offered at, in some measure; but, I think, a little partially to the ancients.

"For the fable itself, 'tis in the English more adorned with episodes, and larger than in the Greek poets; consequently more diverting. For, if the action be but one, and that plain, without any counterturn of design or episode, *i. e.* under plot, how can it be so pleasing as the English, which have both underplot and a turned design, which keeps the audience in expectation of the catastrophe? whereas in the Greek poets we see through the whole design at first.

"For the characters, they are neither so many nor so various in Sophocles and Euripides, as in Shakspeare and Fletcher: only they are more adapted to those ends of tragedy which Aristotle commends to us, pity and terror.

"The manners flow from the characters, and consequently must partake of their advantages and disadvantages.

"The thoughts and words, which are the fourth and fifth beauties of tragedy, are certainly more noble and more poetical in the English than in the Greek, which must be proved by comparing them somewhat more equitably than Mr. Rymer has done.

"After all, we need not yield that the English way is less conducing to move pity and terror, because they often show virtue oppressed and vice punished: where they do not both, or either, they are not to be defended.

"And if we should grant that the Greeks performed this better, perhaps it may admit of dispute, whether pity and terror are either the prime, or at least the only ends of tragedy.

"'Tis not enough that Aristotle had said so; for Aristotle drew his models of tragedy from Sophocles and Euripides; and if he had seen ours, might have changed his mind. And chiefly we have to say (what I hinted on pity and terror, in the last paragraph save one), that the punishment of vice, and reward of virtue, are the most adequate ends of tragedy, because most conducing to good example of life. Now, pity is not so easily raised for a criminal (and the ancient tragedy always represents its chief person such) as it is for an innocent man; and the suffering of innocence and punishment of the offender is of the nature of English tragedy: contrarily, in the Greek, innocence is unhappy often, and the offender escapes. Then we are not touched with the sufferings of any sort of men so much as of lovers; and this was almost unknown to the ancients: so that they neither administered poetical justice, of which Mr. Rymer boasts, so well as we; neither knew they the best common-place of pity, which is love.

"He therefore unjustly blames us for not building on what the ancients left us; for it seems, upon consideration of the premises, that we have wholly finished what they began.

" My judgment on this piece is this: that it is extremely learned, but that the author of it is better read in the Greek than in the English poets; that all writers ought to study this critique, as the best account I have ever seen of the ancients; that the model of tragedy, he has here given, is excellent, and extremely correct; but that it is not the only model of all tragedy, because it is too much circumscribed in plot, characters, &c.; and, lastly, that we may be taught here justly to admire and imitate the ancients, without giving them the preference with this author, in prejudice to our own country.

" Want of method in this excellent treatise makes the thoughts of the author sometimes obscure.

" His meaning, that pity and terror are to be moved, is, that they are to be moved as the means conducing to the ends of tragedy, which are pleasure and instruction.

" And these two ends may be thus distinguished. The chief end of the poet is to please; for his immediate reputation depends on it.

" The great end of a poem is to instruct, which is performed by making pleasure the vehicle of that instruction; for poesy is an art, and all arts are made to profit.—*Rapin.*

" The pity, which the poet is to labour for, is for the criminal, not for those or him whom he has murdered, or who have been the occasion of the tragedy. The terror is likewise in the punishment of the same criminal; who, if he be represented too great an offender, will not be pitied; if altogether innocent, his punishment will be unjust.

" Another obscurity is, where he says, Sophocles perfected tragedy by introducing the third actor: that is, he meant three kinds of action: one company singing, or speaking; another playing on the music; a third dancing.

" To make a true judgment in this competition betwixt the Greek poets and the English, in tragedy:

" Consider, First, How Aristotle has defined a tragedy. Secondly, What he assigns the end of it to be. Thirdly, What he thinks the beauties of it. Fourthly, The means to attain the end proposed.

" Compare the Greek and English tragic poets justly, and without partiality, according to those rules.

" Then, Secondly, Consider whether Aristotle has made a just definition of tragedy, of its parts, of its ends, and of its beauties; and whether he, having not seen any others but those of Sophocles, Euripides, &c. had or truly could determine what all the excellences of tragedy are, and wherein they consist.

" Next, show in what ancient tragedy was deficient; for example, in the narrowness of its plots, and fewness of persons; and try whether that be not a fault in the Greek poets; and whether their excellency was so great, when the variety was visibly so little; or whether what they did was not very easy to do.

" Then make a judgment on what the English have added to their beauties: as, for example, not only more plot, but also new passions: as, namely, that of love, scarcely touched on by the ancients, except in this one example of Phædra, cited by Mr. Rymer: and in that how short they were of Fletcher!

" Prove also that love, being a heroic passion, is fit for tragedy, which cannot be denied, because of the example alleged of Phædra: and how far Shakspeare has outdone them in friendship, &c.

" To return to the beginning of this inquiry; consider if pity and terror be enough for tragedy to move; and I believe, upon a true definition of tragedy, it will be found that its work extends farther, and that it is to reform manners, by a delightful representation of human life in great persons, by way of dialogue. If this be true, then not only pity and terror are to be moved, as the only means to bring us to virtue, but generally love to virtue, and hatred to vice; by showing the rewards of one, and punishments of the other; at least by rendering virtue always amiable, though it be shown unfortunate; and vice detestable, though it be shown triumphant.

" If, then, the encouragement of virtue and discouragement of vice be the proper ends of poetry in tragedy, pity and terror, though good means are not the only. For all the passions, in their turns, are to be set in a ferment; as joy, anger, love, fear, are to be used as the poet's common-places; and a general concernment for the principal actors is to be raised, by making them appear such in their characters, their words, and actions, as will interest the audience in their fortunes.

" And if, after all, in a larger sense, pity comprehends this concernment for the good, and terror includes detestation for the bad, then let us consider whether the English have not answered this end of tragedy as well as the ancients, or perhaps better.

" And here Mr. Rymer's objections against these plays are to be impartially weighed, that we may see whether they are of weight enough to turn the balance against our countrymen.

" It is evident those plays, which he arraigns, have moved both those passions in a high degree upon the stage.

" To give the glory of this away from the poet, and to place it upon the actors, seems unjust.

" One reason is, because whatever actors they have found, the event has been the same; that is, the same passions have been always moved; which shows that there is something of force

and merit in the plays themselves, conducing to the design of raising these two passions: and suppose them ever to have been excellently acted, yet action only adds grace, vigour, and more life, upon the stage; but cannot give it wholly where it is not first. But, secondly, I dare appeal to those who have never seen them acted, if they have not found these two passions moved within them: and if the general voice will carry it, Mr. Rymer's prejudice will take off his single testimony.

"This, being matter of fact, is reasonably to be established by this appeal; as, if one man says it is night, when the rest of the world conclude it to be day, there needs no farther argument against him that it is so.

"If he urge that the general taste is depraved, his arguments to prove this can at best but evince that our poets took not the best way to raise those passions: but experience proves against him, that those means, which they have used, have been successful, and have produced them.

"And one reason of that success is, in my opinion, this; that Shakspeare and Fletcher have written to the genius of the age and nation in which they lived; for though nature, as he objects, is the same in all places, and reason too the same; yet the climate, the age, the disposition of the people, to whom a poet writes, may be so different, that what pleased the Greeks would not satisfy an English audience.

"And if they proceed upon a foundation of truer reason to please the Athenians than Shakspeare and Fletcher to please the English, it only shows that the Athenians were a more judicious people; but the poet's business is certainly to please the audience.

"Whether our English audience have been pleased hitherto with acorns, as he calls it, or with bread, is the next question; that is, whether the means which Shakspeare and Fletcher have used, in their plays, to raise those passions beforenamed, be better applied to the ends by the Greek poets than by them. And perhaps we shall not grant him this wholly: let it be yielded that a writer is not to run down with the stream, or to please the people by their usual methods, but rather to reform their judgments, it still remains to prove that our theatre needs this total reformation.

"The faults, which he has found in their design, are rather wittily aggravated in many places than reasonably urged; and as much may be returned on the Greeks by one who were as witty as himself.

"They destroy not if they are granted, the foundation of the fabric; only take away from the beauty of the symmetry; for example, the faults in the character of the King, in 'King and No-king,' are not, as he calls them, such as render him detestable, but only imperfections which accompany human nature, and are for the most part excused by the violence of his love; so that they destroy not our pity or concernment for him: this answer may be applied to most of his objections of that kind.

"And Rolla committing many murders, when he is answerable but for one, is too severely arraigned by him; for, it adds to our horror and detestation of the criminal; and poetic justice is not neglected neither; for we stab him in our minds for every offence which he commits; and the point, which the poet is to gain on the audience, is not so much in the death of an offender as the raising a horror of his crimes.

"That the criminal should neither be wholly guilty, nor wholly innocent, but so participating of both as to move both pity and terror, is certainly a good rule, but not perpetually to be observed; for that were to make all tragedies too much alike; which objection he foresaw, but has not fully answered.

"To conclude, therefore; if the plays of the ancients are more correctly plotted, ours are more beautifully written. And, if we can raise passions as high on worse foundations, it shows our genius in tragedy is greater; for in all other parts of it the English have manifestly excelled them."

The original of the following letter is preserved in the Library at Lambeth, and was kindly imparted to the public by the reverend Dr. Vyse.

Copy of an original letter from John Dryden, Esq. to his sons in Italy, from a MS. in the Lambeth Library, marked No. 935, p. 56.

(Superscribed)

"Al illustrissimo Sigre.
"Carlo Dryden Camariere
"d'Honore A.S.S.
"In Roma.
"Franca per Mantoua.

"Sept. the 3d, our style.

"Dear Sons,

"Being now at Sir William Bowyer's in the country, I cannot write at large, because I find myself somewhat indisposed with a cold, and am thick of hearing, rather worse than I was in town. I am glad to find, by your letter of July 26th, your style, that you are both in health, but wonder you should think me so negligent as to forget to give you an account of the ship in which your parcel is to come. I have written to you two or three letters concerning it, which I have sent by safe hands, as I told you, and doubt not but you have them before this can arrive to you. Being out of

town, I have forgotten the ship's name, which your mother will inquire and put it into her letter, which is joined with mine. But the master's name I remember: he is called Mr. Ralph Thorp; the ship is bound to Leghorn, consigned to Mr. Peter and Mr. Thomas Ball, merchants. I am of your opinion, that by Tonson's means almost all our letters have miscarried for this last year. But, however, he has missed of his design in the dedication, though he had prepared the book for it; for, in every figure of Æneas he has caused him to be drawn like King William, with a hooked nose. After my return to town, I intend to alter a play of Sir Robert Howard's, written long since, and lately put into my hands; it is called "The Conquest of China by the Tartars." It will cost me six weeks study, with the probable benefit of a hundred pounds. In the mean time I am writing a song for St. Cecilia's Feast, who, you know, is the patroness of music. This is troublesome, and no way beneficial; but I could not deny the stewards of the feast, who came in a body to me to desire that kindness, one of them being Mr. Bridgeman, whose parents are your mother's friends. I hope to send you thirty guineas between Michaelmas and Christmas, of which I will give you an account when I come to town. I remember the counsel you give me in your letter; but dissembling, though lawful in some cases, is not my talent; yet, for your sake, I will struggle with the plain openness of my nature, and keep in my just resentments against that degenerate order. In the mean time, I flatter not myself with any manner of hopes, but do my duty, and suffer for God's sake; being assured, before-hand, never to be rewarded, though the times should alter. Towards the latter end of this month, September, Charles will begin to recover his perfect health, according to his nativity, which, casting it myself, I am sure is true, and all things hitherto have happened accordingly to the very time that I predicted them: I hope at the same time to recover more health, according to my age. Remember me to poor Harry, whose prayers I earnestly desire. My Virgil succeeds in the world beyond its desert or my expectation. You know the profits might have been more; but neither my conscience nor my honour would suffer me to take them; but I can never repent of my constancy, since I am thoroughly persuaded of the justice of the cause for which I suffer. It has pleased God to raise up many friends to me amongst my enemies, though they who ought to have been my friends are negligent of me. I am called to dinner, and cannot go on with this letter, which I desire you to excuse; and am

"Your most affectionate father,

"JOHN DRYDEN."

SMITH.

EDMUND SMITH is one of those lucky writers who have, without much labour, attained high reputation, and who are mentioned with reverence rather for the possession than the exertion of uncommon abilities.

Of his life little is known; and that little claims no praise but what can be given to intellectual excellence seldom employed to any virtuous purpose. His character, as given by Mr. Oldisworth with all the partiality of friendship, which is said by Dr. Burton to show "what fine things one man of parts can say of another," and which, however, comprises great part of what can be known of Mr. Smith, it is better to transcribe at once than to take by pieces. I shall subjoin such little memorials as accident has enabled me to collect.

Mr. EDMUND SMITH was the only son of an eminent merchant, one Mr. Neale, by a daughter of the famous Baron Lechmere. Some misfortunes of his father, which were soon followed by his death, were the occasion of the son's being left very young in the hands of a near relation (one who married Mr. Neale's sister whose name was Smith.

This gentleman and his lady treated him as their own child, and put him to Westminster School, under the care of Dr. Busby; whence after the loss of his faithful and generous guardian (whose name he assumed and retained) he was removed to Christ-church, in Oxford, and there by his aunt handsomely maintained till her death; after which he continued a member of that learned and ingenious society till within five years of his own; though, some time before his leaving Christ-church, he was sent for by his mother to Worcester, and owned and acknowledged as her legitimate son; which had not been mentioned, but to wipe off the aspers

sions that were ignorantly cast by some on his birth. It is to be remembered, for our Author's honour, that, when at Westminster election he stood a candidate for one of the universities, he so signally distinguished himself by his conspicuous performances, that there arose no small contention between the representative electors of Trinity College, in Cambridge, and Christ-church, in Oxon, which of those two royal societies should adopt him as their own. But the electors of Trinity College having the preference of choice that year, they resolutely elected him; who yet, being invited at the same time to Christ-church, chose to accept of a studentship there. Mr. Smith's perfections, as well natural as acquired, seem to have been formed upon Horace's plan, who says, in his "Art of Poetry,"

—Ego nec studium sine divite vena,
Nec rude quid profit video ingenium; alterius sic
Altera poscit opem res, et conjurat amice.

He was endowed by nature with all those excellent and necessary qualifications which are previous to the accomplishment of a great man. His memory was large and tenacious, yet by a curious felicity chiefly susceptible of the finest impressions it received from the best authors he read, which it always preserved in their primitive strength and amiable order.

He had a quickness of apprehension and vivacity of understanding which easily took in and surmounted the most subtle and knotty parts of mathematics and metaphysics. His wit was prompt and flowing, yet solid and piercing; his taste delicate, his head clear, and his way of expressing his thoughts perspicuous and engaging. I shall say nothing of his person, which was yet so well turned, that no neglect of himself in his dress could render it disagreeable; insomuch that the fair sex, who observed and esteemed him, at once commended and reproved him by the name of the *handsome* sloven. An eager but generous and noble emulation grew up with him; which (as it were a rational sort of instinct) pushed him upon striving to excel in every art and science that could make him a credit to his College, and that college the ornament of the most learned and polite University; and it was his happiness to have several contemporaries and fellow-students who exercised and excited this virtue in themselves, and others thereby becoming so deservedly in favour with this age, and so good a proof of its nice discernment. His judgment, naturally good, soon ripened into an exquisite fineness and distinguishing sagacity, which, as it was active and busy, so it was vigorous and manly, keeping even paces with a rich and strong imagination, always upon the wing, and never tired with aspiring. Hence it was, that, though he writ as young as Cowley, he had no puerilities; and his earliest productions were so far from having any thing in them mean and trifling, that, like the junior compositions of Mr. Stepney, they may make gray authors blush. There are many of his first essays in oratory, in epigram, elegy, and epique, still handed about the University in manuscript, which show a masterly hand; and though maimed and injured by frequent transcribing, make their way into our most celebrated miscellanies, where they shine with uncommon lustre. Besides those verses in the Oxford books which he could not help setting his name to, several of his compositions came abroad under other names, which his own singular modesty and faithful silence strove in vain to conceal. The Encænia and public Collections of the University upon State Subjects were never in such esteem, either for elegy and congratulation, as when he contributed most largely to them; and it was natural for those who knew his peculiar way of writing to turn to his share in the work, as by far the most relishing part of the entertainment. As his parts were extraordinary, so he well knew how to improve them; and not only to polish the diamond, but enchase it in the most solid and durable metal. Though he was an academic the greatest part of his life, yet he contracted no sourness of temper, no spice of pedantry, no itch of disputation, or obstinate contention for the old or new philosophy, no assuming way of dictating to others, which are faults (though excusable) which some are insensibly led into who are constrained to dwell long within the walls of a private college. His conversation was pleasant and instructive; and what Horace said of Plotius, Varius, and Virgil, might justly be applied to him:

Nil ego contulerim jucundo sanus Amico.
Sat. v. l. 1.

As correct a writer as he was in his most elaborate pieces, he read the works of others with candour, and reserved his greatest severity for his own compositions; being readier to cherish and advance than damp or depress a rising genius, and as patient of being excelled himself (if any could excel him) as industrious to excel others.

It were to be wished he had confined himself to a particular profession who was capable of surpassing in any; but, in this, his want of application was in a great measure owing to his want of due encouragement.

He passed through the exercises of the College and University with unusual applause; and though he often suffered his friends to call him off from his retirements, and to lengthen out those jovial avocations, yet his return to his studies was so much the more passionate, and

his intention upon those refined pleasures of reading and thinking so vehement (to which his facetious and unbended intervals bore no proportion) that the habit grew upon him, and the series of meditation and reflection being kept up whole weeks together, he could better sort his ideas, and take in the sundry parts of a science at one view, without interruption or confusion. Some indeed of his acquaintance, who were pleased to distinguish between the wit and the scholar, extolled him altogether on the account of these titles; but others, who knew him better, could not forbear doing him justice as a prodigy in both kinds. He had signalized himself, in the schools, as a philosopher and polemic of extensive knowledge and deep penetration; and went through all the courses with a wise regard to the dignity and importance of each science. I remember him in the Divinity-school responding and disputing with a perspicuous energy, a ready exactness, and commanding force of argument, when Dr. Jane worthily presided in the chair; whose condescending and disinterested commendation of him gave him such a reputation as silenced the envious malice of his enemies, who durst not contradict the approbation of so profound a master in theology. None of those self-sufficient creatures who have either trifled with philosophy, by attempting to ridicule it, or have encumbered it with novel terms and burdensome explanations, understood its real weight and purity half so well as Mr. Smith. He was too discerning to allow of the character of unprofitable, rugged, and abstruse, which some superficial sciolists (so very smooth and polite as to admit of no impression) either out of an unthinking indolence or an ill-grounded prejudice had affixed to this sort of studies. He knew the thorny terms of philosophy served well to fence in the true doctrines of religion; and looked upon school divinity as upon a rough but well-wrought armour, which might at once adorn and defend the Christian hero, and equip him for the combat.

Mr. Smith had a long and perfect intimacy with all the Greek and Latin classics; with which he had carefully compared whatever was worth perusing in the French, Spanish, and Italian (to which languages he was no stranger) and in all the celebrated writers of his own country. But then, according to the curious observation of the late Earl of Shaftesbury, he kept the poet in awe by regular criticism; and, as it were, married the two arts for their mutual support and improvement. There was not a tract of credit upon that subject which he had not diligently examined, from Aristotle down to Hedelin and Bossu; so that, having each rule constantly before him, he could carry the art through every poem, and at once point out the graces and deformities. By this means he seemed to read with a design to correct as we as imitate.

Being thus prepared, he could not but tas every little delicacy that was set before him though it was impossible for him at the sam time to be fed and nourished with any thing bu what was substantial and lasting. He consid ered the ancients and moderns not as parties rivals for fame, but as architects upon one an the same plan, the Art of Poetry; according which he judged, approved, and blamed, with out flattery or detraction. If he did not alway commend the compositions of others, it was n ill-nature (which was not in his temper), bu strict justice would not let him call a fe flowers set in ranks, a glib measure, and many couplets, by the name of poetry; he w of Ben Jonson's opinion, who could not a mire

> —Verses as smooth and soft as cream,
> In which there was neither depth nor stream.

And therefore, though his want of complaisan for some men's overbearing vanity made hi enemies, yet the better part of mankind we obliged by the freedom of his reflections.

His Bodleian Speech, though taken from remote and imperfect copy, hath shown th world how great a master he was of the Cice onian eloquence, mixed with the concisene and force of Demosthenes, the elegant and mo ing turns of Pliny, and the acute and wise r flections of Tacitus.

Since Temple and Roscommon, no man u derstood Horace better, especially as to his ha py diction, rolling numbers, beautiful imager and alternate mixture of the soft and the s blime. This endeared Dr. Hannes's odes him, the finest genius for Latin lyric since th Augustan age. His friend Mr. Philips's Od to Mr. St. John (late Lord Bolingbroke) aft the manner of Horace's Lusory, or Amatori Odes, is certainly a masterpiece; but M Smith's "Pocockius" is of the sublimer kin though, like Waller's writings upon Oliv Cromwell, it wants not the most delicate a surprising turns peculiar to the person praise I do not remember to have seen any thing li it in Dr. Bathurst,* who had made some a tempts this way with applause. He was excellent judge of humanity; and so good a historian, that in familiar discourse he wou talk over the most memorable facts in antiquity the lives, actions, and characters of celebrate men, with amazing facility and accuracy. A he had thoroughly read and digested Thuanus works, so he was able to copy after him; an

* Dr. Ralph Bathurst, whose Life and Literar Remains were published in 1761, by Mr. Thoma Warton.—C.

his talent in this kind was so well known and allowed, that he had been singled out by some great men to write a history which it was their interest to have done with the utmost art and dexterity. I shall not mention for what reasons this design was dropped, though they are very much to Mr. Smith's honour. The truth is, and I speak it before living witnesses, whilst in agreeable company could fix him upon a subject of useful literature nobody shone to greater advantage; he seemed to be that Memmius whom Lucretius speaks of:

—Quem tu, Dea, tempore in omni
Omnibus ornatum voluisti excellere rebus.

His works are not many, and those scattered up and down in miscellanies and collections, being wrested from him by his friends with great difficulty and reluctance. All of them together make but a small part of that much greater body which lies dispersed in the possession of numerous acquaintance; and cannot perhaps be made entire, without great injustice to him, because few of them had his last hand, and the transcriber was often obliged to take the liberties of a friend. His condolence for the death of Mr. Philips is full of the noblest beauties, and hath done justice to the ashes of that second Milton, whose writings will last as long as the English language, generosity, and valour. For him Mr. Smith had contracted a perfect friendship; a passion he was most susceptible of, and whose laws he looked upon as sacred and inviolable.

Every subject that passed under his pen had all the life, proportion, and embellishments, bestowed on it, which an exquisite skill, a warm imagination, and a cool judgment, possibly could bestow on it. The epic, lyric, elegiac, every sort of poetry he touched upon (and he touched upon a great variety) was raised to its proper height, and the differences between each of them observed with a judicious accuracy. We saw the old rules and new beauties placed in admirable order by each other; and there was a predominant fancy and spirit of his own infused, superior to what some draw off from the ancients, or from poesies here and there culled out of the moderns, by a painful industry and servile imitation. His contrivances were adroit and magnificent; his images lively and adequate; his sentiments charming and majestic; his expressions natural and bold; his numbers various and sounding; and that enamelled mixture of classical wit, which without redundance and affectation sparkled through his writings, and were no less pertinent and agreeable.

His "Phædra" is a consummate tragedy, and the success of it was as great as the most sanguine expectations of his friends could promise or foresee. The number of nights, and the common method of filling the house, are not always the surest marks of judging what encouragement a play meets with; but the generosity of all the persons of a refined taste about town was remarkable on this occasion: and it must not be forgotten how zealously Mr. Addison espoused his interest, with all the elegant judgment and diffusive good-nature for which that accomplished gentleman and author is so justly valued by mankind. But as to "Phædra," she has certainly made a finer figure under Mr. Smith's conduct upon the English stage, than either in Rome or Athens; and if she excels the Greek and Latin "Phædra," I need not say she surpasses the French one, though embellished with whatever regular beauties and moving softness Racine himself could give her.

No man had a juster notion of the difficulty of composing than Mr. Smith; and sometimes he would create greater difficulties than he had reason to apprehend. Writing with ease what (as Mr. Wycherley speaks) may be easily written, moved his indignation. When he was writing upon a subject, he would seriously consider what Demosthenes, Homer, Virgil, or Horace, if alive, would say upon that occasion, which whetted him to exceed himself as well as others. Nevertheless, he could not or would not finish several subjects he undertook: which may be imputed either to the briskness of his fancy, still hunting after a new matter, or to an occasional indolence, which spleen and lassitude brought upon him, which, of all his foibles, the world was least inclined to forgive. That this was not owing to conceit or vanity, or a fulness of himself, (a frailty which has been imputed to no less men than Shakspeare and Jonson) is clear from hence; because he left his works to the entire disposal of his friends, whose most rigorous censures he even courted and solicited, submitting to their animadversions and the freedom they took with them with an unreserved and prudent resignation.

I have seen sketches and rough draughts of some poems to be designed set out analytically; wherein the fable, structure, and connection, the images, incidents, moral, episodes, and a great variety of ornaments, were so finely laid out, so well fitted to the rules of art, and squared so exactly to the precedents of the ancients, that I have often looked on these poetical elements with the same concern with which curious men are affected at the sight of the most entertaining remains and ruins of an antique figure or building. Those fragments of the learned, which some men have been so proud of their pains in collecting, are useless rarities, without form and without life, when compared with these embryos, which wanted not spirit enough to preserve them; so that I cannot help thinking that if some of them were to come abroad they would be as highly valued by the poets as the sketches of Julio and Titian are by the

painters; though there is nothing in them but a few outlines, as to the design and proportion.

It must be confessed, that Mr. Smith had some defects in his conduct, which those are most apt to remember who could imitate him in nothing else. His freedom with himself drew severer acknowledgments from him than all the malice he ever provoked was capable of advancing, and he did not scruple to give even his misfortunes the hard name of faults; but, if the world had half his good-nature, all the shady parts would be entirely struck out of his character.

A man who, under poverty, calamities, and disappointments, could make so many friends, and those so truly valuable, must have just and noble ideas of the passion of friendship, in the success of which consisted the greatest, if not the only happiness of his life. He knew very well what was due to his birth, though fortune threw him short of it in every other circumstance of life. He avoided making any, though perhaps reasonable, complaints of her dispensations, under which he had honour enough to be easy, without touching the favours she flung in his way when offered to him at a price of a more durable reputation. He took care to have no dealings with mankind in which he could not be just: and he desired to be at no other expense in his pretensions than that of intrinsic merit, which was the only burden and reproach he ever brought upon his friends. He could say, as Horace did of himself, what I never yet saw translated:

Meo sum pauper in ære.

At his coming to town, no man was more surrounded by all those who really had or pretended to wit, or more courted by the great men who had then a power and opportunity of encouraging arts and sciences, and gave proofs of their fondness for the name of patron in many instances, which will ever be remembered to their glory. Mr. Smith's character grew upon his friends by intimacy, and outwent the strongest prepossessions which had been conceived in his favour. Whatever quarrel a few sour creatures, whose obscurity is their happiness, may possibly have to the age, yet amidst a studied neglect and total disuse of all those ceremonial attendances, fashionable equipments, and external recommendation, which are thought necessary introductions into the *grande monde*, this gentleman was so happy as still to please; and whilst the rich, the gay, the noble, and honourable, saw how much he excelled in wit and learning, they easily forgave him all other differences. Hence it was that both his acquaintance and retirements were his own free choice. What Mr. Prior observes upon a very great character was true of him, *that most of his faults brought their excuse with them.*

Those who blamed him most understood hi least, it being the custom of the vulgar to char an excess upon the most complaisant, and form a character by the moral of a few, wh have sometimes spoiled an hour or two, in goo company. Where only fortune is wanting make a great name, that single exception ca never pass upon the best judges and most equi able observers of mankind; and when the tim comes for the world to spare their pity, we ma justly enlarge our demands upon them for the admiration.

Some few years before his death, he had en gaged himself in several considerable undertak ings: in all which he had prepared the worl to expect mighty things from him. I have see about ten sheets of his English Pindar, whic exceeded any thing of that kind I could ev hope for in our language. He had drawn ou a plan of a tragedy of the Lady Jane Grey, an had gone through several scenes of it. But I could not well have bequeathed that work better hands than where, I hear, it is at prese lodged; and the bare mention of two suc names may justify the largest expectations, an is sufficient to make the town an agreeable in vitation.

His greatest and noblest undertaking w Longinus. He had finished an entire transl tion of the "Sublime," which he sent to th Reverend Mr. Richard Parker, a friend of hi late of Merton College, an exact critic in th Greek tongue, from whom it came to my hand The French version of Monsieur Boilea though truly valuable, was far short of it. H proposed a large addition to this work, of not and observations of his own, with an enti system of the Art of Poetry, in three books, u der the titles of *Thought*, *Diction*, and *Figur* I saw the last of these perfect, and in a fa copy, in which he showed prodigious judgme and reading; and particularly had reformed th Art of Rhetoric, by reducing that vast and co fused heap of terms, with which a long succe sion of pedants had encumbered the world, to very narrow compass, comprehending all th was useful and ornamental in poetry. Und each head and chapter, he intended to make r marks upon all the ancients and moderns, th Greek, Latin, English, French, Spanish, a Italian poets, and to note their several beauti and defects.

What remains of his works is left, as I a informed, in the hands of men of worth an judgment, who loved him. It cannot be su posed they would suppress any thing that w his, but out of respect to his memory, and f want of proper hands to finish what so great genius had begun.

Such is the declamation of Oldisworth, wri ten while his admiration was yet fresh, and h

indness warm: and therefore such as, without any criminal purpose of deceiving, shows a strong desire to make the most of all favourable truth. I cannot much commend the performance. The praise is often indistinct, and the sentences are loaded with words of more pomp than use. There is little, however, that can be contradicted, even when a plainer tale comes to be told.

Edmund Neale, known by the name of Smith, was born at Handley, the seat of the Lechmeres, in Worcestershire. The year of his birth is uncertain.*

He was educated at Westminster. It is known to have been the practice of Dr. Busby to detain those youth long at school of whom he had formed the highest expectations. Smith took his master's degree on the 8th of July, 1696; he therefore was probably admitted into the University in 1689, when we may suppose twenty years old.

His reputation for literature in his college was such as has been told; but the indecency and licentiousness of his behaviour drew upon him, Dec. 24, 1694, while he was yet only bachelor, a public admonition, entered upon record, in order to his expulsion. Of this reproof the effect is not known. He was probably less notorious. At Oxford, as we all know, much will be forgiven to literary merit; and of that he had exhibited sufficient evidence by his excellent ode on the death of the great Orientalist, Dr. Pocock, who died in 1691, and whose praise must have been written by Smith when he had been but two years in the University.

This ode, which closed the second volume of the "Musæ Anglicanæ," though perhaps some objections may be made to its Latinity, is by far the best lyric composition in that collection; nor do I know where to find it equalled among the modern writers. It expresses, with great felicity, images not classical in classical diction; its digressions and returns have been deservedly recommended by Trapp as models for imitation.

He had several imitations from Cowley:

> Testitur hinc tot sermo coloribus
> Quot tu, Pococki, dissimilis tui
> Orator effers, quot vicissim
> Te memores celebrare gaudent.

I will not commend the figure which makes the orator pronounce the colours, or give to colours memory and delight. I quote it, however, as an imitation of these lines:

> So many languages he had in store,
> That only fame shall speak of him in more.

The simile, by which an old man, retaining the fire of his youth, is compared to Ætna flaming through the snow, which Smith has used with great pomp, is stolen from Cowley, however little worth the labour of conveyance.

He proceeded to take his degree of master of arts, July 8, 1696. Of the exercises which he performed on that occasion, I have not heard any thing memorable.

As his years advanced, he advanced in reputation: for he continued to cultivate his mind, though he did not amend his irregularities: by which he gave so much offence, that April 24, 1700, the Dean and Chapter declared "the place of Mr. Smith void, he having been convicted of riotous behaviour in the house of Mr. Cole, an apothecary; but it was referred to the Dean when and upon what occasion the sentence should be put into execution."

Thus tenderly was he treated: the governors of his college could hardly keep him, and yet wished that he would not force them to drive him away.

Some time afterwards he assumed an appearance of decency: in his own phrase, he *whitened* himself, having a desire to obtain the censorship, an office of honour and some profit in the college; but, when the election came, the preference was given to Mr. Foulkes his junior; the same, I suppose, that joined with Freind in an edition of part of Demosthenes. The censor is a tutor; and it was not thought proper to trust the superintendance of others to a man who took so little care of himself.

From this time Smith employed his malice and his wit against the dean, Dr. Aldrich, whom he considered as the opponent of his claim. Of his lampoon upon him, I once heard a single line too gross to be repeated.

But he was still a genius and a scholar, and Oxford was unwilling to lose him; he was endured, with all his pranks and his vices, two years longer; but on Dec. 20, 1705, at the instance of all the canons, the sentence declared five years before was put in execution.

The execution was, I believe, silent and tender; for one of his friends, from whom I learned much of his life, appeared not to know it.

He was now driven to London, where he associated himself with the whigs, whether because they were in power, or because the tories had expelled him, or because he was a whig by principle, may perhaps be doubted. He was, however, caressed by men of great abilities, whatever were their party, and was supported by the liberality of those who delighted in his conversation.

There was once a design, hinted at by Oldisworth, to have made him useful. One evening,

* By his epitaph he appears to have been forty-two years old when he died. He was consequently born in the year 1668.—R.

as he was sitting with a friend at a tavern, he was called down by the waiter; and, having stayed some time below, came up thoughtful. After a pause, said he to his friend, "He that wanted me below was Addison, whose business was to tell me that a history of the Revolution was intended, and to propose that I should undertake it. I said, 'What shall I do with the character of Lord Sunderland?' and Addison immediately returned, 'When, Rag, were you drunk last?' and went away."

Captain Rag was a name which he got at Oxford by his negligence of dress.

This story I heard from the late Mr. Clark, of Lincoln's Inn, to whom it was told by the friend of Smith.

Such scruples might debar him from some profitable employments; but as they could not deprive him of any real esteem, they left him many friends; and no man was ever better introduced to the theatre than he, who, in that violent conflict of parties, had a prologue and epilogue from the first wits on either side.

But learning and nature will now and then take different courses. His play pleased the critics, and the critics only. It was, as Addison has recorded, hardly heard the third night. Smith had indeed trusted entirely to his merit, had ensured no band of applauders, nor used any artifice to force success, and found that native excellence was not sufficient for its own support.

The play, however, was bought by Lintot, who advanced the price from fifty guineas, the current rate, to sixty; and Halifax, the general patron, accepted the dedication. Smith's indolence kept him from writing the dedication, till Lintot, after fruitless importunity, gave notice that he would publish the play without it. Now, therefore, it was written; and Halifax expected the Author with his book, and had prepared to reward him with a place of three hundred pounds a year. Smith, by pride, or caprice, or indolence, or bashfulness, neglected to attend him, though doubtless warned and pressed by his friends, and at last missed his reward by not going to solicit it.

Addison has, in the "Spectator," mentioned the neglect of Smith's tragedy as disgraceful to the nation, and imputes it to the fondness for operas then prevailing. The authority of Addison is great; yet the voice of the people, when to please the people is the purpose, deserves regard. In this question, I cannot but think the people in the right. The fable is mythological, a story which we are accustomed to reject as false; and the manners are so distant from our own, that we know them not from sympathy, but by study; the ignorant do not understand the action; the learned reject it as a school-boy's tale; *incredulus odi*. What I cannot for a moment believe, I cannot for a moment behold with interest or anxiety. The sentiments thus remote from life are removed yet further by the diction, which is too luxuriant and splendid for dialogue, and envelopes the thoughts rather than displays them. It is a scholar's play, such as may please the reader rather than the spectator; the work of a vigorous and elegant mind, accustomed to please itself with its own conceptions, but of little acquaintance with the course of life.

Dennis tells us, in one of his pieces, that he had once a design to have written the tragedy of "Phædra;" but was convinced that the action was too mythological.

In 1709, a year after the exhibition of "Phædra," died John Philips, the friend and fellow-collegian of Smith, who, on that occasion, wrote a poem, which justice must place among the best elegies which our language can show, an elegant mixture of fondness and admiration, of dignity and softness. There are some passages too ludicrous; but every human performance has its faults.

This elegy it was the mode among his friends to purchase for a guinea; and as his acquaintance was numerous, it was a very profitable poem.

Of his Pindar, mentioned by Oldisworth, I have never otherwise heard. His Longinus he intended to accompany with some illustrations, and had selected his instances of the false sublime from the works of Blackmore.

He resolved to try again the fortune of the stage with the story of Lady Jane Grey. It is not unlikely that his experience of the inefficacy and incredibility of a mythological tale might determine him to choose an action from the English history, at no great distance from our own times, which was to end in a real event produced by the operation of known characters.

A subject will not easily occur that can give more opportunities of informing the understanding, for which Smith was unquestionably qualified, or for moving the passions, in which I suspect him to have had less power.

Having formed his plan and collected materials, he declared that a few months would complete his design; and, that he might pursue his work with less frequent avocations, he was, in June, 1710, invited by Mr. George Ducket to his house at Gartham, in Wiltshire. Here he found such opportunities of indulgence as did not much forward his studies, and particularly some strong ale, too delicious to be resisted. He ate and drank till he found himself plethoric; and then, resolving to ease himself by evacuation, he wrote to an apothecary in the neighbourhood a prescription of a purge so forcible that the apothecary thought it his duty to delay it till he had given notice of its danger. Smith, not pleased with the contradiction of a shopman, and boastful of his own knowledge, treated

otice with rude contempt, and swallowed his wn medicine, which, in July, 1710, brought im to the grave. He was buried at Gartham.

Many years afterwards, Ducket communiated to Oldmixon, the historian, an account retended to have been received from Smith, hat Clarendon's History was, in its publicaon, corrupted by Aldrich, Smalridge, and Atrbury; and that Smith was employed to forge nd insert the alterations.

This story was published triumphantly by ldmixon, and may be supposed to have been gerly received; but its progress was soon iecked: for, finding its way into the Journal f Trévoux, it fell under the eye of Atterbury, ien an exile in France, who immediately deied the charge, with this remarkable particur, that he never in his whole life had once poken to Smith;* his company being, as must e inferred, not accepted by those who attended their characters.

The charge was afterwards very diligently efuted by Dr. Burton of Eton, a man eminent r literature; and, though not of the same par- with Aldrich and Atterbury, too studious of ruth to leave them burdened with a false harge. The testimonies which he has collect- have convinced mankind that either Smith r Ducket was guilty of wilful and malicious alsehood.

This controversy brought into view those arts of Smith's life, which, with more honour his name, might have been concealed.

Of Smith I can yet say a little more. He vas a man of such estimation among his comanions, that the casual censures or praises hich he dropped in conversation were conidered, like those of Scaliger, as worthy of prervation.

He had great readiness and exactness of criicism, and by a cursory glance over a new omposition would exactly tell all its faults and eauties.

He was remarkable for the power of reading vith great rapidity, and of retaining, with reat fidelity, what he so easily collected.

He therefore always knew what the present uestion required; and, when his friends exressed their wonder at his acquisitions, made a state of apparent negligence and drunkenss, he never discovered his hours of reading r method of study, but involved himself in afected silence, and fed his own vanity with heir admiration.

One practice he had, which was easily oberved: if any thought or image was presented to his mind that he could use or improve, he did not suffer it to be lost: but, amidst the jollity of a tavern, or in the warmth of conversation, very diligently committed it to paper.

Thus it was that he had gathered two quires of hints for his new tragedy; of which Rowe, when they were put into his hands, could make, as he says, very little use, but which the collector considered as a valuable stock of materials.

When he came to London, his way of life connected him with the licentious and dissolute; and he affected the airs and gayety of a man of pleasure: but his dress was always deficient; scholastic cloudiness still hung about him; and his merriment was sure to produce the scorn of his companions.

With all his carelessness and all his vices, he was one of the murmurers at fortune; and wondered why he was suffered to be poor, when Addison was caressed and preferred; nor would a very little have contented him; for he estimated his wants at six hundred pounds a year.

In his course of reading, it was particular that he had diligently perused, and accurately remembered, the old romances of knight-errantry.

He had a high opinion of his own merit, and was something contemptuous in his treatment of those whom he considered as not qualified to oppose or contradict him. He had many frailties; yet it cannot but be supposed that he had great merit who could obtain to the same play a prologue from Addison and an epilogue from Prior; and who could have at once the patronage of Halifax and the praise of Oldisworth.

For the power of communicating these minute memorials, I am indebted to my conversation with Gilbert Walmsley, late registrar of the ecclesiastical court of Lichfield, who was acquainted both with Smith and Ducket; and declared, that, if the tale concerning Clarendon were forged, he should suspect Ducket of the falsehood; for Rag was a man of great veracity.

Of Gilbert Walmsley, thus presented to my mind, let me indulge myself in the remembrance. I knew him very early; he was one of the first friends that literature procured me, and I hope that at least my gratitude made me worthy of his notice.

He was of an advanced age, and I was only not a boy; yet he never received my notions with contempt. He was a whig, with all the virulence and malevolence of his party; yet difference of opinion did not keep us apart. I honoured him, and he endured me.

He had mingled with the gay world, without exemption from its vices or its follies, but had never neglected the cultivation of his mind; his belief of revelation was unshaken; his learn-

* See Bishop Atterbury's "Epistolary Correspondence," 1799, vol. III. p. 126. 133. In the same work, vol. I. p. 325, it appears that Smith was at one time suspected to have been author of the "Tale of a Tub."—N.

ing preserved his principles; he grew first regular, and then pious.

His studies had been so various, that I am not able to name a man of equal knowledge. His acquaintance with books was great; and what he did not immediately know, he could at least tell where to find. Such was his amplitude of learning, and such his copiousness of communication, that it may be doubted, whether a day now passes in which I have not some advantage from his friendship.

At this man's table I enjoyed many cheerful and instructive hours, with companions such as are not often found; with one who has lengthened and one who has gladdened life; with Dr. James, whose skill in physic will be long remembered, and with David Garrick, whom I hoped to have gratified with this character of our common friend: but what are the hopes of man! I am disappointed by that stroke of death which has eclipsed the gayety of nations, and impoverished the public stock of harmless pleasure.

In the Library at Oxford is the following ludicrous Analysis of Pocockius:

EX AUTOGRAPHO.

(Sent by the Author to Mr. Urry.)

Opusculum hoc, Halberdarie amplissime, in lucem proferre hactenus distuli, judicii tui acumen subveritus magis quam bipennis. Tandem aliquando oden hanc ad te mitto sublimem, t
neram, flebilem, suavem, qualem domum div
nus (si Musis vacaret) scripsisset Gastrellu
adeo scilicet sublimem ut inter legendum do
mire, adeo flebilem ut ridere velis. Cujus el
gantiam ut melius inspicias, versuum ordine
et materiam breviter referam. 1mus. versus
duobus prælliis decantatis. 2dus. et 3us. de L
tharingio, cuniculis subterraneis, saxis, pont
hostibus, et Asiâ. 4tus. et 5tus. de cateni
subdibus, uncis, draconibus, tigribus, et croc
dilis. 6us. 7us. 8us. 9us. de Gomorrhâ,
Babylone, Babele, et quodam domi suæ per
grino. 10us. aliquid de quodam Pococki
11us. 12us. de Syriâ, Solymâ. 13us. 14us.
Hoseâ, et quercu, et de juvene quodam val
sene. 15us. 16us. de Ætnâ, et quomodo Ætn
Pocockio fit valde similis. 17us. 18us. de tub
astro, umbrâ, flammis, rotis, Pocockio non ne
lecto. Cætera de Christianis, Ottomanis, Baby
loniis, Arabibus, et gravissimâ agrorum melan
cholià; de Cæsare *Flacco*,* Nestore, et mise
ando juvenis cujusdam florentissimi fato, ann
ætatis suæ centesimo præmaturè abrepti. Qu
omnia cum accuratè expenderis, necesse est t
oden hanc meam admirandâ planè varietat
constare fatearis. Subitò ad Batavos proficisco
lauro ab illis donandus. Prius verò Pembr
chienses voco ad certamen Poeticum. Vale.

Illustrissima tua deosculor crura.

E. SMITH

DUKE.

Of Mr. Richard Duke I can find few memorials. He was bred at Westminster* and Cambridge; and Jacob relates, that he was some time tutor to the Duke of Richmond.

He appears from his writings to have been not ill qualified for poetical compositions; and, being conscious of his powers, when he left the University, he enlisted himself among the wits. He was the familiar friend of Otway; and was engaged, among other popular names, in the translations of Ovid and Juvenal. In his "Review," though unfinished, are some vigorous lines. His poems are not below mediocrity; nor have I found much in them to be praised.†

With the wit he seems to have shared the di
soluteness of the times; for some of his com
positions are such as he must have reviewe
with detestation in his later days, when h
published those Sermons which Felton ha
commended.

Perhaps, like some other foolish young me
he rather talked than lived viciously, in an a
when he that would be thought a wit w
afraid to say his prayers; and, whatever mig
have been bad in the first part of his life, w
surely condemned and reformed by his bett
judgment.

* He was admitted there in 1670; was elected to Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1675; and took his master's degree in 1682.—N.

† They make a part of a volume published by Tonson in 8vo. 1717, containing the poems of the Earl of Roscommon, and the Duke of Buckingham's Ess
on Poetry; but were first published in Dryde
Miscellany, as were most, if not all, of the poem
in that collection.—H.

* Pro *Flacco*, animo paulo attentiore, scripsiss
Marone.

In 1688, being then master of arts and fellow of Trinity College, in Cambridge, he wrote a poem on the marriage of the Lady Anne with George, Prince of Denmark.

He then took orders;* and, being made prebendary of Gloucester, became a proctor in convocation for that church, and chaplain to Queen Anne.

In 1710, he was presented by the Bishop of Winchester to the wealthy living of Witney, in Oxfordshire, which he enjoyed but a few months. On February 10, 1710-11, having returned from an entertainment, he was found dead the next morning. His death is mentioned in Swift's *Journal*.

KING.

William King was born in London, in 1663; the son of Ezekiel King, a gentleman. He was allied to the family of Clarendon.

From Westminster-school, where he was a scholar on the foundation under the care of Dr. Busby, he was at eighteen elected to Christchurch, in 1681; where he is said to have prosecuted his studies with so much intenseness and activity, that before he was eight years standing he had read over, and made remarks upon, twenty-two thousand odd hundred books and manuscripts.† The books were certainly not very long, the manuscripts not very difficult, nor the remarks very large; for the calculator will find that he despatched seven a day for every day of his eight years; with a remnant that more than satisfies most other students. He took his degree in the most expensive manner, as a *grand compounder*; whence it is inferred that he inherited a considerable fortune.

In 1688, the same year in which he was made master of arts, he published a confutation of Varillas's account of Wickliffe; and engaging in the study of the civil law, became doctor in 1692, and was admitted advocate at Doctors Commons.

He had already made some translations from the French, and written some humorous and satirical pieces; when, in 1694, Molesworth published his "Account of Denmark," in which he treats the Danes and their monarch with great contempt; and takes the opportunity of insinuating those wild principles, by which he supposes liberty to be established, and by which his adversaries suspect that all subordination and government is endangered.

This book offended Prince George; and the Danish minister presented a memorial against it. The principles of its author did not please Dr. King; and therefore he undertook to confute part, and laugh at the rest. The controversy is now forgotten; and books of this kind seldom live long, when interest and resentment have ceased.

In 1697, he mingled in the controversy between Boyle and Bentley; and was one of those who tried what wit could perform in opposition to learning, on a question which learning only could decide.

In 1699, was published by him "A Journey to London," after the method of Dr. Martin Lister, who had published "A Journey to Paris." And, in 1700, he satirized the Royal Society, at least Sir Hans Sloane, their president, in two dialogues, entitled "The Transactioner."

Though he was a regular advocate in the courts of civil and canon law, he did not love his profession, nor indeed any kind of business which interrupted his voluntary dreams, or forced him to rouse from that indulgence in which only he could find delight. His reputation as a civilian was yet maintained by his judgments in the courts of delegates, and raised very high by the address and knowledge which he discovered in 1700, when he defended the Earl of Anglesea against his lady, afterwards Dutchess of Buckinghamshire, who sued for a divorce, and obtained it.

The expense of his pleasures and neglect of business had now lessened his revenues; and he was willing to accept of a settlement in Ireland, where, about 1702, he was made judge of the Admiralty, commissioner of the prizes, keeper of the records in Birmingham's tower, and vicar-general to Dr. Marsh, the primate.

But it is vain to put wealth within the reach of him who will not stretch out his hand to take it. King soon found a friend, as idle and

* He was presented to the rectory of Blaby, in Leicestershire, in 1687-8; and obtained a prebend at Gloucester, in 1688.—N.

† This appears by his "Adversaria," printed in his works, edit. 1776, 3 vols.—C.

thoughtless as himself, in Upton, one of the judges, who had a pleasant house called Mountown near Dublin, to which King frequently retired; delighting to neglect his interest, forget his cares, and desert his duty.

Here he wrote "Mully of Mountown," a poem; by which, though fanciful readers in the pride of sagacity have given it a political interpretation, was meant originally no more than it expressed, as it was dictated only by the Author's delight in the quiet of Mountown.

In 1708, when Lord Wharton was sent to govern Ireland, King returned to London with his poverty, his idleness, and his wit, and published some essays, called "Useful Transactions." His "Voyage to the Island of Cajamai" is particularly commended. He then wrote "The Art of Love," a poem remarkable, notwithstanding its title, for purity of sentiment; and in 1709 imitated Horace in an "Art of Cookery," which he published, with some letters to Dr. Lister.

In 1710, he appeared as a lover of the church, on the side of Sacheverell; and was supposed to have concurred at least in the projection of "The Examiner." His eyes were open to all the operations of whiggism; and he bestowed some strictures upon Dr. Kennet's adulatory sermon at the funeral of the Duke of Devonshire.

"The History of the Heathen Gods," a book composed for schools, was written by him in 1710. The work is useful, but might have been produced without the powers of King. The next year, he published "Rufinus," an historical essay; and a poem, intended to dispose the nation to think as he thought of the Duke of Marlborough and his adherents.

In 1711, competence, if not plenty, was agai put into his power. He was, without the troub of attendance, or the mortification of a reques made gazetteer. Swift, Freind, Prior, ar other men of the same party, brought him th key of the gazeteer's office. He was now aga placed in a profitable employment, and aga threw the benefit away. An act of insolvenc made his business at that time particular troublesome; and he would not wait till hur should be at an end, but impatiently resigned and returned to his wonted indigence and musements.

One of his amusements at Lambeth, whe he resided, was to mortify Dr. Tenison, th archbishop, by a public festivity on the surren er of Dunkirk to Hill; an event with whic Tenison's political bigotry did not suffer him be delighted. King was resolved to counte act his sullenness, and at the expense of a fe barrels of ale filled the neighbourhood with ho est merriment.

In the autumn of 1712, his health declined he grew weaker by degrees, and died on Chris mas-day. Though his life had not been wit out irregularity, his principles were pure a orthodox, and his death was pious.

After this relation, it will be naturally su posed that his poems were rather the amus ments of idleness than the efforts of study; th he endeavoured rather to divert than astonish that his thoughts seldom aspired to sublimity and that, if his verse was easy and his imag familiar, he attained what he desired. H purpose is to be merry; but, perhaps, to enj his mirth, it may be sometimes necessary think well of his opinions.*

SPRAT.

Thomas Sprat was born in 1636, at Tallaton, in Devonshire, the son of a clergyman; and having been educated, as he tells of himself, not at Westminster or Eton, but at a little school by the church-yard side, became a commoner of Wadham College, in Oxford, in 1651; and, being chosen scholar next year, proceeded through the usual academical course; and, in 1657, became master of arts. He obtained a fellowship, and commenced poet.

In 1659, his poem on the death of Oliver was published, with those of Dryden and Waller. In his dedication to Dr. Wilkins, he appears a very willing and liberal encomiast, both of the living and the dead. He implores his patron excuse of his verses, both as falling "so in nitely below the full and sublime genius of th excellent poet who made this way of writi free of our nation," and being "so little equ and proportioned to the renown of a prince whom they were written; such great actio

* Dr. Johnson appears to have made but little u of the Life of Dr. King, prefixed to his "Works, 3 vols." 1776, to which it may not be impertinent refer the reader. His talent for humour ought to praised in the highest terms. In that at least yielded to none of his contemporaries.—C.

and lives deserving to be the subject of the noblest pens and most Divine phansies." He proceeds; "Having so long experienced your care and indulgence, and been formed as it were, by your own hands, not to entitle you to any thing which my meanness produces would be not only injustice, but sacrilege."

He published, the same year, a poem on the "Plague of Athens;" a subject of which it is not easy to say what could recommend it. To these he added afterwards a poem on Mr. Cowley's death.

After the Restoration he took orders, and by Cowley's recommendation was made chaplain to the Duke of Buckingham, whom he is said to have helped in writing "The Rehearsal." He was likewise chaplain to the King.

As he was the favourite of Wilkins, at whose house began those philosophical conferences and inquiries which in time produced the Royal Society, he was consequently engaged in the same studies, and became one of the fellows; and when, after their incorporation, something seemed necessary to reconcile the public to the new institution, he undertook to write its history, which he published in 1667. This is one of the few books which selection of sentiment and elegance of diction have been able to preserve, though written upon a subject flux and transitory. "The history of the Royal Society," is now read, not with the wish to know what they were then doing, but how their transactions are exhibited by Sprat.

In the next year he published "Observations on Sorbiere's Voyage into England, in a Letter to Mr. Wren." This is a work not ill performed; but perhaps rewarded with at least its full proportion of praise.

In 1668, he published Cowley's Latin poems, and prefixed in Latin the Life of the Author, which he afterwards amplified, and placed before Cowley's English works, which were by will committed to his care.

Ecclesiastical benefices now fell fast upon him. In 1668, he became a prebendary of Westminster, and had afterwards the church of St. Margaret, adjoining to the Abbey. He was, in 1680, made canon of Windsor; in 1683, dean of Westminster; and in 1684, bishop of Rochester.

The court having thus a claim to his diligence and gratitude, he was required to write the history of the Rye-house Plot; and in 1685, published "A true Account and Declaration of the horrid Conspiracy against the late King, his present Majesty, and the present Government;" a performance which he thought convenient, after the Revolution, to extenuate and excuse.

The same year, being clerk of the closet to the King, he was made dean of the chapel-royal; and, the year afterwards, received the last proof of his master's confidence, by being appointed one of the commissioners for ecclesiastical affairs. On the critical day when the Declaration distinguished the true sons of the church of England, he stood neuter, and permitted it to be read at Westminster; but pressed none to violate his conscience; and when the Bishop of London was brought before them, gave his voice in his favour.

Thus far he suffered interest or obedience to carry him; but further he refused to go. When he found that the powers of the ecclesiastical commission were to be exercised against those who had refused the Declaration, he wrote to the lords, and other commissioners, a formal profession of his unwillingness to exercise that authority any longer, and withdrew himself from them. After they had read his letter, they adjourned for six months, and scarcely ever met afterwards.

When King James was frighted away, and a new government was to be settled, Sprat was one of those who considered, in a conference, the great question, whether the crown was vacant, and manfully spoke in favour of his old master.

He complied, however, with the new establishment, and was left unmolested; but, in 1692, a strange attack was made upon him by one Robert Young and Stephen Blackhead, both men convicted of infamous crimes, and both, when the scheme was laid, prisoners in Newgate. These men drew up an association, in which they whose names were subscribed declared their resolution to restore King James, to seize the Princess of Orange, dead or alive, and to be ready with thirty thousand men, to meet King James when he should land. To this they put the names of Sancroft, Sprat, Marlborough, Salisbury, and others. The copy of Dr. Sprat's name was obtained by a fictitious request, to which an answer in his own hand was desired. His hand was copied so well, that he confessed it might have deceived himself. Blackhead, who had carried the letter, being sent again with a plausible message, was very curious to see the house, and particularly importunate to be let into the study; where, as is supposed, he designed to leave the association. This, however, was denied him; and he dropped it in a flower-pot in the parlour.

Young now laid an information before the privy-council; and, May 7, 1692, the Bishop was arrested, and kept at a messenger's under a strict guard eleven days. His house was searched, and directions were given that the flower-pots should be inspected. The messengers, however, missed the room in which the paper was left. Blackhead went therefore a third time; and, finding his paper where he had left it, brought it away.

The Bishop, having been enlarged, was, on June the 10th and 13th, examined again before

the privy-council, and confronted with his accusers. Young persisted with the most obdurate impudence, against the strongest evidence; but the resolution of Blackhead by degrees gave way. There remained at last no doubt of the Bishop's innocence, who, with great prudence and diligence, traced the progress and detected the characters of the two informers, and published an account of his own examination and deliverance; which made such an impression upon him, that he commemorated it through life by a yearly day of thanksgiving.

With what hope, or what interest, the villains had contrived an accusation which they must know themselves utterly unable to prove, was never discovered.

After this, he passed his days in the quiet exercise of his function. When the cause of Sacheverell put the public in commotion, he honestly appeared among the friends of the church. He lived to his seventy-ninth year, and died May 20, 1713.

Burnet is not very favourable to his memory; but he and Burnet were old rivals. On some public occasion they both preached before the House of Commons. There prevailed in those days an indecent custom: when the preacher touched any favourable topic in a manner that delighted his audience, their approbation was expressed by a loud *hum*, continued in proportion to their zeal or pleasure. When Burnet preached, part of his congregation *hummed* so loudly and so long, that he sat down to enjoy it, and rubbed his face with his handkerchief. When Sprat preached, he likewise was honoured with the like animating *hum;* but he stretched out his hand to the congregation, and cried, "Peace peace, I pray you peace."

This I was told in my youth by my father an old man, who had been no careless observer of the passages of those times.

Burnet's sermon, says Salmon, was remarkable for sedition, and Sprat's for loyalty. Burnet had the thanks of the house; Sprat had no thanks, but a good living from the King, which he said, was of as much value as the thanks of the Commons.

The works of Sprat, besides his few poems are, "The History of the Royal Society," "The Life of Cowley," "The Answer to Sorbiere," "The History of the Rye-house Plot," "The Relation of his own Examination," and a volume of sermons. I have heard it observed with great justness, that every book is of a different kind, and that each has its distinct and characteristical excellence.

My business is only with his poems. He considered Cowley as a model; and supposed that, as he was imitated, perfection was approached. Nothing, therefore, but Pindaric liberty was to be expected. There is in his few productions no want of such conceits as he thought excellent: and of those our judgment may be settled by the first that appears in his praise of Cromwell, where he says, that Cromwell's "fame, like man, will grow white as it grows old."

HALIFAX.

The Life of the Earl of Halifax was properly that of an artful and active statesman, employed in balancing parties, contriving expedients, and combating opposition, and exposed to the vicissitudes of advancement and degradation; but in this collection, poetical merit is the claim to attention: and the account which is here to be expected may properly be proportioned not to his influence in the state, but to his rank among the writers of verse.

Charles Montague was born April 16, 1661, at Horton, in Northamptonshire, the son of Mr. George Montague, a younger son of the Earl of Manchester. He was educated first in the country, and then removed to Westminster, where, in 1677, he was chosen a king's scholar, and recommended himself to Busby by his felicity in extemporary epigrams. He contracted a very intimate friendship with Mr. Stepney, and, in 1682, when Stepney was elected a Cambridge, the election of Montague being not to proceed till the year following, he was afraid lest by being placed at Oxford he might be separated from his companion, and therefore solicited to be removed to Cambridge, without waiting for the advantages of another year.

It seems indeed time to wish for a removal for he was already a school-boy of one-and-twenty.

His relation, Dr. Montague, was then master of the college in which he was placed a fellow commoner, and took him under his particular care. Here he commenced an acquaintance

with the great Newton, which continued through his life, and was at last attested by a legacy.

In 1685, his verses on the death of King Charles made such an impression on the Earl of Dorset, that he was invited to town, and introduced by that universal patron to the other wits. In 1687, he joined with Prior in "The City Mouse and the Country Mouse," a burlesque of Dryden's "Hind and Panther." He signed the invitation to the Prince of Orange, and sate in the convention. He about the same time married the Countess Dowager of Manchester, and intended to have taken orders; but afterwards, altering his purpose, he purchased for 1,500*l.* the place of one of the clerks of the council.

After he had written his epistle on the victory of the Boyne, his patron, Dorset, introduced him to King William, with this expression:—"Sir, I have brought a *mouse* to wait on your Majesty." To which the King is said to have replied, "You do well to put me in the way of making a *man* of him;" and ordered him a pension of five hundred pounds. This story, however current, seems to have been made after the event. The King's answer implies a greater acquaintance with our proverbial and familiar diction than King William could possibly have attained.

In 1691, being member of the House of Commons, he argued warmly in favour of a law to grant the assistance of counsel in trials for high treason; and, in the midst of his speech falling into some confusion, was for awhile silent; but, recovering himself, observed, "how reasonable it was to allow counsel to men called as criminals before a court of justice, when it appeared how much the presence of that assembly could disconcert one of their own body."*

After this he rose fast into honours and employments, being made one of the commissioners of the Treasury, and called to the privy-council. In 1694, he became chancellor of the Exchequer; and the next year engaged in the great attempt of the recoinage, which was in two years happily completed. In 1696, he projected the general fund, and raised the credit of the Exchequer; and, after inquiry concerning a grant of Irish crown-lands, it was determined by a vote of the Commons, that Charles Montague, Esq. had deserved his Majesty's favour. In 1698, being advanced to the first commission of the Treasury, he was appointed one of the regency in the King's absence: the next year he was made auditor of the Exchequer, and the year after created Baron Halifax. He was, however, impeached by the Commons; but the articles were dismissed by the Lords.

At the accession of Queen Anne he was dismissed from the council: and in the first parliament of her reign was again attacked by the Commons, and again escaped by the protection of the Lords. In 1704, he wrote an answer to Broomley's speech against occasional conformity. He headed the inquiry into the danger of the church. In 1706, he proposed and negotiated the Union of Scotland; and when the Elector of Hanover had received the garter, after the act had passed for securing the protestant succession, he was appointed to carry the ensigns of the order to the electoral court. He sate as one of the judges of Sacheverell; but voted for a mild sentence. Being now no longer in favour, he contrived to obtain a writ for summoning the Electoral Prince to parliament as Duke of Cambridge.

At the Queen's death he was appointed one of the regents; and at the accession of George I. was made earl of Halifax, knight of the garter, and first commissioner of the treasury, with a grant to his nephew of the reversion of the auditorship of the Exchequer. More was not to be had, and this he kept but a little while; for, on the 19th of May, 1715, he died of an inflammation of his lungs.

Of him, who from a poet became a patron of poets, it will be readily believed that the works would not miss of celebration. Addison began to praise him early, and was followed or accompanied by other poets: perhaps by almost all, except Swift and Pope, who forebore to flatter him in his life, and after his death spoke of him, Swift with slight censure, and Pope, in the character of Bufo, with acrimonious contempt.

He was, as Pope says, "fed with dedications;" for Tickell affirms that no dedication was unrewarded. To charge all unmerited praise with the guilt of flattery, and to suppose that the encomiast always knows and feels the falsehoods of his assertions, is surely to discover great ignorance of human nature and human life. In determinations depending not on rules, but on experience and comparison, judgment is always, in some degree, subject to affection. Very near to admiration is the wish to admire.

Every man willingly gives value to the praise which he receives, and considers the sentence passed in his favour as the sentence of discern-

* Mr. Reed observes that this anecdote is related by Mr. Walpole, in his "Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors," of the Earl of Shaftesbury, author of the "Characteristics;" but it appears to me to be a mistake, if we are to understand that the words were spoken by Shaftesbury at this time, when he had no seat in the House of Commons; nor did the bill pass at this time, being thrown out by the House of Lords. It became a law in the 7th William, when Halifax and Shaftesbury both had seats. The editors of the "Biographia Britannica" adopt Mr. Walpole's story, but they are not speaking of this period. The story first appeared in the Life of Lord Halifax, published in 1715.—C.

ment. We admire in a friend that understanding which selected us for confidence; we admire more, in a patron, that judgment which, instead of scattering bounty indiscriminately, directed it to us; and, if the patron be an author, those performances which gratitude forbids us to blame, affection will easily dispose us to exalt.

To these prejudices, hardly culpable, interest adds a power always operating, though not always, because not willingly, perceived. The modesty of praise wears gradually away; and perhaps the pride of patronage may be in time so increased, that modest praise will no longer please.

Many a blandishment was practised upon Halifax, which he would never have known had he no other attractions than those of his poetry, of which a short time has withered the beauties. It would now be esteemed no honour by a contributor to the monthly bundles of verses, to be told, that in strains either familiar or solemn, he sings like Montague.

PARNELL.

The Life of Dr. Parnell is a task which I should very willingly decline, since it has been lately written by Goldsmith, a man of such variety of powers, and such felicity of performance, that he always seemed to do best that which he was doing; a man who had the art of being minute without tediousness, and general without confusion; whose language was copious without exuberance; exact without constraint, and easy without weakness.

What such an author has told, who would tell again? I have made an abstract from his larger narrative; and have this gratification from my attempt, that it gives me an opportunity of paying due tribute to the memory of Goldsmith.

Τὸ γὰρ γέρας ἴστι θανόντων.

Thomas Parnell was the son of a commonwealthsman of the same name, who, at the Restoration, left Congleton, in Cheshire, where the family had been established for several centuries, and settling in Ireland, purchased an estate, which, with his lands in Cheshire, descended to the poet, who was born in Dublin, in 1679; and, after the usual education at a grammar-school, was, at the age of thirteen, admitted into the College, where, in 1700, he became master of arts; and was the same year ordained a deacon, though under the canonical age, by a dispensation from the Bishop of Derry.

About three years afterwards he was made a priest; and in 1705, Dr. Ashe, the bishop of Clogher, conferred upon him the archdeaconry of Clogher. About the same year he married Mrs. Anne Minchin, an amiable lady, by whom he had two sons, who died young, and a daughter who long survived him.

At the ejection of the whigs, in the end of Queen Anne's reign, Parnell was persuaded to change his party, not without much censure from those whom he forsook, and was received by the new ministry as a valuable reinforcement. When the Earl of Oxford was told that Dr. Parnell waited among the crowd in the outer room, he went, by the persuasion of Swift, with his treasurer's staff in his hand, to inquire for him, and to bid him welcome; and as may be inferred from Pope's dedication, admitted him as a favourite companion to his convivial hours; but, as it seems often to have happened in those times to the favourites of the great, without attention to his fortune, which, however, was in no great need of improvement.

Parnell, who did not want ambition or vanity, was desirous to make himself conspicuous and to show how worthy he was of high preferment. As he thought himself qualified to become a popular preacher, he displayed his elocution with great success in the pulpits of London; but the Queen's death putting an end to his expectations, abated his diligence; and Pope represents him as falling from that time into intemperance of wine. That in his latter life he was too much a lover of the bottle, is not denied; but I have heard it imputed to a cause more likely to obtain forgiveness from mankind —the untimely death of a darling son; or, as others tell, the loss of his wife, who died (1712) in the midst of his expectations.

He was now to derive every future addition to his preferments from his personal interest with his private friends, and he was not long unregarded. He was warmly recommended by Swift to Archbishop King, who gave him a prebend in 1713; and in May, 1716, presented

lm to the vicarage of Finglass, in the diocese of Dublin, worth four hundred pounds a year. Such notice, from such a man, inclines me to believe, that the vice of which he has been accused was not gross, or not notorious.

But his prosperity did not last long. His end, whatever was its cause, was now approaching. He enjoyed his preferment little more than a year; for in July, 1717, in his thirty-eighth year, he died at Chester, on his way to Ireland.

He seems to have been one of those poets who take delight in writing. He contributed to the papers of that time, and probably published more than he owned. He left many compositions behind him, of which Pope selected those which he thought best, and dedicated them to the Earl of Oxford. Of these Goldsmith has given an opinion, and his criticism it is seldom safe to contradict. He bestows just praise upon "The Rise of Woman," "The Fairy Tale," and "The Pervigilium Veneris;" but has very properly remarked, that in "The Battle of Mice and Frogs," the Greek names have not in English their original effect.

He tells us, that "The Book-Worm" is borrowed from Beza; but he should have added, with modern applications: and, when he discovers that "Gay Bacchus" is translated from Augurellus, he ought to have remarked that the latter part is purely Parnell's. Another poem, "When Spring comes on," is, he says, taken from the French. I would add, that the description of *barrenness*, in his verses to Pope, was borrowed from Secundus: but, lately searching for the passage, which I had formerly read, I could not find it. The "Night-piece on Death" is indirectly preferred by Goldsmith to Gray's "Church-Yard:" but, in my opinion, Gray has the advantage of dignity, variety, and originality of sentiment. He observes, that the story of the "Hermit" is in More's "Dialogues" and Howell's "Letters," and supposes it to have been originally Arabian.

Goldsmith has not taken any notice of the "Elegy to the old Beauty," which is perhaps the meanest; nor of the "Allegory on Man," the happiest of Parnell's performances; the hint of the "Hymn to Contentment" I suspect to have been borrowed from Cleiveland.

The general character of Parnell, is not great extent of comprehension, or fertility of mind. Of the little that appears still less is his own. His praise must be derived from the easy sweetness of his diction: in his verses there is more happiness than pains; he is sprightly without effort, and always delights, though he never ravishes; every thing is proper, yet every thing seems casual. If there is some appearance of elaboration in the "Hermit," the narrative, as it is less* airy, is less pleasing. Of his other compositions it is impossible to say whether they are the productions of nature, so excellent as not to want the help of art or of art so refined as to resemble nature.

This criticism relates only to the pieces published by Pope. Of the large appendages, which I find in the last edition, I can only say, that I know not whence they came, nor have ever inquired whither they are going. They stand upon the faith of the compilers.

GARTH.

Samuel Garth was of a good family in Yorkshire, and from some school in his own country became a student at Peterhouse, in Cambridge, where he resided till he became doctor of physic in July 7th, 1691. He was examined before the College, at London, on March the 12th, 1691-2, and admitted fellow June 26th, 1693. He was soon so much distinguished by his conversation and accomplishments, as to obtain very extensive practice; and, if a pamphlet of those times may be credited, had the favour and confidence of one party, as Radcliffe had of the other.

He is always mentioned as a man of benevolence; and it is just to suppose that his desire of helping the helpless disposed him to so much zeal for the Dispensary; an undertaking, of which some account, however short, is proper to be given.

Whether what Temple says be true, that physicians have had more learning than the other faculties, I will not stay to inquire; but, I believe, every man has found in physicians great liberality and dignity of sentiment, very prompt effusion of beneficence, and willingness to exert a lucrative art where there is no hope of lucre. Agreeably to this character, the College of Physicians, in July, 1687, published an edict, requiring all the fellows, candidates, and

* Dr. Warton asks, "less than what?"—E.

licentiates, to give gratuitous advice to the neighbouring poor.

This edict was sent to the court of aldermen; and, a question being made to whom the appellation of the *poor* should be extended, the College answered, that it should be sufficient to bring a testimonial from the clergyman officiating in the parish where the patient resided.

After a year's experience, the physicians found their charity frustrated by some malignant opposition, and made, to a great degree, vain by the high price of physic; they therefore voted, in August, 1688, that the laboratory of the College should be accommodated to the preparation of medicines, and another room prepared for their reception; and that the contributors to the expense should manage the charity.

It was now expected, that the apothecaries would have undertaken the care of providing medicines; but they took another course. Thinking the whole design pernicious to their interest, they endeavoured to raise a faction against it in the College, and found some physicians mean enough to solicit their patronage, by betraying to them the counsels of the College. The greater part, however, enforced by a new edict, in 1694, the former order of 1687, and sent it to the mayor and aldermen, who appointed a committee to treat with the College, and settle the mode of administering the charity.

It was desired by the aldermen, that the testimonials of churchwardens and overseers should be admitted; and that all hired servants, and all apprentices to handicraftsmen, should be considered as *poor*. This likewise was granted by the College.

It was then considered who should distribute the medicines, and who should settle their prices. The physicians procured some apothecaries to undertake the dispensation, and offered that the warden and company of the apothecaries should adjust the price. This offer was rejected; and the apothecaries who had engaged to assist the charity were considered as traitors to the company, threatened with the imposition of troublesome offices, and deterred from the performance of their engagements. The apothecaries ventured upon public opposition, and presented a kind of remonstrance against the design to the committee of the city, which the physicians condescended to confute; and at last the traders seem to have prevailed among the sons of trade; for the proposal of the College having been considered, a paper of approbation was drawn up, but postponed and forgotten.

The physicians still persisted; and in 1696 a subscription was raised by themselves, according to an agreement prefixed to the Dispensary. The poor were, for a time, supplied with medicines; for how long a time I know not. The medicinal charity, like others, began with ardour, but soon remitted, and at last died gradually away.

About the time of the subscription begins the action of "The Dispensary." The poem, as its subject was present and popular, co-operated with the passions and prejudices then prevalent and with such auxiliaries to its intrinsic merit was universally and liberally applauded. It was on the side of charity against the intrigues of interest, and of regular learning against licentious usurpation of medical authority, and was therefore naturally favoured by those who read and can judge of poetry.

In 1697, Garth spoke that which is now called the *Harveian* Oration; which the authors of the "Biographia" mention with more praise than the passage quoted in their notes will fully justify. Garth, speaking of the mischiefs done by quacks, has these expressions:—"Non tamen telis vulnerat ista agyrtarum colluvies, sed theriaca quadam magis perniciosa, non pyrio, sed pulvere nescio quo exotico certat, non globulis plumbeis, sed pilulis æque lethalibus interficit." This was certainly thought fine by the author, and is still admired by his biographer. In October, 1702, he became one of the censors of the College.

Garth, being an active and zealous whig, was a member of the Kit-cat club, and, by consequence, familiarly known to all the great men of that denomination. In 1710, when the government fell into other hands, he writ to Lord Godolphin, on his dismission, a short poem, which, was criticised in the "Examiner," and so successfully either defended or excused by Mr. Addison, that, for the sake of the vindication, it ought to be preserved.

At the accession of the present family his merits were acknowledged and rewarded. He was knighted with the sword of his hero, Marlborough; and was made physician in ordinary to the King, and physician general to the army.

He then undertook an edition of Ovid's "Metamorphoses," translated by several hands which he recommended by a preface, written with more ostentation than ability: his notions are half-formed, and his materials immethodically confused. This was his last work. He died Jan. 18, 1717-18, and was buried at Harrow-on-the-hill.

His personal character seems to have been social and liberal. He communicated himself through a very wide extent of acquaintance; and though firm in a party, at a time when firmness included virulence, yet he imparted his kindness to those who were not supposed to favour his principles. He was an early encourager of Pope, and was at once the friend of Addison and of Granville. He is accused of voluptuousness and irreligion; and Pope, who says "that if ever there was a good Christian, without knowing himself to be so, it was Dr

Garth," seems not able to deny what he is angry to hear, and loath to confess.

Pope afterwards declared himself convinced, that Garth died in the communion of the church of Rome, having been privately reconciled. It is observed by Lowth, that there is less distance than is thought between scepticism and popery: and that a mind, wearied with perpetual doubt, willingly seeks repose in the bosom of an infallible church.

His poetry has been praised at least equally to its merit. In "The Dispensary" there is a strain of smooth and free versification; but few lines are eminently elegant. No passages fall below mediocrity, and few rise much above it. The plan seems formed without just proportion to the subject; the means and end have no necessary connection. Resnel, in his preface to Pope's Essay, remarks, that Garth exhibits no discrimination of characters; and that what any one says might, with equal propriety, have been said by another. The general design is, perhaps, open to criticism; but the composition can seldom be charged with inaccuracy or negligence. The Author never slumbers in self-indulgence; his full vigour is always exerted; scarcely a line is left unfinished; nor is it easy to find an expression used by constraint, or a thought imperfectly expressed. It was remarked by Pope, that "The Dispensary" had been corrected in every edition, and that every change was an improvement. It appears, however, to want something of poetical ardour, and something of general delectation; and, therefore, since it has been no longer supported by accidental and intrinsic popularity, it has been scarcely able to support itself.

ROWE.

Nicholas Rowe was born at Little Beckford, in Bedfordshire, in 1673. His family had long possessed a considerable estate, with a good house, at Lambertoun, in Devonshire.* His ancestor, from whom he descended in a direct line, received the arms borne by his descendants for his bravery in the Holy War. His father, John Rowe, who was the first that quitted his paternal acres to practise any part of profit, professed the law, and published Benlow's and Dallison's "Reports" in the reign of James the Second, when in opposition to the notions, then diligently propagated, of dispensing power, he ventured to remark how low his authors rated the prerogative. He was made a serjeant, and died April 30, 1692. He was buried in the Temple church.

Nicholas was first sent to a private school, at Highgate; and, being afterwards removed to Westminster, was, at twelve years,† chosen one of the King's scholars. His master was Busby, who suffered none of his scholars to let their powers lie useless; and his exercises in several languages are said to have been written with uncommon degrees of excellence, and yet to have cost him very little labour.

At sixteen he had in his father's opinion, made advances in learning sufficient to qualify him for the study of law, and was entered a student of the Middle Temple, where for some time he read statutes and reports with proficiency proportionate to the force of his mind, which was already such that he endeavoured to comprehend law, not as a series of precedents, or collection of positive precepts, but as a system of rational government, and impartial justice.

When he was nineteen, he was, by the death of his father, left more to his own direction, and probably from that time suffered law gradually to give way to poetry. At twenty-five he produced "The Ambitious Step-mother," which was received with so much favour, that he devoted himself from that time wholly to elegant literature.

His next tragedy (1702) was "Tamerlane," in which, under the name of Tamerlane, he intended to characterize King William, and Lewis the Fourteenth under Bajazet. The virtues of Tamerlane seem to have been arbitrarily assigned him by his poet, for I know not that history gives any other qualities than those which make a conqueror. The fashion, however, of the time was, to accumulate upon Lewis all that can raise horror and detestation; and whatever good was withheld from him, that it might not be thrown away, was bestowed upon King William.

This was the tragedy which Rowe valued most, and that which probably, by the help of political auxiliaries, excited most applause; but

* In the Villare, *Lamerton*.—Orig. Edit.

† He was not elected till 1688.—N.

occasional poetry must often content itself with occasional praise. "Tamerlane" has for a long time been acted only once a year, on the night when King William landed. Our quarrel with Lewis has been long over; and it now gratifies neither zeal nor malice to see him painted with aggravated features, like a Saracen upon a sign.

"The Fair Penitent," his next production (1703), is one of the most pleasing tragedies on the stage, where it still keeps its turns of appearing, and probably will long keep them, for there is scarcely any work of any poet at once so interesting by the fable, and so delightful by the language. The story is domestic, and therefore easily received by the imagination, and assimilated to common life; the diction is exquisitely harmonious, and soft or sprightly as occasion requires.

The character of Lothario seems to have been expanded by Richardson into Lovelace; but he has excelled his original in the moral effect of the fiction. Lothario, with gayety which cannot be hated, and bravery which cannot be despised, retains too much of the spectator's kindness. It was in the power of Richardson alone to teach us at once esteem and detestation, to make virtuous resentment overpower all the benevolence which wit, elegance, and courage, naturally excite; and to lose at last the hero in the villain.

The fifth act is not equal to the former; the events of the drama are exhausted, and little remains but to talk of what is past. It has been observed, that the title of the play does not sufficiently correspond with the behaviour of Calista, who at last shows no evident signs of repentance, but may be reasonably suspected of feeling pain from detection rather than from guilt, and expresses more shame than sorrow, and more rage than shame.

His next (1706) was "Ulysses;" which, with the common fate of mythological stories, is now generally neglected. We have been too early acquainted with the poetical heroes, to expect any pleasure from their revival; to show them, as they have already been shown, is to disgust by repetition; to give them new qualities, or new adventures, is to offend by violating received notions.

"The Royal Convert" (1708) seems to have a better claim to longevity. The fable is drawn from an obscure and barbarous age, to which fictions are more easily and properly adapted; for when objects are imperfectly seen, they easily take forms from imagination. The scene lies among our ancestors in our own country, and therefore very easily catches attention. Rodogune is a personage truly tragical, of high spirit, and violent passions, great with tempestuous dignity, and wicked with a soul that would have been heroic if it had been virtuous. The motto seems to tell, that this play was not successful.

Rowe does not always remember what his characters require. In "Tamerlane" there is some ridiculous mention of the God of Love and Rodogune, a savage Saxon, talks of Venus and the eagle that bears the thunder of Jupiter.

The play discovers its own date, by a prediction of the Union, in imitation of Cranmer's prophetic promises to Henry the Eighth. The anticipated blessings of union are not very naturally introduced, nor very happily expressed.

He once (1706) tried to change his hand. He ventured on a comedy, and produced "The Biter;" with which, though it was unfavourably treated by the audience, he was himself delighted; for he is said to have sate in the house laughing with great vehemence, whenever he had, in his own opinion, produced a jest. But finding that he and the public had no sympathy of mirth, he tried at lighter scenes no more.

After "The Royal Convert" (1714) appeared "Jane Shore," written, as its Author professes *in imitation of Shakspeare's style*. In what he thought himself an imitator of Shakspeare, it is not easy to conceive. The numbers, the diction the sentiments, and the conduct, every thing in which imitation can consist, are remote in the utmost degree from the manner of Shakspeare whose dramas it resembles only as it is an English story, and as some of the persons have their names in history. This play, consisting chiefly of domestic scenes and private distress, lays hold upon the heart. The wife is forgiven because she repents, and the husband is honoured because he forgives. This, therefore, is one of those pieces which we still welcome on the stage.

His last tragedy (1715) was "Lady Jane Gray." This subject had been chosen by Mr Smith, whose papers were put into Rowe's hands such as he describes them in his preface. This play has likewise sunk into oblivion. From this time he gave nothing more to the stage.

Being, by a competent fortune, exempted from any necessity of combating his inclination, he never wrote in distress, and therefore does not appear to have ever written in haste. His works were finished to his own approbation and bear few marks of negligence or hurry. It is remarkable, that his prologues and epilogues are all his own, though he sometimes supplied others; he afforded help, but did not solicit it.

As his studies necessarily made him acquainted with Shakspeare, and acquaintance produced veneration, he undertook (1709) an edition of his works, from which he neither received much praise, nor seems to have expected it; yet, I believe, those who compare it with former

copies will find that he has done more than he promised; and that, without the pomp of notes or boasts of criticism, many passages are happily restored. He prefixed a life of the author, such as tradition, then almost expiring, could supply, and a preface;* which cannot be said to discover much profundity or penetration. He at least contributed to the popularity of his author.

He was willing enough to improve his fortune by other arts than poetry. He was under-secretary for three years when the Duke of Queensberry was secretary of state, and afterwards applied to the Earl of Oxford for some public employment.† Oxford enjoined him to study Spanish; and when, some time afterwards, he came again, and said that he had mastered it, dismissed him with this congratulation: "Then, Sir, I envy you the pleasure of reading 'Don Quixote' in the original."

This story is sufficiently attested; but why Oxford, who desired to be thought a favourer of literature, should thus insult a man of acknowledged merit; or how Rowe, who was so keen a whig, that he did not willingly converse with men of the opposite party, could ask preferment from Oxford, it is not now possible to discover. Pope,‡ who told the story, did not say on what occasion the advice was given; and, though he owned Rowe's disappointment, doubted whether any injury was intended him, but thought it rather Lord Oxford's odd way.

It is likely that he lived on discontented through the rest of Queen Anne's reign; but the time came at last when he found kinder friends. At the accession of King George he was made poet-laureat; I am afraid by the ejection of poor Nahum Tate, who (1716) died in the Mint, where he was forced to seek shelter by extreme poverty. He was made likewise one of the land-surveyors of the customs of the port of London. The Prince of Wales chose him clerk of his council; and the Lord Chancellor Parker, as soon as he received the seals, appointed him, unasked, secretary of the presentations. Such an accumulation of employments undoubtedly produced a very considerable revenue.

Having already translated some parts of Lucan's "Pharsalia," which had been published in the Miscellanies, and doubtless received many praises, he undertook a version of the whole work, which he lived to finish, but not to publish. It seems to have been printed under the care of Dr. Welwood, who prefixed the author's life, in which is contained the following character:

"As to his person, it was graceful and well made: his face regular, and of a manly beauty. As his soul was well lodged, so its rational and animal faculties excelled in a high degree. He had a quick and fruitful invention, a deep penetration, and a large compass of thought, with singular dexterity and easiness in making his thoughts to be understood. He was master of most parts of polite learning, especially the classical authors, both Greek and Latin; understood the French, Italian, and Spanish languages; and spoke the first fluently, and the other two tolerably well.

"He had likewise read most of the Greek and Roman histories in their original languages, and most that are written in English, French, Italian, and Spanish. He had a good taste in philosophy; and, having a firm impression of religion upon his mind, he took great delight in divinity and ecclesiastical history, in both which he made great advances in the times he retired into the country, which were frequent. He expressed, on all occasions, his full persuasion of the truth of revealed religion; and, being a sincere member of the established church himself, he pitied, but condemned not, those that dissented from it. He abhorred the principles of persecuting men upon the account of their opinions in religion; and, being strict in his own, he took it not upon him to censure those of another persuasion. His conversation was pleasant, witty, and learned, without the least tincture of affectation or pedantry; and his inimitable manner of diverting and enlivening the company, made it impossible for any one to be out of humour when he was in it. Envy and detraction seemed to be entirely foreign to his constitution; and whatever provocations he met with at any time, he passed them over without the least thought of resentment or revenge. As Homer had a Zoilus, so Mr. Rowe had sometimes his; for there were not wanting malevolent people and pretenders to poetry too, that would now and then bark at his best performances; but he was conscious of his own genius, and had so much good-nature as to forgive them; nor could he ever be tempted to return them an answer.

"The love of learning and poetry made him not the less fit for business, and nobody applied himself closer to it, when it required his attendance. The late Duke of Queensberry, when he was secretary of state, made him his secretary for public affairs; and when that truly great man came to know him well, he was never so pleased as when Mr. Rowe was in his company. After the Duke's death, all avenues were stopped to his preferment; and, during the rest of that reign, he passed his time with the muses and his books, and sometimes the conversation of his friends.

"When he had just got to be easy in his

* Mr. Rowe's preface, however, is not distinct, as it might be supposed from this passage, from the life.—R.

† Spence. ‡ Ibid.

fortune, and was in a fair way to make it better, death swept him away, and in him deprived the world of one of the best men, as well as one of the best geniuses of the age. He died like a Christian and a philosopher, in charity with all mankind, and with an absolute resignation to the will of God. He kept up his good-humour to the last; and took leave of his wife and friends, immediately before his last agony, with the same tranquillity of mind, and the same indifference for life, as though he had been upon taking but a short journey. He was twice married: first to a daughter of Mr. Parsons, one of the auditors of the revenue; and afterwards to a daughter of Mr. Devenish, of a good family in Dorsetshire. By the first he had a son; and by the second a daughter, married afterwards to Mr. Fane. He died the sixth of December, 1718, in the forty-fifth year of his age; and was buried the nineteenth of the same month in Westminster Abbey, in the aisle where many of our English poets are interred, over against Chaucer, his body being attended by a select number of his friends, and the Dean and choir officiating at the funeral."

To this character, which is apparently given with the fondness of a friend, may be added the testimony of Pope, who says in a letter to Blount, "Mr. Rowe accompanied me, and passed a week in the Forest. I need not tell you how much a man of his turn entertained me; but I must acquaint you, there is a vivacity and gayety of disposition almost peculiar to him, which makes it impossible to part from him without that uneasiness which generally succeeds all our pleasure."

Pope has left behind him another mention of his companion, less advantageous, which is thus reported by Dr. Warburton.

"Rowe, in Mr. Pope's opinion, maintained a decent character, but had no heart. Mr. Addison was justly offended with some behaviour which arose from that want, and estranged himself from him; which Rowe felt very severely. Mr. Pope, their common friend, knowing this, took an opportunity, at some juncture of Mr. Addison's advancement, to tell him how poor Rowe was grieved at his displeasure, and what satisfaction he expressed at Mr. Addison's good fortune, which he expressed so naturally, that he (Mr. Pope) could not but think him sincere. Mr. Addison replied, 'I do not suspect that he feigned; but the levity of his heart is such, that he is struck with any new adventure; and it would affect him just in the same manner, if he heard I was going to be hanged.'—Mr. Pope said he could not deny but Mr. Addison understood Rowe well."

This censure time has not left us the power of confirming or refuting; but observation daily shows, that much stress is not to be laid on hyperbolical accusations, and pointed sentences, which even he that utters them desires to b applauded rather than credited. Addison ca hardly be supposed to have meant all that h said. Few characters can bear the microscopi scrutiny of wit quickened by anger; and per haps the best advice to authors would be, tha they should keep out of the way of one another

Rowe is chiefly to be considered as a tragi writer and a translator. In his attempt at co medy he failed so ignominiously, that his "Bi ter" is not inserted in his works; and his oc casional poems and short compositions are rarel worthy of either praise or censure; for the seem the casual sports of a mind seeking rathe to amuse its leisure than to exercise its powers

In the construction of his dramas, there i not much art; he is not a nice observer of th unities. He extends time and varies place a his convenience requires. To vary the place i not, in my opinion, any violation of nature, i the change be made between the acts; for it i no less easy for the spectator to suppose himsel at Athens in the second act, than at Thebes i the first; but to change the scene, as is done b Rowe, in the middle of an act, is to add mor acts to the play, since an act is so much of th business as is transacted without interruption Rowe, by this licence, easily extricates himsel from difficulties; as, in "Jane Gray," whe we have been terrified with all the dreadfu pomp of public execution, and are wonderin how the heroine or the poet will proceed, n sooner has Jane pronounced some prophetic rhymes, than—pass and be gone—the scen closes, and Pembroke and Gardiner are turne out upon the stage.

I know not that there can be found in hi plays, any deep search into nature, any accurat discriminations of kindred qualities, or nice dis play of passion in its progress: all is generi and undefined. Nor does he much interest o affect the auditor, except in "Jane Shore," who is always seen and heard with pity. Ali cia is a character of empty noise, with no re semblance to real sorrow or to natural madness

Whence, then, has Rowe his reputation From the reasonableness and propriety of som of his scenes, from the elegance of his diction and the suavity of his verse. He seldom move either pity or terror, but he often elevates th sentiments; he seldom pierces the breast, but h always delights the ear, and often improves th understanding.

His translation of the "Golden Verses," an of the first book of Quillet's Poem, have no thing in them remarkable. The "Golde Verses" are tedious.

The version of Lucan is one of the greates productions of English poetry; for there is per haps none that so completely exhibits the geniu and spirit of the original. Lucan is distin guished by a kind of dictatorial or philosophi

dignity, rather, as Quintilian observes, declamatory than poetical; full of ambitious morality and pointed sentences, comprised in vigorous and animated lines. This character Rowe has very diligently and successfully preserved. His versification, which is such as his contemporaries practised, without any attempt at innovation or improvement, seldom wants either melody or force. His author's sense is sometimes a little diluted by additional infusions, and sometimes weakened by too much expansion. But such faults are to be expected in all translations, from the constraint of measures and dissimilitude of languages. The "Pharsalia" of Rowe deserves more notice than it obtains, and as it is more read will be more esteemed.*

ADDISON.

Joseph Addison was born on the first of May, 1672, at Milston, of which his father, Lancelot Addison, was then rector, near Ambrosebury in Wiltshire, and appearing weak and unlikely to live, he was christened the same day. After the usual domestic education, which from the character of his father may be reasonably supposed to have given him strong impressions of piety, he was committed to the care of Mr. Naish, at Ambrosebury, and afterwards of Mr. Taylor, at Salisbury.

Not to name the school or the masters of men illustrious for literature is a kind of historical fraud, by which honest fame is injuriously diminished; I would therefore trace him through the whole process of his education. In 1683, in the beginning of his twelfth year, his father, being made dean of Lichfield, naturally carried his family to his new residence, and, I believe, placed him for some time, probably not long, under Mr. Shaw, then master of the school at Lichfield, father of the late Dr. Peter Shaw. Of this interval his biographers have given no account, and I know it only from a story of a *barring-out*, told me when I was a boy, by Andrew Corbet of Shropshire, who had heard it from Mr. Pigot, his uncle.

The practice of barring-out was a savage licence, practised in many schools at the end of the last century, by which the boys, when the periodical vacation drew near, growing petulent at the approach of liberty, some days before the time of regular recess, took possession of the school, of which they barred the doors, and bade their master defiance from the windows. It is not easy to suppose that on such occasions the master would do more than laugh; yet if tradition may be credited, he often struggled hard to force or surprise the garrison. The master, when Pigot was a school-boy, was barred-out at Lichfield; and the whole operation, as he said, was planned and conducted by Addison.

To judge better of the probability of this story, I have inquired when he was sent to the Chartreux; but, as he was not one of those who enjoyed the founder's benefaction, there is no account preserved of his admission. At the school of the Chartreux, to which he was removed either from that of Salisbury or Lichfield, he pursued his juvenile studies under the care of Dr. Ellis, and contracted that intimacy with Sir Richard Steele, which their joint labours have so effectually recorded.

Of this memorable friendship the greater praise must be given to Steele. It is not hard to love those from whom nothing can be feared; and Addison never considered Steele as a rival, but Steele lived, as he confesses, under an habitual subjection to the predominating genius of Addison, whom he always mentioned with reverence, and treated with obsequiousness.

Addison,† who knew his own dignity, could not always forbear to show it, by playing a little upon his admirer; but he was in no danger of retort: his jests were endured without resistance or resentment.

But the sneer of jocularity was not the worst. Steele, whose imprudence of generosity, or vanity of profusion, kept him always incurably necessitous, upon some pressing exigence, in an evil hour, borrowed a hundred pounds of his friend, probably without much purpose of repayment; but Addison, who seems to have had other notions of a hundred pounds, grew impatient of delay, and reclaimed his loan by an execution. Steele felt with great sensibility the obduracy of his creditor, but with emotions of sorrow rather than of anger.‡

* The life of Rowe is a very remarkable instance of the uncommon strength of Dr. Johnson's memory. When I received from him the MS. he complacently observed, "that the criticism was tolerably well done, considering that he had not seen Rowe's Works for thirty years."—N.

† Spence.

‡ This fact was communicated to Johnson in my

In 1687, he was entered into Queen's College, in Oxford, where, in 1689, the accidental perusal of some Latin verses gained him the patronage of Dr. Lancaster, afterwards provost of Queen's College; by whose recommendation he was elected into Magdalen College as a Demy, a term by which that society denominates those which are elsewhere called Scholars; young men who partake of the founder's benefaction, and succeed in their order to vacant fellowships.*

Here he continued to cultivate poetry and criticism, and grew first eminent by his Latin compositions, which are indeed entitled to particular praise. He has not confined himself to the imitation of any ancient author, but has formed his style from the general language, such as a diligent perusal of the productions of different ages happened to supply.

His Latin compositions seem to have had much of his fondness, for he collected a second volume of the "Musæ Anglicanæ," perhaps for a convenient receptacle, in which all his Latin pieces are inserted, and where his poem on the Peace has the first place. He afterwards presented the collection to Boileau, who, from that time, "conceived," says Tickell, "an opinion of the English genius for poetry." Nothing is better known of Boileau, than that he had an injudicious and peevish contempt of modern Latin, and therefore his profession of regard was probably the effect of his civility rather than approbation.

Three of his Latin poems are upon subjects on which perhaps he would not have ventured to have written in his own language. "The Battle of the Pigmies and Cranes;" "The Barometer;" and "A Bowling-green." When the matter is low or scanty, a dead language, in which nothing is mean because nothing is familiar, affords great conveniences; and, by the sonorous magnificence of Roman syllables, the writer conceals penury of thought, and want of novelty, often from the reader, and often from himself.

In his twenty-second year he first showed his power of English poetry by some verses addressed to Dryden; and soon afterwards published a translation of the greater part of the Fourth Georgic, upon Bees; after which, says Dryden, "my latter swarm is hardly worth the hiving."

hearing by a person of unquestionable veracity, but whose name I am not at liberty to mention. He had it, as he told me, from Lady Primrose, to whom Steele related it with tears in his eyes. The late Dr. Stinton confirmed it to me, by saying, that he heard it from Mr. Hooke, author of the Roman History; and he from Mr. Pope.—H.

See, Victor's Letters, vol. i. p. 328, this transaction somewhat differently related.—R.

* He took the degree of M. A. Feb. 14, 1693.

About the same time he composed the argu ments prefixed to the several books of Dryden' Virgil: and produced an essay on the "Geor gics," juvenile, superficial, and uninstructive without much either of the scholar's learnin or the critic's penetration.

His next paper of verses contained a charac ter of the principal English poets, inscribed t Henry Sacheverell, who was then, if not a poet a writer of verses;* as is shown by his versio of a small part of Virgil's "Georgics," pub lished in the Miscellanies; and a Latin enco mium on Queen Mary, in the "Musæ Angli canæ." These verses exhibit all the fondnes of friendship; but on one side or the other friendship was afterwards too weak for the ma lignity of faction.

In this poem is a very confident and discrimi nate character of Spenser, whose work he ha then never read.† So little sometimes is criti cism the effect of judgment. It is necessary t inform the reader, that about this time he wa introduced by Congreve to Montague, the chancellor of the Exchequer: Addison was the learning the trade of a courtier, and subjoine Montague as a poetical name to those of Cowle and of Dryden.

By the influence of Mr. Montague, concur ring, according to Tickell, with his natural mo desty, he was diverted from his original desig of entering into holy orders. Montague allege the corruption of men who engaged in civil em ployments without liberal education; and de clared, that, though he was represented as a enemy to the church, he would never do it an injury but by withholding Addison from it.

Soon after (in 1695) he wrote a poem to Kin William, with a rhyming introduction addresse to Lord Somers. King William had no regar to elegance or literature; his study was onl war; yet by a choice of ministers, whose dispo sition was very different from his own, he pro cured, without intention, a very liberal patron

* A letter which I found among Dr. Johnson' papers, dated in January, 1784, from a lady in Wil shire, contains a discovery of some importance i literary history, viz. that, by the initials H. S. pr fixed to the poem, we are not to understand th famous Dr. Henry Sacheverell, whose trial is th most remarkable incident in his life. The info mation thus communicated is, that the verses i question were not an address to the famous D Sacheverell, but to a very ingenious gentleman o the same name, who died young, supposed to be Maukeman, for that he wrote the history of the Isle o Man.—That this person left his papers to Mr. Add son, and had formed a plan of a tragedy upon th death of Socrates.—The lady says she had this i formation from a Mr. Stephens, who was a fellow o Merton College, a contemporary and intimate wit Mr. Addison, in Oxford, who died near fifty yea ago, a prebendary of Winchester.—H.

† Spence.

age to poetry. Addison was caressed both by Somers and Montague.

In 1697 appeared his Latin verses on the peace of Ryswick, which he dedicated to Montague, and which was afterwards called by Smith, "the best Latin poem since the 'Æneid.'" Praise must not be too rigorously examined; but the performance cannot be denied to be vigorous and elegant.

Having yet no public employment, he obtained, (in 1699) a pension of three hundred pounds a year, that he might be enabled to travel. He staid a year at Blois,* probably to learn the French language; and then proceeded in his journey to Italy, which he surveyed with the eyes of a poet.

While he was travelling at leisure, he was far from being idle: for he not only collected his observations on the country, but found time to write his Dialogues on Medals, and four acts of "Cato." Such at least is the relation of Tickell. Perhaps he only collected his materials, and formed his plan.

Whatever were his other employments in Italy, he there wrote the Letter to Lord Halifax, which is justly considered as the most elegant, if not the most sublime, of his poetical productions. But in about two years he found it necessary to hasten home; being, as Swift informs us, distressed by indigence, and compelled to become the tutor of a travelling squire, because his pension was not remitted.

At his return he published his Travels, with a dedication to Lord Somers. As his stay in foreign countries was short, his observations are such as might be supplied by a hasty view, and consist chiefly in comparisons of the present face of the country with the descriptions left us by the Roman poets, from whom he made preparatory collections, though he might have spared the trouble, had he known that such collections had been made twice before by Italian authors.

The most amusing passage of his book is his account of the minute republic of San Marino; of many parts it is not a very severe censure to say, that they might have been written at home. His elegance of language, and variegation of prose and verse, however, gains upon the reader; and the book, though awhile neglected, became in time so much the favourite of the public, that before it was reprinted it rose to five times its price.

When he returned to England (in 1702) with a meanness of appearance which gave testimony of the difficulties to which he had been reduced, he found his old patrons out of power, and was therefore, for a time, at full leisure for the cultivation of his mind: and a mind so cultivated gives reason to believe that little time was lost.

But he remained not long neglected or useless. The victory at Blenheim (1704) spread triumph and confidence over the nation; and Lord Godolphin, lamenting to Lord Halifax, that it had not been celebrated in a manner equal to the subject, desired him to propose it to some better poet. Halifax told him, that there was no encouragement for genius; that worthless men were unprofitably enriched with public money, without any care to find or employ those whose appearance might do honour to their country. To this Godolphin replied, that such abuses should in time be rectified; and that, if a man could be found capable of the task then proposed, he should not want an ample recompense. Halifax then named Addison, but required that the treasurer should apply to him in his own person. Godolphin sent the message by Mr. Boyle, afterwards Lord Carlton; and Addison, having undertaken the work, communicated it to the treasurer, while it was yet advanced no further than the simile of the angel, and was immediately rewarded by succeeding Mr. Locke in the place of commissioner of appeals.

In the following year he was at Hanover with Lord Halifax; and the year after he was made under secretary of state, first to Sir Charles Hedges, and in a few months more to the Earl of Sunderland.

About this time the prevalent taste for Italian operas inclined him to try what would be the effect of a musical drama in our own language. He therefore wrote the opera of "Rosamond," which, when exhibited on the stage, was either hissed or neglected; but, trusting that the readers would do him more justice, he published it, with an inscription to the Dutchess of Marlborough; a woman without skill, or pretensions to skill, in poetry or literature. His dedication was therefore an instance of servile absurdity, to be exceeded only by Joshua Barnes's dedication of a Greek Anacreon to the Duke.

His reputation had been somewhat advanced by "The Tender Husband," a comedy which Steele dedicated to him, with a confession that he owed to him several of the most successful scenes. To this play Addison supplied a prologue.

When the Marquis of Wharton was appointed lord lieutenant of Ireland, Addison attended him as his secretary, and was made keeper of the records in Birmingham's Tower, with a salary of three hundred pounds a year. The office was little more than nominal, and the salary was augmented for his accommodation.

Interest and faction allow little to the operation of particular dispositions or private opinions. Two men of personal characters more

* Spence.

opposite than those of Wharton and Addison could not easily be brought together. Wharton was impious, profligate, and shameless, without regard, or appearance of regard, to right and wrong:* whatever is contrary to this may be said of Addison; but as agents of a party they were connected, and how they adjusted their other sentiments we cannot know.

Addison must however not be too hastily condemned. It is not necessary to refuse benefits from a bad man, when the acceptance implies no approbation of his crimes; nor has the subordinate officer any obligation to examine the opinions or conduct of those under whom he acts, except that he may not be made the instrument of wickedness. It is reasonable to suppose that Addison counteracted, as far as he was able, the malignant and blasting influence of the Lieutenant; and that at least by his intervention some good was done and some mischief prevented.

When he was in office, he made a law to himself, as Swift has recorded, never to remit his regular fees in civility to his friends: "for," said he, "I may have a hundred friends; and if my fee be two guineas, I shall, by relinquishing my right, lose two hundred guineas, and no friend gain more than two: there is therefore no proportion between the good imparted and the evil suffered."

He was in Ireland when Steele, without any communication of his design, began the publication of the "Tatler;" but he was not long concealed; by inserting a remark on Virgil which Addison had given him, he discovered himself. It is indeed not easy for any man to write upon literature or common life, so as not to make himself known to those with whom he familiarly converses, and who are acquainted with his track of study, his favourite topic, his peculiar notions, and his habitual phrases.

If Steele desired to write in secret, he was not lucky; a single month detected him. His first Tatler was published April 22, (1709) and Addison's contribution appeared May 26. Tickell observes, that the "Tatler" began and was concluded without his concurrence. This is doubtless literally true; but the work did not suffer much by his unconsciousness of its commencement or his absence at its cessation; for he continued his assistance to December 23, and the paper stopped on January 2. He did not distinguish his pieces by any signature; and I know not whether his name was not kept secret till the papers were collected into volumes.

To the "Tatler," in about two months, succeeded the "Spectator;" a series of essays of the same kind, but written with less levity, upon a more regular plan, and published daily. Such an undertaking showed the writers not to distrust their own copiousness of materials, or facility of composition, and their performance justified their confidence. They found, however, in their progress, many auxiliaries. To attempt a single paper was no terrifying labour; many pieces were offered, and many were received.

Addison had enough of the zeal of party, but Steele had at that time almost nothing else. The "Spectator," in one of the first papers, showed the political tenets of its authors; but a resolution was soon taken, of courting general approbation by general topics and subjects on which faction had produced no diversity of sentiments, such as literature, morality, and familiar life. To this practice they adhered with few deviations. The ardour of Steele once broke out in praise of Marlborough; and when Dr. Fleetwood prefixed to some sermons a preface overflowing with whiggish opinions, that it might be read by the Queen,* it was reprinted in the "Spectator."

To teach the minuter decencies and inferior duties, to regulate the practice of daily conversation, to correct those depravities which are rather ridiculous than criminal, and remove those grievances which, if they produce no lasting calamities, impress hourly vexation, was first attempted by Casa in his book of Manners, and Castiglione in his "Courtier;" two books yet celebrated in Italy for purity and elegance, and which, if they are now less read, are neglected only because they have effected that reformation which their authors intended, and their precepts now are no longer wanted. Their usefulness to the age in which they were written is sufficiently attested by the translations which almost all the nations of Europe were in haste to obtain.

This species of instruction was continued, and perhaps advanced, by the French; among whom La Bruyere's "Manners of the Age," though, as Boileau remarked, it is written without connection, certainly deserves praise for liveliness of description and justness of observation.

Before the "Tatler" and "Spectator," if the writers for the theatre are excepted, England had no masters of common life. No writers had yet undertaken to reform either the savageness of neglect or the impertinence of civility; to show when to speak or to be silent; how to refuse or how to comply. We had many books to teach us our more important duties, and to settle opinions in philosophy or politics; but an *Arbiter Elegantiarum*, a judge of propriety, was

* Dr. Johnson appears to have blended the character of the Marquis with that of his son the Duke.—N.

* This particular number of the "Spectator," it is said, was not published till twelve o'clock, that it might come out precisely at the hour of her Majesty's breakfast, and that no time might be left for deliberating about serving it up with that meal, as usual. See the edition of the "Tatler" with notes vol. vi. No. 271, note p. 452, &c.—N.

yet wanting, who should survey the track of daily conversation, and free it from thorns and prickles, which tease the passer, though they do not wound him.

For this purpose nothing is so proper as the frequent publication of short papers, which we read not as study but amusement. If the subject be slight, the treatise is short. The busy may find time, and the idle may find patience.

This mode of conveying cheap and easy knowledge began among us in the civil war,* when it was much the interest of either party to raise and fix the prejudices of the people. At that time appeared "Mercurius Aulicus," "Mercurius Rusticus," and "Mercurius Civicus." It is said that when any title grew popular, it was stolen by the antagonist, who by this stratagem conveyed his notions to those who would not have received him had he not worn the appearance of a friend. The tumult of those unhappy days left scarcely any man leisure to treasure up occasional compositions; and so much were they neglected, that a complete collection is no where to be found.

These Mercuries were succeeded by L'Estrange's "Observator;" and that by Lesley's "Rehearsal," and perhaps by others; but hitherto nothing had been conveyed to the people in this commodious manner but controversy relating to the church or state; of which they taught many to talk, whom they could not teach to judge.

It has been suggested, that the Royal Society was instituted soon after the Restoration to divert the attention of the people from public discontent. The "Tatler" and "Spectator" had the same tendency; they were published at a time when two parties, loud, restless, and violent, each with plausible declarations, and each perhaps without any distinct termination of its views, were agitating the nation: to minds heated with political contest they supplied cooler and more inoffensive reflections; and it is said by Addison, in a subsequent work, that they had a perceptible influence upon the conversation of that time, and taught the frolicksome and the gay to unite merriment with decency; an effect which they can never wholly lose, while they continue to be among the first books by which both sexes are initiated in the elegancies of knowledge.

The "Tatler" and "Spectator" adjusted, like Casa, the unsettled practice of daily intercourse by propriety and politeness; and, like La Bruyere, exhibited the Characters and Manners of the Age. The personages introduced in these papers were not merely ideal; they were then known, and conspicuous in various stations. Of the "Tatler" this is told by Steele in his last paper; and of the "Spectator" by Budgell in the preface to "Theophrastus," a book which Addison has recommended, and which he was suspected to have revised, if he did not write it. Of those portraits, which may be supposed to be sometimes embellished and sometimes aggravated, the originals are now partly known and partly forgotten.

But to say that they united the plans of two or three eminent writers, is to give them but a small part of their due praise; they superadded literature and criticism, and sometimes towered far above their predecessors, and taught, with great justness of argument and dignity of language, the most important duties and sublime truths.

All these topics were happily varied with elegant fictions and refined allegories, and illuminated with different changes of style and felicities of invention.

It is recorded by Budgell, that, of the characters feigned or exhibited in the "Spectator," the favourite of Addison was Sir Roger de Coverley, of whom he had formed a very delicate and discriminate idea,* which he would not suffer to be violated; and, therefore, when Steele had shown him innocently picking up a girl in the Temple and taking her to a tavern, he drew upon himself so much of his friend's indignation, that he was forced to appease him by a promise of forbearing Sir Roger for the time to come.

The reason which induced Cervantes to bring his hero to the grave, *para mi sola nacio Don Quixote, y yo para el*, made Addison declare, with undue vehemence of expression, that he would kill Sir Roger; being of opinion that they were born for one another, and that any other hand would do him wrong.

It may be doubted whether Addison ever filled up his original delineation. He describes his Knight as having his imagination somewha warped; but of this perversion he has made very little use. The irregularities in Sir Roger's conduct seem not so much the effects of mind deviating from the beaten track of life, by the perpetual pressure of some overwhelm-

* Newspapers appear to have had an earlier date than here assigned. Cleiveland, in his character of a London diurnal, says, "The original sinner of this kind was Dutch; Gallo-Belgicus, the Protoplas, and the modern Mercuries but Hans en Kelders." Some intelligence given by Mercurius Gallo-Belgicus is mentioned in Carew's "Survey of Cornwall," p. 126, originally published in 1602. These vehicles of information are often mentioned in the plays of James and Charles the First.—R.

* The errors in this account are explained at considerable length in the preface to the "Spectator" prefixed to the edition in the "British Essayists." The original delineation of Sir Roger undoubtedly belongs to Steele.—C.

fing idea, as of habitual rusticity, and that negligence which solitary grandeur naturally generates.

The variable weather of the mind, the flying vapours of incipient madness, which from time to time cloud reason, without eclipsing it, it requires so much nicety to exhibit, that Addison seems to have been deterred from prosecuting his own design.

To Sir Roger, who, as a country gentleman, appears to be a tory, or, as it is gently expressed, an adherent to the landed interest, is opposed Sir Andrew Freeport, a new man, a wealthy merchant, zealous for the monied interest, and a whig. Of this contrariety of opinions, it is probable more consequences were at first intended than could be produced, when the resolution was taken to exclude party from the paper. Sir Andrew does but little, and that little seems not to have pleased Addison, who, when he dismissed him from the club, changed his opinions. Steele had made him, in the true spirit of unfeeling commerce, declare that he "would not build a hospital for idle people;" but at last he buys land, settles in the country, and builds, not a manufactory, but a hospital for twelve old husbandmen; for men, with whom a merchant has little acquaintance, and whom he commonly considers with little kindness.

Of essays thus elegant, thus instructive, and thus commodiously distributed, it is natural to suppose the approbation general, and the sale numerous. I once heard it observed, that the sale may be calculated by the product of the tax, related in the last number to produce more than twenty pounds a week, and therefore stated at one and twenty pounds, or three pounds ten shillings a day: this, at a halfpenny a paper, will give sixteen hundred and eighty* for the daily number.

This sale is not great; yet this, if Swift be credited, was likely to grow less; for he declares that the "Spectator," whom he ridicules for his endless mention of the fair sex, had before his recess wearied his readers.

The next year (1713), in which "Cato" came upon the stage, was the grand climacteric of Addison's reputation. Upon the death of Cato, he had, as is said, planned a tragedy in the time of his travels, and had for several years the first four acts finished, which were shown to such as were likely to spread their admiration. They were seen by Pope, and by Cibber, who relates that Steele, when he took back the copy, told him, in the despicable cant of literary modesty, that, whatever spirit his friend had shown in the composition, he doubted whether he would have courage sufficient to expose it to the censure of a British audience.

The time however was now come, when those who affected to think liberty in danger, affected likewise to think that a stage play might preserve it; and Addison was importuned, in the name of the tutelary deities of Britain, to show his courage and his zeal by finishing his design.

To resume his work he seemed perversely and unaccountably unwilling; and by a request which perhaps he wished to be denied, desired Mr. Hughes to add a fifth act. Hughes supposed him serious; and, undertaking the supplement, brought in a few days some scenes for his examination: but he had in the mean time gone to work himself, and produced half an act which he afterwards completed, but with brevity irregularly disproportionate to the foregoing parts, like a task, performed with reluctance and hurried to its conclusion.

It may yet be doubted whether "Cato" was made public by any change of the Author's purpose; for Dennis charged him with raising prejudices in his own favour, by false position of preparatory criticism, and with poisoning the town by contradicting in the "Spectator" the established rule of poetical justice, because his own hero, with all his virtues, was to fall before a tyrant. The fact is certain; the motive we must guess.

Addison was, I believe, sufficiently disposed to bar all avenues against all danger. When Pope brought him the prologue, which is properly accommodated to the play, there were these words: "Britons, arise! be worth like this approved," meaning nothing more than Britons, erect and exalt yourselves to the approbation of public virtue; Addison was frighted, lest he should be thought a promoter of insurrection, and the line was liquidated to "Britons, attend."

Now "heavily in clouds came on the day, the great, the important day," when Addison was to stand the hazard of the theatre. That there might, however, be left as little hazard as was possible, on the first night, Steele, as himself relates, undertook to pack an audience. This, says Pope,* had been tried for the first time in favour of the "Distrest Mother;" and was now, with more efficacy, practised for "Cato."

The danger was soon over. The whole nation was at that time on fire with faction. The whigs applauded every line in which liberty was mentioned, as a satire on the tories; and the tories echoed every clap, to show that the satire was unfelt. The story of Bolingbroke is well known. He called Booth to his box, and gave him fifty guineas for defending the cause of liberty so well against a perpetual dictator.

* That this calculation is not exaggerated, that it is even much below the real number, see the notes on the "Tatler," ed. 1786, vol. vi. p. 452.—N.

* Spence.

he whigs, says Pope, design a second present, hen they can accompany it with as good a ntence.

The play, supported thus by the emulation of ctious praise, was acted night after night for longer time than, I believe, the public had lowed to any drama before; and the Author, Mrs. Porter long afterwards related, wan-ered through the whole exhibition behind the enes with restless and unappeasable solici-ide.

When it was printed, notice was given that e Queen would be pleased if it was dedicated her; "but, as he had designed that compli-ent elsewhere, he found himself obliged," says ickell, "by his duty on the one hand, and his nour on the other, to send it into the world ithout any dedication."

Human happiness has always its abatements; e brightest sunshine of success is not without cloud. No sooner was "Cato" offered to ie reader than it was attacked by the acute alignity of Dennis, with all the violence of ngry criticism. Dennis, though equally zeal-s, and probably by his temper more furious, an Addison, for what they called liberty, and ough a flatterer of the whig ministry, could ot sit quiet at a successful play; but was eager tell friends and enemies that they had mis-aced their admirations. The world was too ubborn for instruction; with the fate of the nsurer of Corneille's Cid, his animadversions owed his anger without effect, and "Cato" ntinued to be praised.

Pope had now an opportunity of courting the iendship of Addison, by vilifying his old enemy, d could give resentment its full play, without ppearing to revenge himself. He therefore ublished "A Narrative of the Madness of hn Dennis;" a performance which left the jections to the play in their full force, and erefore discovered more desire of vexing the itic than of defending the poet.

Addison, who was no stranger to the world, robably saw the selfishness of Pope's friend-ip; and, resolving that he should have the nsequences of his officiousness to himself, in-rmed Dennis by Steele, that he was sorry for e insult; and that whenever he should think to answer his remarks he would do it in a anner to which nothing could be objected.

The greatest weakness of the play is in the enes of love, which are said by Pope* to have en added to the original plan upon a subse-ient review, in compliance with the popular ractice of the stage. Such an authority it is ard to reject; yet the love is so intimately ingled with the whole action that it cannot sily be thought extrinsic and adventitious; for, if it were taken away, what would be left? or how were the four acts filled in the first draught?

At the publication the wits seemed proud to pay their attendance with encomiastic verses. The best are from an unknown hand, which will perhaps lose somewhat of their praise when the author is known to be Jeffreys.

"Cato" had yet other honours. It was cen-sured as a party-play by a scholar of Oxford, and defended in a favourable examination by Dr. Sewel. It was translated by Salvini into Italian, and acted at Florence; and by the Jesuits of St. Omer's into Latin, and played by their pupils. Of this version a copy was sent to Mr. Addison: it is to be wished that it could be found, for the sake of comparing their version of the soliloquy with that of Bland.

A tragedy was written on the same subject by Des Champs, a French poet, which was tran-slated with a criticism on the English play. But the translator and the critic are now for-gotten.

Dennis lived on unanswered, and therefore little read. Addison knew the policy of litera-ture too well to make his enemy important by drawing the attention of the public upon a criti-cism which, though sometimes intemperate, was often irrefragable.

While "Cato" was upon the stage, another daily paper, called "the Guardian," was pub-lished by Steele. To this Addison gave great assistance, whether occasionally or by previous engagement is not known.

The character of Guardian was too narrow and too serious: it might properly enough admit both the duties and decencies of life, but seemed not to include literary speculations, and was in some degree violated by merriment and burlesque. What had the guardian of the liz-ards to do with clubs of tall or of little men, with nests of ants or with Strada's prolusions?

Of this paper nothing is necessary to be said, but that it found many contributors, and that it was a continuation of the "Spectator" with the same elegance and the same variety, till some unlucky sparkle from a tory paper set Steele's politics on fire, and wit at once blazed into faction. He was soon too hot for neutral topics, and quitted the "Guardian" to write the "Englishman."

The papers of Addison are marked in the "Spectator" by one of the letters in the name of Clio, and in the "Guardian" by a hand; whether it was, as Tickell pretends to think, that he was unwilling to usurp the praise of others, or, as Steele, with far greater likelihood, insinuates, that he could not without discontent impart to others any of his own. I have heard that his avidity did not satisfy itself with the air of renown, but that with great eagerness he laid hold on his proportion of the profits.

* Spence.

Many of these papers were written with powers truly comic, with nice discrimination of characters, and accurate observation of natural or accidental deviation from propriety; but it was not supposed that he had tried a comedy on the stage, till Steele after his death declared him the author of the "Drummer." This however Steele did not know to be true by any direct testimony; for, when Addison put the play into his hands, he only told him, it was the work of a "Gentleman in the company;" and, when it was received, as is confessed, with cold disapprobation, he was probably less willing to claim it. Tickell omitted it in his collection; but the testimony of Steele, and the total silence of any other claimant, has determined the public to assign it to Addison, and it is now printed with his other poetry. Steele carried the "Drummer" to the play-house, and afterwards to the press, and sold the copy for fifty guineas.

To the opinion of Steele may be added the proof supplied by the play itself, of which the characters are such as Addison would have delineated, and the tendency such as Addison would have promoted. That it should have been ill received would raise wonder, did we not daily see the capricious distribution of theatrical praise.

He was not all this time an indifferent spectator of public affairs. He wrote, as different exigencies required (in 1707), "The present State of the War, and the necessity of an Augmentation;" which, however judicious, being written on temporary topics, and exhibiting no peculiar powers, laid hold on no attention, and has naturally sunk by its own weight into neglect. This cannot be said of the few papers entitled "The Whig Examiner," in which is employed all the force of gay malevolence and humorous satire. Of this paper, which just appeared and expired, Swift remarks, with exultation, that "it is now down among the dead men."* He might well rejoice at the death of that which he could not have killed. Every reader of every party, since personal malice is past and the papers which once inflamed the nation are read only as effusions of wit, must wish for more of the Whig Examiners; for on no occasion was the genius of Addison more vigorously exerted, and on none did the superiority of his powers more evidently appear. His "Trial of Count Tariff," written to expose the treaty of commerce with France, lived no longer than the question that produced it.

Not long afterwards, an attempt was made to revive the "Spectator," at a time indeed by no means favourable to literature, when the succession of a new family to the throne filled the nation with anxiety, discord, and confusion: and either the turbulence of the times or the satiety of the readers put a stop to the publication, after an experiment of eighty numbers which were afterwards collected into an eighth volume, perhaps more valuable than any of those that went before it. Addison produced more than a fourth part, and the other contributors are by no means unworthy of appearing as his associates. The time that had passed during the suspension of the "Spectator," though it had not lessened his power of humour, seems to have increased his disposition to seriousness: the proportion of his religious to his comic papers is greater than in the former series.

The "Spectator," from its recommencement was published only three times a week; and some discriminative marks were added to the papers. To Addison, Tickell has ascribed twenty-three.*

The "Spectator," had many contributors, and Steele, whose negligence kept him always in a hurry, when it was his turn to furnish a paper, called loudly for the letters, of which Addison, whose materials were more, made little use; having recourse to sketches and hints of the product of his former studies, which he now reviewed and completed: among these are named by Tickell the Essays on Wit, those on the Pleasures of the Imagination, and the Criticism on Milton.

When the House of Hanover took possession of the throne, it was reasonable to expect that the zeal of Addison would be suitably rewarded. Before the arrival of King George, he was made secretary to the regency, and was required by his office to send notice to Hanover, that the Queen was dead, and that the throne was vacant. To do this would not have been difficult to any man but Addison, who was so overwhelmed with the greatness of the event, and so distracted by choice of expression, that the Lords, who could not wait for the niceties of criticism, called Mr. Southwell, a clerk in the House, and ordered him to despatch the message. Southwell readily told what was necessary in the common style of business, and valued himself upon having done what was too hard for Addison.

He was better qualified for the "Freeholder," a paper which he published twice a week, from Dec. 23, 1715, to the middle of the next year. This was undertaken in defence of the established government, sometimes with argume

* From a tory song in vogue at the time, the burthen whereof is

> And he that will this health deny,
> Down among the dead men let him lie.—H.

* Numb. 556, 557, 558, 559. 561, 562. 565. 567, 5
569. 571. 574, 575. 579, 580. 582, 583, 584, 585. 5
592. 598. 600.

ıd sometimes with mirth. In argument he ıd many equals; but his humour was singular ıd matchless. Bigotry itself must be delight- l with the tory fox-hunter.

There are however some strokes less elegant ıd less decent; such as the Pretender's Jour- al, in which one topic of ridicule is his pover- . This mode of abuse had been employed by ilton against King Charles II.

" ——— Jacobœi
Centum, exulantis viscera marsupii regis."

nd Oldmixon delights to tell of some alder- an of London, that he had more money than e exiled princes; but that which might be pected from Milton's savageness or Oldmix- 's meanness was not suitable to the delicacy Addison.

Steele thought the humour of the "Freehold- " too nice and gentle for such noisy times; d is reported to have said, that the ministry ade use of a lute, when they should have lled for a trumpet.

This year (1716)* he married the Countess owager of Warwick, whom he had solicited a very long and anxious courtship, perhaps th behaviour not very unlike that of Sir ger to his disdainful widow; and who, I ı afraid, diverted herself often by playing th his passion. He is said to have first known r by becoming tutor to her son. † "He rmed," said Tonson, "the design of get- g that lady from the time when he was st recommended into the family." In what rt of his life he obtained the recommendation, how long, and in what manner, he lived in e family, I know not. His advances at first ere certainly timorous, but grew bolder as his putation and influence increased; till at last e lady was persuaded to marry him, on terms ıch like those on which a Turkish princess is poused, to whom the Sultan is reported to pro- unce, "Daughter, I give thee this man for y slave." The marriage, if uncontradicted port can be credited, made no addition to his ppiness; it neither found them nor made them ıal. She always remembered her own rank, d thought herself entitled to treat with very tle ceremony the tutor of her son. Rowe's llad of the "Despairing Shepherd" is said to ve been written, either before or after mar- ge, upon this memorable pair; and it is cer- n that Addison has left behind him no en- ıragement for ambitious love.

The year after (1717) he rose to his highest vation, being made secretary of state. For s employment he might justly be supposed alified by long practice of business, and by his gular ascent through other offices; but expec- tation is often disappointed; it is universally confessed that he was unequal to the duties of his place. In the House of Commons he could not speak, and therefore was useless to the defence of the government. In the office, says Pope,* he could not issue an order without losing his time in quest of fine expressions. What he gained in rank he lost in credit; and, finding by experience, his own inability, was forced to solicit his dismission, with a pension of fifteen hundred pounds a year. His friends palliated this relinquishment, of which both friends and enemies knew the true reason, with an account of declining health and the necessity of recess and quiet.

He now returned to his vocation, and began to plan literary occupations for his future life. He purposed a tragedy on the death of Socrates: a story of which, as Tickell remarks, the basis is narrow, and to which I know not how love could have been appended. There would however have been no want either of virtue in the sentiments or elegance in the language.

He engaged in a nobler work, a defence of the Christian religion, of which part was published after his death; and he designed to have made a new poetical version of the "Psalms."

These pious compositions Pope imputed† to a selfish motive, upon the credit, as he owns, of Tonson; who, having quarrelled with Addison, and not loving him, said, that when he laid down the secretary's office, he intended to take orders, and obtain a bishopric; "for," said he, "I always thought him a priest in his heart."

That Pope should have thought this conjecture of Tonson worth remembrance, is a proof, but indeed, so far as I have found, the only proof, that he retained some malignity from their ancient rivalry. Tonson pretended but to guess it; no other mortal ever suspected it; and Pope might have reflected, that a man who had been secretary of state in the ministry of Sunderland knew a nearer way to a bishopric than by defending religion or translating the "Psalms."‡

It is related, that he had once a design to make an English Dictionary, and that he considered Dr. Tillotson as the writer of highest authority. There was formerly sent to me by Mr. Locker, clerk of the Leathersellers' Company, who was eminent for curiosity and literature, a collection of examples collected from Tillotson's works, as Locker said, by Addison. It came too late to be of use, so I inspected it but slightly, and remember it indistinctly. I thought the passages too short.

Addison, however, did not conclude his life in peaceful studies; but relapsed, when he was near his end, to a political dispute.

It so happened that (1718-19) a controversy

* August 2. † Spence.

* Spence. ‡ Ibid.

was agitated with great vehemence between those friends of long continuance, Addison and Steele. It may be asked, in the language of Homer, what power or what cause should set them at variance. The subject of their dispute was of great importance. The Earl of Sunderland proposed an act called "The Peerage Bill;" by which the number of peers should be fixed, and the King restrained from any new creation of nobility, unless when an old family should be extinct. To this the Lords would naturally agree; and the King, who was yet little acquainted with his own prerogative, and, as is now well known, almost indifferent to the possessions of the Crown had been persuaded to consent. The only difficulty was found among the Commons, who were not likely to approve the perpetual exclusion of themselves and their posterity. The bill therefore was eagerly opposed, and among others by Sir Robert Walpole, whose speech was published.

The Lords might think their dignity diminished by improper advancements, and particularly by the introduction of twelve new peers at once, to produce a majority of tories in the last reign; an act of authority violent enough, yet certainly legal, and by no means to be compared with that contempt of national right with which, some time afterwards, by the instigation of whiggism, the Commons, chosen by the people for three years, chose themselves for seven. But, whatever might be the disposition of the Lords, the people had no wish to increase their power. The tendency of the bill, as Steele observed in a letter to the Earl of Oxford, was to introduce an aristocracy: for a majority in the House of Lords, so limited, would have been despotic and irresistible.

To prevent this subversion of the ancient establishment, Steele, whose pen readily seconded his political passions, endeavoured to alarm the nation, by a pamphlet called "The Plebeian." To this an answer was published by Addison, under the title of "The Old Whig," in which it is not discovered that Steele was then known to be the advocate for the Commons. Steele replied by a second *Plebeian*; and, whether by ignorance or by courtesy, confined himself to his question, without any personal notice of his opponent. Nothing hitherto was committed against the laws of friendship or proprieties of decency; but controvertists cannot long retain their kindness for each other. The "Old Whig" answered the "Plebeian," and could not forbear some contempt of "little Dicky, whose trade it was to write pamphlets." Dicky, however, did not lose his settled veneration for his friend; but contented himself with quoting some lines of "Cato," which were at once detection and reproof. The bill was laid aside during that session; and Addison died before the next, in which its commitment was rejected by two hundred and sixty-five to one hu and seventy-seven.

Every reader surely must regret that two illustrious friends, after so many passed in confidence and endearment, in of interest, conformity of opinion, and fe ship of study, should finally part in acrimo opposition. Such a controversy was *B plusquam civile*, as Lucan expresses it. could not faction find other advocates among the uncertainties of the human stat are doomed to number the instability of fr ship.

Of this dispute I have little knowledg from the "Biographia Britannica." "Old Whig" is not inserted in Addi works, nor is it mentioned by Tickell i life; why it was omitted, the biographers d less give the true reason; the fact wa recent, and those who had been heated i contention were not yet cool.

The necessity of complying with time of sparing persons is the great impedime biography. History may be formed from manent monuments and records; but live only be written from personal knowledge, is growing every day less, and in a short is lost for ever. What is known can seldo immediately told; and when it might be it is no longer known. The delicate fea of the mind, the nice discriminations of ch ter, and the minute peculiarities of conduc soon obliterated; and it is surely better caprice, obstinacy, frolic, and folly, ho they might delight in the description, shou silently forgotten, than that, by wanton n ment and unseasonable detection, a pang s be given to a widow, a daughter, a brother friend. As the process of these narrati now bringing me among my contemporar begin to feel myself "walking upon ashes which the fire is not extinguished," and co to the time of which it will be proper rath say "nothing that is false, than all that is t

The end of this useful life was now appr ing. Addison had for some time been opp by shortness of breath, which was now a vated by a dropey; and, finding his d pressing, he prepared to die conformably own precepts and professions.

During this lingering decay, he sent, as relates,* a message by the Earl of Warwi Mr. Gay, desiring to see him. Gay, wh not visited him for some time before, obeye summons, and found himself received with kindness. The purpose for which the view had been solicited was then discov Addison told him, that he had injured but that, if he recovered, he would recom

* Spence.

him. What the injury was he did not explain; nor did Gay ever know, but supposed that some preferment designed for him had, by Addison's intervention, been withheld.

Lord Warwick was a young man of very irregular life, and perhaps of loose opinions. Addison, for whom he did not want respect, had very diligently endeavoured to reclaim him; but his arguments and expostulations had no effect. One experiment, however, remained to be tried: when he found his life near its end, he directed the young lord to be called; and when he desired, with great tenderness, to hear his last injunctions, told him, "I have sent for you, that you may see how a Christian can die." What effect this awful scene had on the Earl, I know not: he likewise died himself in a short time.

In Tickell's excellent "Elegy" on his friend are these lines:

> He taught us how to live; and, oh! too high
> The price of knowledge! taught us how to die—

in which he alludes, as he told Dr. Young, to this moving interview.

Having given directions to Mr. Tickell for the publication of his works, and dedicated them on his death-bed to his friend Mr. Craggs, he died June 17, 1719, at Holland-house, leaving no child but a daughter.*

Of his virtue it is a sufficient testimony that the resentment of party has transmitted no charge of any crime. He was not one of those who are praised only after death; for his merit was so generally acknowledged, that Swift, having observed that his election passed without a contest, adds, that, if he proposed himself for king, he would hardly have been refused.

His zeal for his party did not extinguish his kindness for the merit of his opponents; when he was secretary in Ireland, he refused to intermit his acquaintance with Swift.

Of his habits, or external manners, nothing is so often mentioned as that timorous or sullen taciturnity which his friends called modesty by too mild a name. Steele mentions with great tenderness "that remarkable bashfulness, which is a cloak that hides and muffles merit;" and tells us, "that his abilities were covered only by modesty, which doubles the beauties which are seen, and gives credit and esteem to all that are concealed." Chesterfield affirms, that "Addison was the most timorous and awkward man that he ever saw." And Addison, speaking of his own deficience in conversation, used to say of himself, that, with respect to intellectual "wealth, he could draw bills for a thousand pounds, though he had not a guinea in his pocket."

That he wanted current coin for ready payment, and by that want was often obstructed and distressed; that he was often oppressed by an improper and ungraceful timidity, every testimony concurs to prove; but Chesterfield's representation is doubtless hyperbolical. That man cannot be supposed very inexpert in the arts of conversation and practice of life, who, without fortune or alliance, by his usefulness and dexterity, became secretary of state; and who died at forty-seven, after having not only stood long in the highest rank of wit and literature, but filled one of the most important offices of state.

The time in which he lived had reason to lament his obstinacy of silence: "for he was," says Steele, "above all men in that talent called humour, and enjoyed it in such perfection, that I have often reflected, after a night spent with him apart from all the world, that I had had the pleasure of conversing with an intimate acquaintance of Terence and Catullus, who had all their wit and nature, heightened with humour more exquisite and delightful than any other man ever possessed." This is the fondness of a friend; let us hear what is told us by a rival. "Addison's conversation,"* says Pope, "had something in it more charming than I have found in any other man. But this was only when familiar; before strangers, or, perhaps, a single stranger, he preserved his dignity by a stiff silence."

This modesty was by no means inconsistent with a very high opinion of his own merit. He demanded to be the first name in modern wit; and, with Steele to echo him, used to depreciate Dryden, whom Pope and Congreve defended against them.† There is no reason to doubt that he suffered too much pain from the prevalence of Pope's poetical reputation; nor is it without strong reason suspected, that by some disingenuous acts he endeavoured to obstruct it: Pope was not the only man whom he insidiously injured, though the only man of whom he could be afraid.

His own powers were such as might have satisfied him with conscious excellence. Of very extensive learning he has indeed given no proofs. He seems to have had small acquaintance with the sciences, and to have read little except Latin and French; but of the Latin poets his Dialogues on Medals show that he had perused the works with great diligence and skill. The abundance of his own mind left him little in need of adventitious sentiments; his wit always could suggest what the occasion demanded. He had read with critical eyes the important volume of human life, and knew the heart

* Who died at Bilton, in Warwickshire, at a very advanced age, in 1707. See Gent. Mag. vol. lxvii. p. 256. 385.—N.

* Spence.

† Tonson and Spence.

of man, from the depths of stratagem to the surface of affectation.

What he knew he could easily communicate. "This," says Steele, "was particular in this writer, that, when he had taken his resolution, or made his plan for what he designed to write, he would walk about a room, and dictate it into language with as much freedom and ease as any one could write it down, and attend to the coherence and grammar of what he dictated."

Pope,* who can be less suspected of favouring his memory, declares that he wrote very fluently, but was slow and scrupulous in correcting; that many of his Spectators were written very fast, and sent immediately to the press; and that it seemed to be for his advantage not to have time for much revisal.

"He would alter," says Pope, "any thing to please his friends before publication; but would not retouch his pieces afterwards; and I believe not one word in 'Cato,' to which I made an objection, was suffered to stand."

The last line of "Cato" is Pope's, having been originally written,

And oh! 'twas this that ended Cato's life.

Pope might have made more objections to the six concluding lines. In the first couplet the words "from hence" are improper; and the second line is taken from Dryden's Virgil. Of the next couplet, the first verse, being included in the second, is therefore useless; and in the third discord is made to produce strife.

Of the course of Addison's familiar day,† before his marriage, Pope has given a detail. He had in the house with him Budgell, and perhaps Philips. His chief companions were Steele, Budgell, Philips, Carey, Davenant, and Colonel Brett. With one or other of these he always breakfasted. He studied all the morning, then dined at a tavern, and went afterwards to Button's.

Button had been a servant in the Countess of Warwick's family, who, under the patronage of Addison, kept a coffee-house on the south side of Russell-street, about two doors from Covent-garden. Here it was that the wits of that time used to assemble. It is said, when Addison had suffered any vexation from the Countess, he withdrew the company from Button's house.

From the coffee-house he went again to a tavern, where he often sat late, and drank too much wine. In the bottle discontent seeks for comfort, cowardice for courage, and bashfulness for confidence. It is not unlikely that Addison was first seduced to excess by the manumission which he obtained from the servile timidity of his sober hours. He that feels oppression from the presence of those to whom he knows himself superior will desire to set loose his powers of conversation; and who that ever asked succours from Bacchus was able to preserve himself from being enslaved by his auxiliary?

Among those friends it was that Addison displayed the elegance of his colloquial accomplishments, which may easily be supposed such as Pope represents them. The remark of Mandeville, who, when he had passed an evening in his company, declared that he was a parson in a tie-wig, can detract little from his character; he was always reserved to strangers, and was not incited to uncommon freedom by a character like that of Mandeville.

From any minute knowlege of his familiar manners, the intervention of sixty years has now debarred us. Steele once promised Congreve and the public a complete description of his character; but the promises of authors are like the vows of lovers. Steele thought no more on his design, or thought on it with anxiety that at last disgusted him, and left his friend in the hands of Tickell.

One slight lineament of his character Swift has preserved. It was his practice, when he found any man invincibly wrong, to flatter his opinions by acquiescence, and sink him yet deeper in absurdity. This artifice of mischief was admired by Stella; and Swift seems to approve her admiration.

His works will supply some information. It appears, from his various pictures of the world, that, with all his bashfulness, he had conversed with many distinct classes of men, had surveyed their ways with very diligent observation, and marked with great acuteness the effects of different modes of life. He was a man in whose presence nothing reprehensible was out of danger; quick in discerning whatever was wrong or ridiculous, and not unwilling to expose it. "There are," says Steele, "in his writings many oblique strokes upon some of the wittiest men of the age." His delight was more to excite merriment than detestation; and he detects follies rather than crimes.

If any judgment be made, from his books, of his moral character, nothing will be found but purity and excellence. Knowledge of mankind, indeed, less extensive than that of Addison, will show, that to write, and to live, are very different. Many who praise virtue do no more than praise it. Yet it is reasonable to believe that Addison's professions and practice were at no great variance, since, amidst that storm of faction in which most of his life was passed, though his station made him conspicuous, and his activity made him formidable, the character given him by his friends was never contradicted by his enemies: of those with whom interest or opinion united him he had not only the esteem, but the kindness; and of others, whom the violence of opposition drove against him, though he might lose the love, he retained the reverence.

* Spence. † Ibid.

It is justly observed by Tickell, that he employed wit on the side of virtue and religion.—He not only made the proper use of wit himself, but taught it to others; and from his time it has been generally subservient to the cause of reason and of truth. He has dissipated the prejudice that had long connected gayety with vice, and easiness of manners with laxity of principles. He has restored virtue to its dignity, and taught innocence not to be ashamed. This is an elevation of literary character, "above all Greek, above all Roman fame." No greater felicity can genius attain than that of having purified intellectual pleasure, separated mirth from indecency, and wit from licentiousness; of having taught a succession of writers to bring elegance and gayety to the aid of goodness; and, if I may use expressions yet more awful, of having "turned many to righteousness."

Addison, in his life, and for some time afterwards, was considered by a greater part of readers as supremely excelling both in poetry and criticism. Part of his reputation may be properly ascribed to the advancement of his fortune; when, as Swift observes, he became a statesman, and saw poets waiting at his levee, it was no wonder that praise was accumulated upon him. Much likewise may be more honourably ascribed to his personal character: he who, if he had claimed it, might have obtained the diadem, was not likely to be denied the laurel.

But time quickly puts an end to artificial and accidental fame; and Addison is to pass through futurity protected only by his genius. Every name which kindness or interest once raised too high is in danger, lest the next age should, by the vengeance of criticism, sink it in the same proportion. A great writer has lately styled him "an indifferent poet and a worse critic."

His poetry is first to be considered; of which it must be confessed that it has not often those felicities of diction which give lustre to sentiments, or that vigour of sentiment that animates diction: there is little of ardour, vehemence, or transport: there is very rarely the awfulness of grandeur, and not very often the splendour of elegance. He thinks justly; but he thinks faintly. This is his general character; to which, doubtless, many single passages will furnish exception.

Yet, if he seldom reaches supreme excellence, he rarely sinks into dulness, and is still more rarely entangled in absurdity. He did not trust his powers enough to be negligent. There is in most of his compositions a calmness and equability, deliberate and cautious, sometimes with little that delights, but seldom with any thing that offends.

Of this kind seem to be his poems to Dryden, to Somers, and to the King. His "Ode on St. Cecilia" has been imitated by Pope, and has something in it of Dryden's vigour. Of his account of the English poets, he used to speak as "a poor thing;"* but it is not worse than his usual strain. He has said, not very judiciously, in his character of Waller,

Thy verse could show ev'n Cromwell's innocence;
And compliment the storms that bore him hence.
O! had thy muse not come an age too soon
But seen great Nassau on the British throne,
How had his triumph glitter'd in thy page!

What is this but to say that he who could compliment Cromwell had been the proper poet for King William? Addison, however, never printed the piece.

The letter from Italy has been always praised, but has never been praised beyond its merit. It is more correct, with less appearance of labour, and more elegant, with less ambition of ornament, than any other of his poems. There is, however, one broken metaphor, of which notice may properly be taken:—

Fired with that name—
I bridle in my struggling Muse with pain,
That longs to launch into a nobler strain.

To *bridle a goddess* is no very delicate idea; but why must she be *bridled?* because she *longs to launch;* an act which was never hindered by a *bridle:* and whither will she *launch?* into a *nobler strain.* She is in the first line a *horse,* in the second a *boat;* and the care of the poet is to keep his *horse* or his *boat* from *singing.*

The next composition is the far-famed "Campaign," which Dr. Warton has termed a "Gazette in Rhyme," with harshness not often used by the good-nature of his criticism. Before a censure so severe is admitted, let us consider that war is a frequent subject of poetry, and then inquire who has described it with more justness and force. Many of our own writers tried their powers upon this year of victory; yet Addison's is confessedly the best performance: his poem is the work of a man not blinded by the dust of learning; his images are not borrowed merely from books. The superiority which he confers upon his hero is not personal prowess, and "mighty bone," but deliberate intrepidity, a calm command of his passions, and the power of consulting his own mind in the midst of danger. The rejection and contempt of fiction is rational and manly.

It may be observed that the last line is imitated by Pope:

Marlborough's exploits appear divinely bright—
Raised of themselves their genuine charms they boast,
And those that paint them truest, praise them most.

* Spence

This Pope had in his thoughts; but, not knowing how to use what was not his own, he spoiled the thought when he had borrowed it:

The well-sung woes shall soothe my pensive ghost;
He best can paint* them who shall feel them most.

Martial exploits may be *painted;* perhaps *woes* may be *painted;* but they are surely not *painted* by being *well-sung:* it is not easy to paint in song, or to sing in colours.

No passage in the "Campaign" has been more often mentioned than the simile of the angel, which is said in the "Tatler" to be "one of the noblest thoughts that ever entered into the heart of man," and is therefore worthy of attentive consideration. Let it be first inquired whether it be a simile. A poetical simile is the discovery of likeness between two actions, in their general nature dissimilar, or of causes terminating by different operations in some resemblance of effect. But the mention of another like consequence from a like cause, or of a like performance by a like agency, is not a simile, but an exemplification. It is not a simile to say that the Thames waters fields, as the Po waters fields; or that as Hecla vomits flames in Iceland, so Ætna vomits flames in Sicily. When Horace says of Pindar, that he pours his violence and rapidity of verse, as a river swoln with rain rushes from the mountain; or of himself, that his genius wanders in quest of poetical decorations, as the bee wanders to collect honey; he, in either case, produces a simile; the mind is impressed with the resemblance of things generally unlike, as unlike as intellect and body. But if Pindar had been described as writing with the copiousness and grandeur of Homer, or Horace had told that he reviewed and finished his own poetry with the same care as Isocrates polished his orations, instead of similitude, he would have exhibited almost identity; he would have given the same portraits with different names. In the poem now examined, when the English are represented as gaining a fortified pass, by repetition of attack, and perseverance of resolution, their obstinacy of courage and vigour of onset is well illustrated by the sea that breaks, with incessant battery, the dikes of Holland. This is a simile; but when Addison, having celebrated the beauty of Marlborough's person, tells us, that "Achilles thus was formed with every grace," here is no simile, but a mere exemplification. A simile may be compared to lines converging at a point, and is more excellent as the lines approach from greater distance; an exemplification may be considered as two parallel lines which run on together without approximation, never far separated, and never joined.

Marlborough is so like the angel in the poem, that the action of both is almost the same, and performed by both in the same manner. Marlborough "teaches the battle to rage;" the angel "directs the storm:" Marlborough is "unmoved in peaceful thought;" the angel is "calm and serene:" Marlborough stands "unmoved amidst the shock of hosts;" the angel rides "calm in the whirlwind." The lines on Marlborough are just and noble; but the simile gives almost the same images a second time.

But perhaps this thought, though hardly a simile, was remote from vulgar conceptions, and required great labour of research or dexterity of application. Of this Dr. Madden, a name which Ireland ought to honour, once gave me his opinion. "If I had set," said he, "ten school-boys to write on the battle of Blenheim, and eight had brought me the angel, I should not have been surprised."

The opera of "Rosamond," though it is seldom mentioned, is one of the first of Addison's compositions. The subject is well chosen, the fiction is pleasing, and the praise of Marlborough, for which the scene gives an opportunity, is, what perhaps every human excellence must be, the product of good-luck, improved by genius. The thoughts are sometimes great, and sometimes tender; the versification is easy and gay. There is doubtless some advantage in the shortness of the lines, which there is little temptation to load with expletive epithets. The dialogue seems commonly better than the songs. The two comic characters of Sir Trusty and Grideline, though of no great value, are yet such as the poet intended.* Sir Trusty's account of the death of Rosamond is, I think, too grossly absurd. The whole drama is airy and elegant; engaging in its process, and pleasing in its conclusion. If Addison had cultivated the lighter parts of poetry, he would probably have excelled.

The tragedy of "Cato," which, contrary to the rule observed in selecting the works of other poets, has by the weight of its character forced its way into the late collection, is unquestionably the noblest production of Addison's genius. Of a work so much read it is difficult to say anything new. About things on which the public thinks long, it commonly attains to think right; and of "Cato" it has been not unjustly determined, that it is rather a poem in dialogue than a drama, rather a succession of just sentiments in elegant language, than a representation of natural affections, or of any state probable or possible in human life. Nothing here "excites or assuages emotion:" here is "no magical power of raising fantastic terror or wild

* "Paint" means (says Dr. Warton) *express* or *describe* them.—C.

* But, according to Dr. Warton, "ought not to have intended."—C.

diety." The events are expected without so-
itude, and are remembered without joy or
row. Of the agents we have no care; we
sider not what they are doing or what they
suffering; we wish only to know what they
re to say. Cato is a being above our solici-
le; a man, of whom the gods take care, and
om we leave to their care with heedless con-
ence. To the rest neither gods nor men can
ve much attention; for there is not one
ongst them that strongly attracts either affec-
n or esteem. But they are made the vehicles
such sentiments and such expression, that
re is scarcely a scene in the play which the
der does not wish to impress upon his memory.
When "Cato" was shown to Pope,* he ad-
ed the Author to print it, without any the-
ical exhibition; supposing that it would be
d more favourably than heard. Addison de-
red himself of the same opinion; but urged
importunity of his friends for its appearance
the stage. The emulation of parties made
successful beyond expectation; and its success
s introduced or confirmed among us the use
dialogue too declamatory, or of unaffecting
gance, and chill philosophy.

The universality of applause, however it
ght quell the censure of common mortals,
d no other effect than to harden Dennis in
ed dislike: but his dislike was not merely
pricious. He found and showed many faults;
showed them indeed with anger, but he
nd them with acuteness, such as ought to
cue his criticism from oblivion; though, at
t, it will have no other life than it derives
m the work which it endeavours to oppress.
Why he pays no regard to the opinion of the
dience, he gives his reason, by remarking,
at,

"A deference is to be paid to a general ap-
ause, when it appears that the applause is
tural and spontaneous; but that little regard
to be had to it, when it is affected and artifi-
l. Of all the tragedies which in his memory
ve had vast and violent runs, not one has
en excellent, few have been tolerable, most
ve been scandalous. When a poet writes a
agedy, who knows he has judgment, and who
ls he has genius, that poet presumes upon his
n merit, and scorns to make a cabal. That
ople come coolly to the representation of such
ragedy, without any violent expectation, or
lusive imagination, or invincible prepossess-
n; that such an audience is liable to receive
pressions which the poem shall naturally
ke on them, and to judge by their own rea-
n, and their own judgments, and that reason
d judgment are calm and serene, not formed
nature to make proselytes, and to control
d lord it over the imaginations of others.

But that when an author writes a tragedy, who knows he has neither genius nor judgment, he has recourse to the making a party, and he endeavours to make up in industry what is wanting in talent, and to supply by poetical craft the absence of poetical art; that such an author is humbly contented to raise men's passions by a plot without doors, since he despairs of doing it by that which he brings upon the stage. That party, and passion, and prepossession, are clamorous and tumultuous things, and so much the more clamorous and tumultuous by how much the more erroneous: that they domineer and tyrannize over the imaginations of persons who want judgment, and sometimes too of those who have it; and like a fierce and outrageous torrent, bear down all opposition before them."

He then condemns the neglect of poetical justice; which is always one of his favourite principles.

"It is certainly the duty of every tragic poet, by the exact distribution of poetical justice, to imitate the Divine dispensation, and to inculcate a particular providence. It is true, indeed, upon the stage of the world, the wicked sometimes prosper, and the guiltless suffer. But that is permitted by the Governor of the world, to show, from the attribute of his infinite justice, that there is a compensation in futurity, to prove the immortality of the human soul, and the certainty of future rewards and punishments. But the poetical persons in tragedy exist no longer than the reading or the representation; the whole extent of their enmity is circumscribed by those; and, therefore, during that reading or representation, according to their merits or demerits, they must be punished or rewarded. If this is not done, there is no impartial distribution of poetical justice, no instructive lecture of a particular providence, and no imitation of the Divine dispensation. And yet the author of this tragedy does not only run counter to this, in the fate of his principal character; but every where, throughout it, makes virtue suffer, and vice triumph; for not only Cato is vanquished by Cæsar, but the treachery and perfidiousness of Syphax prevail over the honest simplicity and the credulity of Juba: and the sly subtlety and dissimulation of Portius over the generous frankness and openheartedness of Marcus."

Whatever pleasure there may be in seeing crimes punished and virtue rewarded, yet, since wickedness often prospers in real life, the poet is certainly at liberty to give it prosperity on the stage. For if poetry has an imitation of reality, how are its laws broken by exhibiting the world in its true form? The stage may sometimes gratify our wishes; but, if it be truly the "*mirror of life*," it ought to show us sometimes what we are to expect.

Dennis objects to the characters, that they are

* Spence.

not natural, or reasonable; but as heroes and heroines are not beings that are seen every day, it is hard to find upon what principles their conduct shall be tried. It is, however, not useless to consider what he says of the manner in which Cato receives the account of his son's death.

" Nor is the grief of Cato, in the fourth act, one jot more in nature than that of his son and Lucia in the third. Cato receives the news of his son's death not only with dry eyes, but with a sort of satisfaction; and in the same page sheds tears for the calamity of his country, and does the same thing in the next page upon the bare apprehension of the danger of his friends. Now, since the love of one's country is the love of one's countrymen, as I have shown upon another occasion, I desire to ask these questions: Of all our countrymen, which do we love most, those whom we know, or those whom we know not? And of those whom we know, which do we cherish most, our friends or our enemies? And of our friends, which are the dearest to us, those who are related to us, or those who are not? And of all our relations, for which have we most tenderness, for those who are near to us, or for those who are remote? And of our near relations, which are the nearest, and consequently the dearest to us, our offspring, or others? Our offspring most certainly; as Nature, or, in other words, Providence, has wisely contrived for the preservation of mankind. Now, does it not follow from what has been said, that for a man to receive the news of his son's death with dry eyes, and to weep at the same time for the calamities of his country, is a wretched affectation, and a miserable inconsistency? Is not that, in plain English, to receive with dry eyes the news of the deaths of those for whose sake our country is a name so dear to us, and at the same time to shed tears for those for whose sakes our country is not a name so dear to us?"

But this formidable assailant is less resistible when he attacks the probability of the action, and the reasonableness of the plan. Every critical reader must remark, that Addison has, with a scrupulosity almost unexampled on the English stage, confined himself in time to a single day, and in place to rigorous unity. The scene never changes, and the whole action of the play passes in the great hall of Cato's house at Utica. Much therefore is done in the hall, for which any other place would be more fit; and this impropriety affords Dennis many hints of merriment, and opportunities of triumph. The passage is long; but as such disquisitions are not common, and the objections are skilfully formed and vigorously urged, those who delight in critical controversy will not think it tedious.

" Upon the departure of Portius, Sempronius makes but one soliloquy, and immediately in comes Syphax, and then the two politicians s at it immediately. They lay their heads t gether, with their snuff-boxes in their hands, Mr. Bayes has it, and feague it away. But, the midst of that wise scene, Syphax seems give a seasonable caution to Sempronius:

Syph. But is it true, Sempronius, that your sen Is called together? Gods! thou must be cautious; Cato has piercing eyes.

" There is a great deal of caution shown deed, in meeting in a governor's own hall carry on their plot against him. Whatev opinion they have of his eyes, I suppose th have none of his ears, or they would never ha talked at this foolish rate so near:

Gods! thou must be cautious.

" Oh! yes, very cautious; for if Cato shou over-hear you, and turn you off for politician Cæsar would never take you; no, Cæsar wou never take you.

" When Cato, Act II. turns the senators o of the hall, upon pretence of acquainting Ju with the result of their debates, he appears me to do a thing which is neither reasonable n civil. Juba might certainly have better be made acquainted with the result of that deb in some private apartment of the palace. B the Poet was driven upon this absurdity to ma way for another; and that is, to give Juba opportunity to demand Marcia of her fath But the quarrel and rage of Juba and Syph in the same Act; the invectives of Syph against the Romans and Cato; the advice th he gives Juba, in her father's hall, to bear aw Marcia by force; and his brutal and clamore rage upon his refusal, and at a time when C was scarcely out of sight, and perhaps not o of hearing, at least some of his guards or dom tics must necessarily be supposed to be with hearing; is a thing that is so far from bel probable, that it is hardly possible.

" Sempronius, in the second Act, comes ba once more in the same morning to the governo hall, to carry on the conspiracy with Syph against the governor, his country, and his famil which is so stupid that it is below the wisd of the O—'s, the Mac's, and the Teague's; ev Eustace Cummins himself would never ha gone to Justice-hall, to have conspired again the government. If officers at Portsmouth shou lay their heads together, in order to the carryi off* J— G—'s niece or daughter, would th

* The person meant by the initials J. G. is Sir Jo Gibson, lieutenant-governor of Portsmouth, in t year 1710, and afterwards. He was much belov in the army, and by the common soldiers call Johnny Gibson.—H.

neet in J— G—'s hall, to carry on that conspi-
acy? There would be no necessity for their
neeting there, at least till they came to the exe-
ution of their plot, because there would be other
laces to meet in. There would be no proba-
ility that they should meet there, because there
ould be places more private and more com-
odious. Now there ought to be nothing in a
agical action but what is necessary or pro-
able.

"But treason is not the only thing that is car-
ed on in this hall; that, and love, and philoso-
hy, take their turns in it, without any manner
necessity or probability occasioned by the ac-
on, as duly and as regularly, without interrupt-
g one another, as if there were a triple league
etween them, and a mutual agreement that each
ould give place to, and make way for, the
her, in a due and orderly succession.

"We now come to the third Act. Sempron-
s, in this Act, comes into the governor's hall,
ith the leaders of the mutiny: but, as soon as
ato is gone, Sempronius, who but just before
d acted like an unparallelled knave, discovers
mself, like an egregious fool, to be an accom-
ice in the conspiracy.

Semp. Know, villains, when such paltry slaves pre-
sume
mix in treason, if the plot succeeds,
ey're thrown neglected by; but, if it fails,
ey're sure to die like dogs, as you shall do.
ere, take these factious monsters, drag them forth
sudden death.—

"It is true, indeed, the second leader says,
ere are none there but friends; but is that
ssible at such a juncture? Can a parcel of
gues attempt to assassinate the governor of a
wn of war, in his own house, in mid-day?
d, after they are discovered, and defeated, can
ere be none near them but friends? Is it not
ain from these words of Sempronius,

ere, take these factious monsters, drag them forth
sudden death—

d from the entrance of the guards upon the
ords of command, that those guards were with-
ear-shot? Behold Sempronius then palpa-
y discovered. How comes it to pass, then,
at instead of being hanged up with the rest,
remains secure in the governor's hall, and
ere carries on his conspiracy against the go-
rnment, the third time in the same day, with
old comrade Syphax, who enters at the same
ne that the guards are carrying away the
ders, big with the news of the defeat of Sem-
onius; though where he had his intelligence
soon is difficult to imagine? And now the
der may expect a very extraordinary scene;
ere is not abundance of spirit indeed, nor a
at deal of passion, but there is wisdom more
n enough to supply all defects.

Syph. Our first design, my friend, has proved
abortive;
Still there remains an after-game to play:
My troops are mounted, their Numidian steeds
Snuff up the winds, and long to scour the desert.
Let but Sempronius lead us in our flight,
We'll force the gate, where Marcus keeps his guard,
And hew down all that would oppose our passage:
A day will bring us into Cæsar's camp.

Semp. Confusion! I have failed of half my pur-
pose;
Marcia, the charming Marcia's left behind.

Well! but though he tells us the half purpose he has failed of, he does not tell us the half that he has carried. But what does he mean by

Marcia, the charming Marcia's left behind?

He is now in her own house! and we have nei-
ther seen her, nor heard of her, any where else since the play began. But now let us hear Sy-
phax:

What hinders then, but that you find her out,
And hurry her away by manly force?

But what does old Syphax mean by finding her out? They talk as if she were as hard to be found as a hare in a frosty morning.

Semp. But how to gain admission!

Oh! she is found out then, it seems.

But how to gain admission! for access
Is given to none but Juba and her brothers.

But, raillery apart, why access to Juba! For he was owned and received as a lover neither by the father nor by the daughter. Well! but let that pass. Syphax puts Sempronius out of pain immediately; and, being a Numidian abound-
ing in wiles, supplies him with a stratagem for admission, that, I believe, is a non-par-
cille.

Syph. Thou shalt have Juba's dress, and Juba's
guards.
The doors will open when Numidia's prince
Seems to appear before them.

"Sempronius is, it seems, to pass for Juba in full day at Cato's house, where they were both so very well known, by having Juba's dress and his guards; as if one of the marshals of France could pass for the Duke of Bavaria at noon-day, at Versailles, by having his dress and liveries. But how does Syphax pretend to help Sempronius to young Juba's dress? Does he serve him in a double capacity, as a general and master of his wardrobe? But why Juba's guards? For the devil of any guards has Juba appeared with yet. Well! though this is a mighty politic invention, yet, methinks, they

might have done without it; for, since the advice that Syphax gave to Sempronius was

To hurry her away by manly force;

in my opinion, the shortest and likeliest way of coming at the lady was by demolishing, instead of putting on an impertinent disguise to circumvent two or three slaves. But Sempronius, it seems, is of another opinion. He extols to the skies the invention of old Syphax:

Semp. Heavens! what a thought was there!

"Now I appeal to the reader if I have not been as good as my word. Did I not tell him, that I would lay before him a very wise scene?

"But now let us lay before the reader that part of the scenery of the fourth Act which may show the absurdities which the Author has run into through the indiscreet observance of the unity of place. I do not remember that Aristotle has said any thing expressly concerning the unity of place. It is true, implicitly, he has said enough in the rules which he has laid down for the chorus. For, by making the chorus an essential part of tragedy, and by bringing it on the stage immediately after the opening of the scene, and retaining it till the very catastrophe, he has so determined and fixed the place of action, that it was impossible for an author on the Grecian stage to break through that unity. I am of opinion, that if a modern tragic poet can preserve the unity of place without destroying the probability of the incidents, it is always best for him to do it; because, by the preserving of that unity, as we have taken notice above, he adds grace, and clearness, and comeliness, to the representation. But since there are no express rules about it, and we are under no compulsion to keep it, since we have no chorus as the Grecian poet had, if it cannot be preserved without rendering the greater part of the incidents unreasonable and absurd, and perhaps sometimes monstrous, it is certainly better to break it.

"Now comes bully Sempronius, comically accoutred and equipped with his Numidian dress and his Numidian guards. Let the reader attend to him with all his ears; for the words of the wise are precious:

Semp. The deer is lodged, I've track'd her to her covert.

"Now I would fain know why this deer is said to be lodged, since we have heard not one word, since the play began, of her being at all out of harbour; and if we consider the discourse with which she and Lucia begin the Act, we have reason to believe that they had hardly been talking of such matters in the street. However, to pleasure Sempronius, let us suppose, for once, that the deer is lodged.

The deer is lodg'd, I've track'd her to her covert.

"If he had seen her in the open field, wh occasion had he to track her, when he had many Numidian dogs at his heels, which, wi one halloo, he might have set upon her haunc es? If he did not see her in the open field, ho could he possibly track her? If he had seen h in the street, why did he not set upon her in t street, since through the street she must be ca ried at last? Now here, instead of having h thoughts upon his business and upon the press danger; instead of meditating and contrivi how he shall pass with his mistress through t southern gate, (where her brother Marcus upon the guard, and where he would certain prove an impediment to him,) which is the R man word for the baggage; instead of doi this, Sempronius is entertaining himself wi whimsies:

Semp. How will the young Numidian rave 'o se His mistress lost! If aught could glad my soul, Beyond th' enjoyment of so bright a prize, 'Twou'd be to torture that young, gay barbarian. But, hark! what noise! Death to my hopes! 'tis 'Tis Juba's self! There is but one way left! He must be murder'd, and a passage cut Through those his guards.

"Pray, what are 'those his guards?' thought, at present, that Juba's guards had be Sempronius's tools, and had been dangling af his heels.

"But now let us sum up all these absurdit together. Sempronius goes at noon-day, in J ba's clothes and with Juba's guards, to Cat palace, in order to pass for Juba, in a pl where they were both so very well known; meets Juba there, and resolves to murder h with his own guards. Upon the guards appe ing a little bashful, he threatens them:

Hah! Dastards do you tremble! Or act like men; or, by yon azure heaven—

"But the guards, still remaining restl Sempronius himself attacks Juba, while each the guards is representing Mr. Spectator's s of the Gaper, awed, it seems, and terrified Sempronius's threats. Juba kills Semproni and takes his own army prisoners, and carr them in triumph away to Cato. Now I wou fain know if any part of Mr. Bayes's trage is so full of absurdity as this?

"Upon hearing the clash of swords, Lu and Marcia come in. The question is, why men come in upon hearing the noise of swor in the governor's hall? Where was the gov nor himself? Where were his guards? Wh were his servants? Such an attempt as this, near the person of a governor of a place of. w was enough to alarm the whole garrison; a yet, for almost half an hour after Sempron was killed, we find none of those appear w were the likeliest in the world to be alarme and the noise of swords is made to draw o

vo poor women thither, who were most cer-
in to run away from it. Upon Lucia and
larcia's coming in, Lucia appears in all the
mptoms of an hysterical gentlewoman:

Luc. Sure 'twas the clash of swords! my troubled heart
so cast down, and sunk amidst its sorrows,
throbs with fear, and aches at every sound!

nd immediately her old whimsy returns upon
r:

O Marcia, should thy brothers, for my sake—
I die away with horror at the thought.

he fancies that there can be no cutting of
roats, but it must be for her. If this is tra-
cal, I would fain know what is comical.
Vell! upon this they spy the body of Sempro-
us; and Marcia, deluded by the habit, it
ems, takes him for Juba; for, says she,

The face is muffled up within the garment.

"Now, how a man could fight, and fall with
s face muffled up in his garment, is, I think,
little hard to conceive! Besides, Juba, before
killed him, knew him to be Sempronius. It
as not by his garment that he knew this; it
as by his face then: his face therefore was
t muffled. Upon seeing this man with his
uffled face, Marcia falls a-raving; and, own-
g her passion for the supposed defunct, begins
make his funeral oration. Upon which
uba enters listening, I suppose on tip-toe; for
cannot imagine how any one can enter listen-
g in any other posture. I would fain know
w it comes to pass, that during all this time
had sent nobody, no, not so much as a can-
e-snuffer, to take away the dead body of Sem-
onius. Well! but let us regard him listen-
g. Having left his apprehension behind him,
, at first, applies what Marcia says to Sem-
onius. But finding at last, with much ado,
at he himself is the happy man, he quits his
e-dropping, and discovers himself just time
ough to prevent his being cuckolded by a dead
an, of whom the moment before he had ap-
ared so jealous; and greedily intercepts the
ss which was fondly designed for one who
uld not be the better for it. But here I must
k a question: how comes Juba to listen here,
no had not listened before throughout the
ay? Or how comes he to be the only person
this tragedy who listens, when love and trea-
n were so often talked in so public a place as
hall? I am afraid the Author was driven
on all these absurdities only to introduce
s miserable mistake of Marcia, which, after
, is much below the dignity of tragedy, as
y thing is which is the effect or result of
ck.

"But let us come to the scenery of the fifth Act, Cato appears first upon the scene, sitting in a thoughtful posture: in his hand Plato's treatise on the Immortality of the Soul, a drawn sword on the table by him. Now let us consider the place in which this sight is presented to us. The place, forsooth, is a long hall. Let us suppose, that any one should place himself in this posture, in the midst of one of our halls in London; that he should appear *solus* in a sullen posture, a drawn sword on the table by him; in his hand Plato's treatise on the Immortality of the Soul, translated lately by Bernard Lintot: I desire the reader to consider, whether such a person as this would pass, with them who beheld him, for a great patriot, a great philosopher, or a general, or some whimsical person, who fancied himself all these? and whether the people, who belonged to the family, would think that such a person had a design upon their midriffs or his own?

"In short, that Cato should sit long enough in the aforesaid posture, in the midst of this large hall, to read over Plato's treatise on the Immortality of the Soul, which is a lecture of two long hours; that he should propose to himself to be private there upon that occasion; that he should be angry with his son for intruding there; then, that he should leave this hall upon the pretence of sleep, give himself the mortal wound in his bedchamber, and then be brought back into that hall to expire, purely to show his good-breeding, and save his friends the trouble of coming up to his bedchamber; all this appears to me to be improbable, incredible, impossible."

Such is the censure of Dennis. There is, as Dryden expresses it, perhaps "too much horse-play in his raillery;" but if his jests are coarse, his arguments are strong. Yet, as we love better to be pleased than be taught, "Cato" is read and the critic is neglected.

Flushed with consciousness of these detections of absurdity in the conduct, he afterwards attacked the sentiments, of Cato; but he then amused himself with petty cavils and minute objections.

Of Addison's smaller poems, no particular mention is necessary; they have little that can employ or require a critic. The parallel of the princes and gods, in his verses to Kneller, is often happy, but is too well known to be quoted.

His translations, so far as I have compared them, want the exactness of a scholar. That he understood his authors cannot be doubted; but his versions will not teach others to understand them, being too licentiously paraphrastical. They are, however, for the most part, smooth and easy; and, what is the first excellence of a translator, such as may be read with pleasure by those who do not know the originals.

His poetry is polished and pure; the product of a mind too judicious to commit faults, but not sufficiently vigorous to attain excellence. He has sometimes a striking line, or a shining paragraph; but in the whole he is warm rather than fervid, and shows more dexterity than strength. He was however one of our earliest examples of correctness.

The versification which he had learned from Dryden he debased rather than refined. His rhymes are often dissonant; in his "Georgic" he admits broken lines. He uses both triplets and Alexandrines, but triplets more frequently in his translations than his other works. The mere structure of verses seems never to have engaged much of his care. But his lines are very smooth in "Rosamond," and too smooth in "Cato."

Addison is now to be considered as a critic; a name which the present generation is scarcely willing to allow him. His criticism is condemned as tentative or experimental, rather than scientific; and he is considered as deciding by taste* rather than by principles.

It is not uncommon for those who have grown wise by the labour of others to add a little of their own, and overlook their masters. Addison is now despised by some who perhaps would never have seen his defects, but by the lights which he afforded them. That he always wrote as he would think it necessary to write now, cannot be affirmed: his instructions were such as the characters of his readers made proper. That general knowledge which now circulates in common talk was in his time rarely to be found. Men not professing learning were not ashamed of ignorance; and, in the female world, any acquaintance with books was distinguished only to be censured. His purpose was to infuse literary curiosity, by gentle and unsuspected conveyance, into the gay, the idle, and the wealthy; he therefore presented knowledge in the most alluring form, not lofty and austere, but accessible and familiar. When he showed them their defects, he showed them likewise that they might be easily supplied. His attempt succeeded; inquiry was awakened, and comprehension expanded. An emulation of intellectual elegance was excited; and, from this time to our own, life has been gradually exalted, and conversation purified and enlarged.

Dryden had, not many years before, scattered criticism over his prefaces with very little parsimony; but though he sometimes condescended to be somewhat familiar, his manner was in general too scholastic for those who had yet their rudiments to learn, and found it not easy to understand their master. His observations were framed rather for those that were learning to write, than for those that read only to talk.

* Taste must decide. Warton.—C.

An instructor like Addison was now wanti whose remarks, being superficial, might easily understood, and being just, might p pare the mind for more attainments. Had presented "Paradise Lost" to the public w all the pomp of system and severity of scien the criticism would perhaps have been admi and the poem still have been neglected; but the blandishments of gentleness and facility has made Milton a universal favourite, w whom readers of every class think it necess to be pleased.

He descended now and then to lower disq sitions; and by a serious display of the beau of "Chevy-Chase," exposed himself to the dicule of Wagstaffe, who bestowed a like po pous character on "Tom Thumb;" and to contempt of Dennis, who, considering the f damental position of his criticism, that "Che Chase" pleases, and ought to please, becaus is natural, observes, that "there is a way deviating from nature, by bombast or tumo which soars above nature, and enlarges ima beyond their real bulk; by affectation, wh forsakes nature in quest of something unusu ble; and by imbecility, which degrades nat by faintness and diminution, by obscuring appearances, and weakening its effects." "Chevy-Chase" there is not much of eit bombast or affectation; but there is chill lifeless imbecility. The story cannot possi be told in a manner that shall make less pression on the mind.

Before the profound observers of the pres race repose too securely on the consciousness their superiority to Addison, let them consi his Remarks on Ovid, in which may be fo specimens of criticism sufficiently subtle refined: let them peruse likewise his "Ess on Wit" and on the "Pleasures of Imagi tion," in which he founds art on the base nature, and draws the principles of invent from dispositions inherent in the mind of m with skill and elegance,* such as his contemp will not easily attain.

As a describer of life and manners, he m be allowed to stand perhaps the first of the f rank. His humour, which, as Steele observ is peculiar to himself, is so happily diffused to give the grace of novelty to domestic scen and daily occurrences. He never "outsteps modesty of nature," nor raises merriment wonder by the violation of truth. His figu neither divert by distortion nor amaze by gravation. He copies life with so much fidel that he can be hardly said to invent; yet exhibitions have an air so much original, that is difficult to suppose them not merely the p duct of imagination.

As a teacher of wisdom, he may be confident

* Far, in Dr. Warton's opinion, beyond Dryden.—

llowed. His religion has nothing in it enusiastic or superstitious; he appears neither eakly credulous nor wantonly sceptical; his orality is neither dangerously lax nor impracably rigid. All the enchantment of fancy nd all the cogency of argument are employed recommend to the reader his real interest, the re of pleasing the Author of his being. Truth shown sometimes as the phantom of a vision; metimes appears half-veiled in an allegory; metimes attracts regard in the robes of fancy; nd sometimes steps forth in the confidence of eason. She wears a thousand dresses, and in l is pleasing.

Mille habet ornatus, mille decenter habet.

His prose is the model of the middle style; on ave subjects not formal, on light occasions not ovelling; pure without scrupulosity, and exct without apparent elaboration; always equable nd always easy, without glowing words or pointed sentences. Addison never deviates from his track to snatch a grace: he seeks no ambitious ornaments and tries no hazardous innovations. His page is always luminous, but never blazes in unexpected splendour.

It was apparently his principal endeavour to avoid all harshness and severity of diction; he is therefore sometimes verbose in his transitions and connections, and sometimes descends too much to the language of conversation; yet if his language had been less idiomatical, it might have lost somewhat of its genuine Anglicism. What he attempted, he performed: he is never feeble, and he did not wish to be energetic;* he is never rapid, and he never stagnates. His sentences have neither studied amplitude nor affected brevity: his periods, though not diligently rounded, are voluble and easy. Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison.

HUGHES.

JOHN HUGHES, the son of a citizen in London, nd of Anne Burgess, of an ancient family in Viltshire, was born at Marlborough, July 29, 677. He was educated at a private school; nd though his advances in literature are, in the Biographia," very ostentatiously displayed, ne name of his master is somewhat ungratefully oncealed.*

At nineteen he drew the plan of a tragedy; nd paraphrased, rather too profusely, the ode Horace which begins *Integer Vitæ*. To poetry e added the science of music, in which he seems have attained considerable skill, together ith the practice of design, or rudiments of ainting.

His studies did not withdraw him wholly om business, nor did business hinder him from udy. He had a place in the office of ordnance; nd was secretary to several commissions for urchasing lands necessary to secure the royal ocks at Chatham and Portsmouth; yet found me to acquaint himself with modern lanuages.

In 1697 he published a poem on the "Peace of Ryswick:" and in 1699 another piece, called "The Court of Neptune," on the return of King William, which he addressed to Mr. Montague, the general patron of the followers of the Muses. The same year he produced a song on the Duke of Gloucester's birth-day.

He did not confine himself to poetry, but cultivated other kinds of writing with great success; and about this time showed his knowledge of human nature by an "Essay on the Pleasure of being Deceived." In 1702 he published, on the death of King William, a Pindaric ode, called "The House of Nassau;" and wrote another paraphrase on the *Otium Divos* of Horace.

In 1703 his Ode on Music was performed at Stationers' Hall; and he wrote afterwards six cantatas, which were set to music by the greatest master of that time, and seemed intended to oppose or exclude the Italian opera, an exotic and irrational entertainment, which has been always combated, and always has prevailed.

His reputation was now so far advanced, that the public began to pay reverence to his name; and he was solicited to prefix a preface to the translation of *Boccalini*, a writer

* He was educated in a dissenting academy, of hich the Rev. Thomas Rowe was tutor; and as a fellow-student there with Dr. Isaac Watts, Ir. Samuel Say, and other persons of eminence. n the "Horæ Lyricæ" of Dr. Watts, is a poem to e memory of Mr. Rowe.—H.

* But, says Dr. Warton, he *sometimes* is so; and in another MS. note he adds, *often* so.—C.

whose satirical vein cost him his life in Italy, and who never, I believe, found many readers in this country, even though introduced by such powerful recommendation.

He translated Fontenelle's "Dialogues of the Dead;" and his version was perhaps read at that time, but is now neglected; for by a book not necessary, and owing its reputation wholly to its turn of diction, little notice can be gained but from those who can enjoy the graces of the original. To the "Dialogues" of Fontenelle he added two composed by himself; and, though not only an honest but a pious man, dedicated his work to the Earl of Wharton. He judged skilfully enough of his own interest; for Wharton, when he went lord-lieutenant to Ireland, offered to take Hughes with him and establish him; but Hughes, having hopes, or promises, from another man in power, of some provision more suitable to his inclination, declined Wharton's offer, and obtained nothing from the other.

He translated the "Miser" of Moliere, which he never offered to the stage; and occasionally amused himself with making versions of favourite scenes in other plays.

Being now received as a wit among the wits, he paid his contributions to literary undertakings, and assisted both the "Tatler," "Spectator," and "Guardian." In 1712 he translated Vertot's "History of the Revolution of Portugal," produced an "Ode to the Creator of the World, from the Fragments of Orpheus," and brought upon the stage an opera called "Calypso and Telemachus," intended to show that the English language might be very happily adapted to music. This was impudently opposed by those who were employed in the Italian opera; and, what cannot be told without indignation, the intruders had such interest with the Duke of Shrewsbury, then lord-chamberlain, who had married an Italian, as to obtain an obstruction of the profits, though not an inhibition of the performance.

There was at this time a project formed by Tonson for a translation of the "Pharsalia" by several hands; and Hughes Englished the tenth book. But this design, as must often happen when the concurrence of many is necessary, fell to the ground; and the whole work was afterwards performed by Rowe.

His acquaintance with the great writers of his time appears to have been very general; but of his intimacy with Addison there is a remarkable proof. It is told, on good authority, that "Cato" was finished and played by his persuasion. It had long wanted the last Act, which he was desired by Addison to supply. If the request was sincere, it proceeded from an opinion, whatever it was, that did not last long; for when Hughes came in a week to show him his first attempt, he found half an act written by Addison himself.

He afterwards published the works of Spens with his life, a glossary, and a Discourse Allegorical Poetry; a work for which he w well qualified as a judge of the beauties of wr ing, but perhaps wanted an antiquary's kno ledge of the obsolete words. He did not mu revive the curiosity of the public; for n thirty years elapsed before his edition was printed. The same year produced his "Apo and Daphne," of which the success was ve earnestly promoted by Steele, who, when rage of party did not misguide him, seems have been a man of boundless benevolence.

Hughes had hitherto suffered the mortifi tions of a narrow fortune; but in 1717 the Lo chancellor Cowper set him at ease; by maki him secretary to the commissions of the peac in which he afterwards, by a particular reque desired his successor Lord Parker to contin him. He had now affluence; but such human life, that he had it when his declini health could neither allow him long possessi nor quick enjoyment.

His last work was his tragedy, "The Si of Damascus," after which *a Siege* becam popular title. This play, which still contin on the stage, and of which it is unnecessary add a private voice to such continuance of probation, is not acted or printed according the author's original draught or his settled tention. He had made Phocyas apostatize fr his religion; after which the abhorrence Eudocia would have been reasonable, his mis would have been just, and the horrors of his pentance exemplary. The players, howev required that the guilt of Phocyas should t minate in desertion to the enemy; and Hugh unwilling that his relations should lose benefit of his work, complied with the alte tion.

He was now weak with a lingering consum tion, and not able to attend the rehearsal, was so vigorous in his faculties that only days before his death he wrote the dedication his patron, Lord Cowper. On February 1719-20, the play was represented, and t author died. He lived to hear that it was w received; but paid no regard to the intelligen being then wholly employed in the meditatio of a departing Christian.

A man of his character was undoubtedly gretted; and Steele devoted an essay, in t paper, called "The Theatre," to the memo of his virtues. His life is written in "Biographia" with some degree of favoura partiality; and an account of him is prefixed his works by his relation the late Mr. Du combe, a man whose blameless elegance deserv the same respect.

The character of his genius I shall transcri from the correspondence of Swift and Pope.

"A month ago," says Swift, "were sent

ver, by a friend of mine, the works of John Hughes, Esquire. They are in prose and verse. never heard of the man in my life, yet I find our name as a subscriber. He is too grave a ort for me; and I think among the *mediocrists* n prose as well as verse."

To this Pope returns: "To answer your question as to Mr. Hughes: what he wanted in genius, he made up as an honest man; but he was of the class you think him."*

In Spence's Collection, Pope is made to speak of him with still less respect, as having no claim to poetical reputation but from his tragedy.

SHEFFIELD,

DUKE OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

JOHN SHEFFIELD, descended from a long series f illustrious ancestors, was born in 1649, the on of Edmund earl of Mulgrave, who died in 658. The young Lord was put into the hands f a tutor, with whom he was so little satisfied, hat he got rid of him in a short time, and at an ge not exceeding twelve years resolved to edu- ate himself. Such a purpose, formed at such n age, and successfully prosecuted, delights, as is strange, and instructs, as it is real.

His literary acquisitions are more wonderful, those years in which they are commonly made ere spent by him in the tumult of a military fe, or the gayety of a court. When war was eclared against the Dutch, he went, at seven- en, on board the ship in which Prince Rupert nd the Duke of Albemarle sailed, with the ommand of the fleet: but by contrariety of inds they were restrained from action. His eal for the King's service was recompensed by he command of one of the independent troops of orse, then raised to protect the coast.

Next year he received a summons to parlia- ent, which, as he was then but eighteen years d, the Earl of Northumberland censured as at ast indecent, and his objection was allowed. He had a quarrel with the Earl of Rochester, hich he has perhaps too ostentatiously related, Rochester's surviving sister, the Lady Sand- ich, is said to have told him with very sharp proaches.

When another Dutch war (1672) broke out, e went again a volunteer in the ship which the lebrated Lord Ossory commanded; and there ade, as he relates, two curious remarks:

"I have observed two things, which I dare firm, though not generally believed. One was, at the wind of a cannon bullet, though flying ver so near, is incapable of doing the least arm; and, indeed, were it otherwise, no man ove deck would escape. The other was, that great shot may be sometimes avoided, even as flies, by changing one's ground a little; for, when the wind sometimes blew away the smoke, it was so clear a sun-shiny day, that we could easily perceive the bullets (that were half spent) fall into the water, and from thence bound up again among us, which gives sufficient time for making a step or two on any side; though in so swift a motion, it is hard to judge well in what line the bullet comes, which, if mistaken, may by removing cost a man his life, instead of saving it."

His behaviour was so favourably represented by Lord Ossory, that he was advanced to the command of the Catherine, the best second-rate ship in the navy.

He afterwards raised a regiment of foot, and commanded it as colonel. The land-forces were sent ashore by Prince Rupert; and he lived in the camp very familiarly with Schomberg. He was then appointed colonel of the old Holland regiment, together with his own, and had the promise of a garter, which he obtained in his twenty-fifth year. He was likewise made gentleman of the bed-chamber. He afterwards went into the French service, to learn the art of war under Turenne, but stayed only a short time. Being by the Duke of Monmouth opposed in his pretensions to the first troop of horse-guards, he, in return, made Monmouth suspected by the Duke of York. He was not long after, when the unlucky Monmouth fell into disgrace, recompensed with the lieutenancy of Yorkshire and the government of Hull.

Thus rapidly did he make his way both to military and civil honours and employments; yet, busy as he was, he did not neglect his studies,

* This, Dr. Warton asserts, is very unjust censure; and, in a note in his late edition of Pope's Works, asks if "the Author of such a tragedy as 'The Siege of Damascus' was one of the *mediocribus?* Swift and Pope seem not to recollect the value and rank of an author who could write such a tragedy."—C.

but at least cultivated poetry; in which he must have been early considered as uncommonly skilful, if it be true which is reported, that when he was yet not twenty years old, his recommendation advanced Dryden to the laurel.

The Moors having besieged Tangier, he was sent (1680) with two thousand men to its relief. A strange story is told of the danger to which he was intentionally exposed in a leaky ship, to gratify some resentful jealousy of the King, whose health he therefore would never permit at his table till he saw himself in a safer place. His voyage was prosperously performed in three weeks; and the Moors without a contest retired before him.

In this voyage he composed "The Vision;" a licentious poem; such as was fashionable in those times, with little power of invention or propriety of sentiment.

At his return he found the King kind, who perhaps had never been angry; and he continued a wit and a courtier as before.

At the succession of King James, to whom he was intimately known, and by whom he thought himself beloved, he naturally expected still brighter sunshine; but all know how soon that reign began to gather clouds. His expectations were not disappointed; he was immediately admitted into the privy-council, and made lord-chamberlain. He accepted a place in the high commission, without knowledge, as he declared after the Revolution, of its illegality. Having few religious scruples, he attended the King to mass, and kneeled with the rest, but had no disposition to receive the Romish faith, or to force it upon others; for when the priests, encouraged by his appearances of compliance, attempted to convert him, he told them, as Burnet has recorded, that he was willing to receive instruction, and that he had taken much pains to believe in God who had made the world and all men in it; but that he should not be easily persuaded *that man was quits, and made God again.*

A pointed sentence is bestowed by successive transmission to the last whom it will fit: this censure of transubstantiation, whatever be its value, was uttered long ago by Anne Askew, one of the first sufferers for the protestant religion, who, in the time of Henry VIII. was tortured in the Tower; concerning which there is reason to wonder that it was not known to the historian of the Reformation.

In the Revolution he acquiesced, though he did not promote it. There was once a design of associating him in the invitation of the Prince of Orange; but the Earl of Shrewsbury discouraged the attempt, by declaring that Mulgrave would never concur. This King William afterwards told him; and asked him what he would have done if the proposal had been made: "Sir," said he, "I would have discovered it to the King whom I then served." To which King William replied, "I cannot blame you."

Finding King James irremediably exclude he voted for the conjunctive sovereignty, upo this principle, that he thought the title of th Prince and his Consort equal, and it woul please the Prince their protector, to have a shar in the sovereignty. This vote gratified Kin William; yet, either by the King's distrust, o his own discontent, he lived some years withou employment. He looked on the King wit malevolence, and if his verses or his prose ma be credited, with contempt. He was, notwith standing this aversion or indifference, mad marquis of Normanby (1694), but still oppose the court on some important questions; yet a last he was received into the cabinet council with a pension of three thousand pounds.

At the accession of Queen Anne, whom he said to have courted when they were both young he was highly favoured. Before her coronatio (1702) she made him Lord privy-seal, and soo after lord-lieutenant of the North riding o Yorkshire. He was then named commissioner for treating with the Scots about the Union and was made next year, first, Duke of Nor manby, and then of Buckinghamshire, there be ing suspected to be somewhere, a latent claim t the title of Buckingham.

Soon after, becoming jealous of the Duke o Marlborough, he resigned the privy-seal, an joined the discontented tories in a motion, ex tremely offensive to the Queen, for inviting th Princess Sophia to England. The Queen courted him back with an offer no less than tha of the chancellorship; which he refused. H now retired from business, and built that hous in the Park which is now the Queen's, upo ground granted by the crown.

When the ministry was changed (1710), h was made lord-chamberlain of the household and concurred in all transactions of that time except that he endeavoured to protect the Cata lans. After the Queen's death he became a constant opponent of the court; and, having n public business, is supposed to have amuse himself by writing his two tragedies. He die February 24, 1720-21.

He was thrice married; by his two first wive he had no children; by his third, who was th daughter of King James by the Countess o Dorchester, and the widow of the Earl of Ang lesy, he had, besides other children that die early, a son, born in 1716, who died in 1735, an put an end to the line of Sheffield. It is obser vable, that the Duke's three wives were al widows. The dutchess died in 1742.

His character is not to be proposed as worth of imitation. His religion he may be suppose to have learned from Hobbes; and his morality was such as naturally proceeds from loose opin ions. His sentiments with respect to women h

picked up in the court of Charles; and his principles concerning property were such as a gaming-table supplies. He was censured as covetous, and has been defended by an instance of inattention to his affairs, as if a man might not at once be corrupted by avarice and idleness. He is said, however, to have had much tenderness, and to have been very ready to apologize for his violences of passion.

He is introduced into this collection only as a poet; and if we credit the testimony of his contemporaries, he was a poet of no vulgar rank. But favour and flattery are now at an end; criticism is no longer softened by his bounties, or awed by his splendour, and, being able to take a more steady view, discovers him to be a writer that sometimes glimmers, but rarely shines, feebly laborious, and at best but pretty. His songs are upon common topics; he hopes, and grieves, and repents, and despairs, and rejoices, like any other maker of little stanzas: to be great, he hardly tries; to be gay, is hardly in his power.

In his "Essay on Satire," he was always supposed to have had the help of Dryden. His "Essay on Poetry" is the great work for which he was praised by Roscommon, Dryden, and Pope; and doubtless by many more whose eulogies have perished.

Upon this piece he appears to have set a high value; for he was all his life-time improving it by successive revisals, so that there is scarcely any poem to be found of which the last edition differs more from the first. Amongst other changes, mention is made of some compositions of Dryden, which were written after the first appearance of the Essay.

At the time when this work first appeared, Milton's fame was not yet fully established, and therefore Tasso and Spenser were set before him. The two last lines were these. The epic poet, says he,

> Must above Milton's lofty flights prevail,
> Succeed where great Torquato, and where greater
> Spenser fail.

The last line in succeeding editions was shortened, and the order of names continued; but now Milton is at last advanced to the highest place, and the passage thus adjusted:

> Must above Tasso's lofty flights prevail,
> Succeed where Spenser, and ev'n Milton fail.

Amendments are seldom made without some token of a rent: lofty does not suit Tasso so well as Milton.

One celebrated line seems to be borrowed. The Essay calls a perfect character

> A faultless monster which the world ne'er saw.

Scaliger, in his poems, terms Virgil *sine labe monstrum*. Sheffield can scarcely be supposed to have read Scaliger's poetry; perhaps he found the words in a quotation.

Of this Essay, which Dryden has exalted so highly, it may be justly said that the precepts are judicious, sometimes new, and often happily expressed; but there are, after all the emendations, many weak lines, and some strange appearances of negligence; as, when he gives the laws of elegy, he insists upon connexion and coherence; without which, says he,

> 'Tis epigram, 'tis point, 'tis what you will:
> But not an elegy, nor writ with skill,
> No *Panegyric*, nor a *Cooper's Hill*.

Who would not suppose that Waller's "Panegyric" and Denham's "Cooper's Hill" were elegies?

His verses are often insipid, but his memoirs are lively and agreeable; he had the perspicuity and elegance of an historian, but not the fire and fancy of a poet.

PRIOR.

Matthew Prior is one of those that has burst out from an obscure original to great eminence. He was born July 21, 1664, according to some, at Winburn, in Dorsetshire, of I know not what parents; others say, that he was the son of a joiner of London; he was perhaps willing enough to leave his birth unsettled,* in hope, like Don Quixote, that the historian of his actions might find him some illustrious alliance.

* The difficulty of settling Prior's birth-place is great. In the Register of his College he is called, at his admission by the President, Matthew Prior, of Winburn, in Middlesex; by himself, next day, Matthew Prior, of Dorsetshire, in which county, not in Middlesex, Winborn, or Winborne, as it stands in the Villare, is found. When he stood candidate for his fellowship, five years afterwards, he was registered again by himself as of Middlesex. The

He is supposed to have fallen, by his father's death, into the hands of his uncle, a vintner,* near Charing Cross, who sent him for some time to Dr. Busby, at Westminster; but, not intending to give him any education beyond that of the school, took him, when he was well advanced in literature, to his own house, where the Earl of Dorset, celebrated for patronage of genius, found him by chance, as Burnet relates, reading Horace, and was so well pleased with his proficiency, that he undertook the care and cost of his academical education.

He entered his name in St. John's College, at Cambridge, in 1682, in his eighteenth year; and it may be reasonably supposed that he was distinguished among his contemporaries. He became a bachelor, as is usual, in four years;† and two years afterwards wrote the poem on the "Deity," which stands first in his volume.

It is the established practice of that College, to send every year to the Earl of Exeter some poems upon sacred subjects, in acknowledgment of a benefaction enjoyed by them from the bounty of his ancestor. On this occasion were those verses written, which, though nothing is said of their success, seem to have recommended him to some notice; for his praise of the Countess's music, and his lines on the famous picture of Seneca, afford reason for imagining that he was more or less conversant with that family.

The same year he published the "City Mouse and Country Mouse," to ridicule Dryden's "Hind and Panther," in conjunction with Mr. Montague. There is a story‡ of great pain suffered, and of tears shed, on this occasion, by Dryden, who thought it hard that "an old man should be so treated by those to whom he had always been civil." By tales like these is the envy raised by superior abilities every day gratified: when they are attacked, every one hopes to see them humbled: what is hoped is readily believed, and what is believed is confidently told. Dryden had been more accustomed to hostilities than that such enemies should break his quiet; and if we can suppose him vexed, it would be hard to deny him sense enough to conceal his uneasiness.

The "City Mouse and Country Mouse" procured its authors more solid advantages than the pleasure of fretting Dryden; for they were both speedily preferred. Montague, indeed, obtained the first notice, with some degree of discontent, as it seems, in Prior, who probably knew that his own part of the performance was the best. He had not, however, much reason to complain; for he came to London, and obtained such notice, that (in 1691) he was sent to the Congress at the Hague as secretary to the embassy. In this assembly of princes and nobles, to which Europe has perhaps scarcely seen any thing equal, was formed the grand alliance against Louis, which at last did not produce effects proportionate to the magnificence of the transaction.

The conduct of Prior in this splendid initiation into public business was so pleasing to King William, that he made him one of the gentlemen of his bed-chamber; and he is supposed to have passed some of the next years in the quiet cultivation of literature and poetry.

The death of Queen Mary (in 1695) produced a subject for all the writers; perhaps no funeral was ever so poetically attended. Dryden, indeed, as a man discountenanced and deprived was silent; but scarcely any other maker of verses omitted to bring his tribute of tuneful sorrow. An emulation of elegy was universal. Maria's praise was not confined to the English language, but fills a great part of the "Musæ Anglicanæ."

Prior, who was both a poet and a courtier, was too diligent to miss this opportunity of respect. He wrote a long ode, which was presented to the King, by whom it was not likely to be ever read.

In two years he was secretary to another embassy, at the treaty of Ryswick (in 1697*); and next year had the same office at the court of France, where he is said to have been considered with great distinction.

As he was one day surveying the apartments at Versailles, being shown the victories of Louis painted by Le Brun, and asked whether the King of England's palace had any such decorations: "The monuments of my master's actions," said he, "are to be seen every where but in his own house."

The pictures of Le Brun are not only in themselves sufficiently ostentatious, but were explained by inscriptions so arrogant, that Boileau and Racine thought it necessary to make them more simple.

He was in the following year at Loo with the King; from whom, after a long audience, he carried orders to England, and upon his arrival became under-secretary of state in the Earl of Jersey's office; a post which he did not retain

last record ought to be preferred, because it was made upon oath. It is observable, that, as a native of Winborne, he is styled *Filius Georgii Prior, generosi;* not consistently with the common account of the meanness of his birth.—Dr. J.

* Samuel Prior kept the Rummer Tavern, near Charing Cross, in 1685. The annual feast of the nobility and gentry living in the parish of St. Martin in the Fields was held at his house, October 14, that year.—N.

† He was admitted to his bachelor's degree in 1686; and to his master's, by mandate, in 1700.—N.

‡ Spence.

* He received, in September, 1697, a present of 2 guineas from the lords justices, for his trouble in bringing over the treaty of peace.—N.

cng, because Jersey was removed; but he was oon made commissioner of trade.

This year (1700) produced one of his longest and most splendid compositions, the "Carmen Seculare," in which he exhausts all his powers of celebration. I mean not to accuse him of flattery: he probably thought all that he wrote, and retained as much veracity as can be properly exacted from a poet professedly encomiastic. King William supplied copious materials for either verse or prose. His whole life had been action, and none ever denied him the resplendent qualities of steady resolution and personal courage. He was really in Prior's mind what he represents him in his verses; he considered him as a hero, and was accustomed to say that he praised others in compliance with the fashion, but that in celebrating King William he followed his inclination. To Prior gratitude would dictate praise which reason would not refuse.

Among the advantages to arise from the future years of William's reign, he mentions a Society for useful Arts, and among them

Some that with care true eloquence shall teach,
And to just idioms fix our doubtful speech;
That from our writers distant realms may know
The thanks we to our monarchs owe,
And schools profess our tongue through every land
That has invoked his aid or bless'd his hand.

Tickell, in his "Prospect of Peace," has the same hope of a new academy:

In happy chains our daring language bound,
Shall sport no more in arbitrary sound.

Whether the similitude of those passages, which exhibit the same thought on the same occasion proceeded from accident or imitation, is not easy to determine. Tickell might have been impressed with his expectation by Swift's "Proposal for ascertaining the English Language," then lately published.

In the parliament that met in 1701 he was chosen representative of East Grinstead. Perhaps it was about this time that he changed his party; for he voted for the impeachment of those lords who had persuaded the King to the Partition-treaty, a treaty in which he had himself been ministerially employed.

A great part of Queen Anne's reign was a time of war, in which there was little employment for negotiators, and Prior had therefore leisure to make or to polish verses. When the battle of Blenheim called forth all the versemen, Prior, among the rest, took care to show his delight in the increasing honour of his country by an Epistle to Boileau.

He published soon afterwards a volume of poems, with the encomiastic character of his deceased patron, the Duke of Dorset; it began with the College Exercise, and ended with the "Nut-brown Maid."

The battle of Ramillies soon afterwards (in 1706) excited him to another effort of poetry. On this occasion he had fewer or less formidable rivals; and it would be not easy to name any other composition produced by that event which is now remembered.

Every thing has its day. Through the reigns of William and Anne no prosperous event passed undignified by poetry. In the last war, when France was disgraced and overpowered in every quarter of the globe; when Spain, coming to her assistance, only shared her calamities, and the name of an Englishman was reverenced through Europe, no poet was heard amidst the general acclamation; the fame of our counsellors and heroes was intrusted to the Gazetteer.

The nation in time grew weary of the war, and the Queen grew weary of her ministers. The war was burdensome, and the ministers were insolent. Harley and his friends began to hope that they might, by driving the whigs from court and from power, gratify at once the Queen and the people. There was now a call for writers, who might convey intelligence of past abuses, and show the waste of public money, the unreasonable conduct of the allies, the avarice of generals, the tyranny of minions, and the general danger of approaching ruin.

For this purpose a paper called "The Examiner" was periodically published, written, as it happened, by any wit of the party, and sometimes, as is said, by Mrs. Manley. Some are owned by Swift; and one, in ridicule of Garth's verses to Godolphin upon the loss of his place, was written by Prior, and answered by Addison, who appears to have known the Author either by conjecture or intelligence.

The tories, who were now in power, were in haste to end the war; and Prior, being recalled (1710) to his former employment of making treaties, was sent (July, 1711) privately to Paris with propositions of peace. He was remembered at the French court; and, returning in about a month, brought with him the Abbe Gualtier, and Mr. Mesnager, a minister from France, invested with full powers.

This transaction not being avowed, Mackay, the master of the Dover packet-boat, either zealously or officiously, seized Prior and his associates at Canterbury. It is easily supposed that they were soon released.

The negotiation was begun at Prior's house, where the Queen's ministers met Mesnager (September 20, 1711), and entered privately upon the great business. The importance of Prior appears from the mention made of him by St. John in his letter to the Queen.

"My Lord Treasurer moved, and all my Lords were of the same opinion, that Mr. Prior should be added to those who are empowered to sign: the reason for which is, because he, having personally treated with Monsieur de Torcy, is

the best witness we can produce of the sense in which the general preliminary engagements are entered into; besides which, as he is the best versed in matters of trade of all your Majesty's servants, who have been trusted in this secret, if you should think fit to employ him in the future treaty of commerce, it will be of consequence that he has been a party concerned in concluding that convention which must be the rule of this treaty."

The assembly of this important night was in some degree clandestine, the design of treating not being yet openly declared, and, when the whigs returned to power, was aggravated to a charge of high treason; though, as Prior remarks in his imperfect answer to the report of the Committee of Secrecy, no treaty ever was made without private interviews and preliminary discussions.

My business is not the history of the peace, but the life of Prior. The conferences began at Utrecht on the first of January (1711-12), and the English plenipotentiaries arrived on the fifteenth. The ministers of the different potentates conferred and conferred; but the peace advanced so slowly, that speedier methods were found necessary, and Bolingbroke was sent to Paris to adjust differences with less formality: Prior either accompanied him or followed him, and, after his departure, had the appointments and authority of an ambassador, though no public character.

By some mistake of the Queen's orders, the court of France had been disgusted; and Bolingbroke says in his letter, "Dear Mat, hide the nakedness of thy country, and give the best turn thy fertile brain will furnish thee with to the blunders of thy countrymen, who are not much better politicians than the French are poets."

Soon after, the Duke of Shrewsbury went on a formal embassy to Paris. It is related by Boyer, that the intention was to have joined Prior in the commission, but that Shrewsbury refused to be associated with a man so meanly born. Prior therefore continued to act without a title till the Duke returned next year to England, and then he assumed the style and dignity of ambassador.

But, while he continued in appearance a private man, he was treated with confidence by Lewis, who sent him with a letter to the Queen, written in favour of the Elector of Bavaria. "I shall expect," says he, "with impatience, the return of Mr. Prior, whose conduct is very agreeable to me." And while the Duke of Shrewsbury was still at Paris, Bolingbroke wrote to Prior thus: "Monsieur de Torcy has a confidence in you: make use of it, once for all, upon this occasion, and convince him thoroughly, that we must give a different turn to our parliament and our people according to their resolution at this crisis."

Prior's public dignity and splendour commenced in August, 1713, and continued till the August following; but I am afraid that, according to the usual fate of greatness, it was attended with some perplexities and mortifications. He had not all that is customarily given to ambassadors: he hints to the Queen in an imperfect poem, that he had no service of plate; and it appeared by the debts which he contracted that his remittances were not punctually made.

On the first of August, 1714, ensued the downfal of the tories and the degradation of Prior. He was recalled, but was not able to return, being detained by the debts which he had found it necessary to contract, and which were not discharged before March, though his old friend Montague was now at the head of the Treasury.

He returned then as soon as he could, and was welcomed on the 25th of March* by a warrant, but was, however, suffered to live in his own house, under the custody of the messenger, till he was examined before a committee of the privy council, of which Mr. Walpole was chairman, and Lord Coningsby, Mr. Stanhope and Mr. Lechmere, were the principal interrogators; who, in this examination, of which there is printed an account not unentertaining, behaved with the boisterousness of men elated by recent authority. They are represented as asking questions sometimes vague, sometimes insidious, and writing answers different from those which they received. Prior, however, seems to have been overpowered by their turbulence; for he confesses that he signed what, if he had ever come before a legal judicature, he should have contradicted or explained away. The oath was administered by Boscawen, a Middlesex justice who at last was going to write his attestation on the wrong side of the paper.

They were very industrious to find some charge against Oxford; and asked Prior, with great earnestness, who was present when the preliminary articles were talked of or signed at his house? He told them, that either the Earl of Oxford or the Duke of Shrewsbury was absent, but he could not remember which; an answer which perplexed them, because it supplied no accusation against either. "Could any thing be more absurd," says he, "or more inhuman, than to propose to me a question, by the answering of which I might, according to them, prove myself a traitor? And notwithstanding their solemn promise, that nothing which I could say should hurt myself, I had no reason to trust them; for they violated this promise about five hours after. However,

* 1715

owned I was there present. Whether this was wisely done or not, I leave to my friends to determine."

When he had signed the paper, he was told by Walpole, that the committee were not satisfied with his behaviour, nor could give such an account of it to the Commons as might merit favour; and that they now thought a stricter confinement necessary than to his own house. "Here," says he, "Boscawen played the moralist, and Coningsby the Christian, but both very awkwardly." The messenger, in whose custody he was to be placed, was then called, and very decently asked by Coningsby, "if his house was secured by bars and bolts?" The messenger answered, "No!" with astonishment. At which Coningsby very angrily said, "Sir, you must secure this prisoner; it is for the safety of the nation: if he escape you shall answer for it."

They had already printed their report; and in this examination were endeavouring to find proofs.

He continued thus confined for some time; and Mr. Walpole (June 10, 1715) moved for an impeachment against him. What made him so acrimonious does not appear: he was by nature no thirster for blood. Prior was a week after committed to close custody, with orders that "no person should be admitted to see him without leave from the speaker."

When two years after, an Act of Grace was passed, he was excepted, and continued still in custody, which he had made less tedious by writing his "Alma." He was, however, soon after discharged.

He had now his liberty, but he had nothing else. Whatever the profit of his employments might have been, he had always spent it; and at the age of fifty-three was, with all his abilities, in danger of penury, having yet no solid revenue but from the fellowship of his college, which, when in his exaltation he was censured for retaining it, he said, he could live upon at last.

Being however generally known and esteemed, he was encouraged to add other poems to those which he had printed, and to publish them by subscription. The expedient succeeded by the industry of many friends, who circulated the proposals,* and the care of some, who, it is said, withheld the money from him lest he should squander it. The price of the volume was two guineas; the whole collection was four thousand; to which Lord Harley, the son of the Earl of Oxford, to whom he had invariably adhered, added an equal sum for the purchase of Down-hall, which Prior was to enjoy during life, and Harley after his decease.

He had now, what wits and philosophers have often wished, the power of passing the day in contemplative tranquillity. But it seems that busy men seldom live long in a state of quiet. It is not unlikely that his health declined. He complains of deafness; "for," says he, "I took little care of my ears while I was not sure if my head was my own."

Of any occurrences in his remaining life, I have found no account. In a letter to Swift, "I have," says he, "treated Lady Harriot at Cambridge (a fellow of a college treat!) and spoke verses to her in a gown and cap! What, the plenipotentiary, so far concerned in the damned peace at Utrecht—the man that makes up half the volume of terse prose, that makes up the report of the committee, speaking verses! *Sic est, homo sum.*"

He died at Wimpole, a seat of the Earl of Oxford, on the eighteenth of September, 1721, and was buried in Westminster; where, on a monument for which, as the "last piece of human vanity," he left five hundred pounds, is engraven this epitaph:

Sui Temporis Historiam meditanti,
Paulatim obrepens Febris
peri simul & Vitæ filum abrupit,
Sept. 18. An. Dom. 1721. Ætat. 57.
H. S. E.
Vir Eximius,
Serenissimis
Regi GULIELMO Reginæque MARIÆ
In Congressione Fœderatorum
Hagæ, anno 1690, celebrata
Deinde Magnæ Britanniæ Legatis,
Tum iis
Qui anno 1697 Pacem RYSWICKI confecerunt,
Tum iis
Qui apud Gallos annis proximis Legationem
Obierunt; eodem etiam anno 1697 in Hiberni
SECRETARIUS;
Necnon in utroque Honorabili consessu
Eorum
Qui anno 1700 ordinandis Commercii negotiis
Quique anno 1711 dirigendis Portorii rebus,
Præsidebant,
COMMISSIONARIUS;
Postremo
Ab ANNA
Felicissimæ memoriæ Reginâ
Ad LUDOVICUM XIV. Galliæ Regem
Missus anno 1711
De Pace stabilienda,
(Pace etiamnum durante
Diuque ut boni jam omnes sperant duratura)
Cum summa potestate Legatus;
MATTHÆUS PRIOR, Armiger:
Qui
Hos omnes, quibus cumulatus est, Titulos
Humanitatis, Ingenii, Eruditionis laude
Superavit;
Cui enim nascenti faciles arriserant Musæ.
Hunc Puerum Schola hic Regia perpolivit;
Juvenem in Collegio S'ti Johannis
Cantabrigia optimis Scientiis instruxit;
Virum denique auxit; & perfecit

* Swift obtained many subscriptions for him in Ireland.—H.

Multa cum viris Principibus consuetudo;
Ita natus, ita institutus,
A Vatum Choro avelli nunquam potuit,
Sed solebat sæpe rerum Civilium gravitatem
Amœniorum Literarum Studiis condire:
Et cum omne adeo Poetices genus
Haud infeliciter tentaret,
Tum in Fabellis concinnè lepidèque texendis
Mirus Artifex
Nemiuem habuit parem.
Hæc liberalis animi oblectamenta,
Quam nullo Illi labore constiterint,
Facile ii perspexere quibus usus est Amici;
Apud quos Urbanitatum & Leporum plenus
Cum ad rem, quæcunque forte inciderat,
Aptè, variè, copiosèque alluderet,
Interea nihil quæsitum, nihil vi expressum
Videbatur,
Sed omnia ultro effluere,
Et quasi jugi è fonte affatim exuberâre,
Ita suos tandem dubios reliquit,
Essetne in Scriptis Poeta Elegantior
An in Convictu Comes Jucundior.

Of Prior, eminent as he was, both by his abilities and station, very few memorials have been left by his contemporaries; the account therefore must now be destitute of his private character and familiar practices. He lived at a time when the rage of party detected all which it was any man's interest to hide; and, as little ill is heard of Prior, it is certain that not much was known. He was not afraid of provoking censure, for when he forsook the whigs,* under whose patronage he first entered the world, he became a tory so ardent and determinate, that he did not willingly consort with men of different opinions. He was one of the sixteen tories who met weekly, and agreed to address each other by the title of *brother*; and seems to have adhered, not only by concurrence of political designs, but by peculiar affection, to the Earl of Oxford and his family. With how much confidence he was trusted has been already told.

He was, however, in Pope's* opinion, fit only to make verses, and less qualified for business than Addison himself. This was surely said without consideration. Addison, exalted to a high place, was forced into degradation by the sense of his own incapacity; Prior, who was employed by men very capable of estimating his value, having been secretary to one embassy, had, when great abilities were again wanted, the same office another time; and was, after so much experience of his knowledge and dexterity, at last sent to transact a negotiation in the highest degree arduous and important, for which he was qualified, among other requisites, in the opinion of Bolingbroke, by his influence upon the French minister, and by skill in questions of commerce above other men.

* Spence.

Of his behaviour in the lighter parts of life, it is too late to get much intelligence. One of his answers to a boastful Frenchman has been related; and to an impertinent he made another equally proper. During his embassy, he sat at the opera by a man, who, in his rapture, accompanied with his own voice the principal singer. Prior fell to railing at the performer with all the terms of reproach that he could collect, till the Frenchman, ceasing from his song, began to expostulate with him for his harsh censure of a man who was confessedly the ornament of the stage. "I know all that," says the ambassador, "mais il chante si haut, que je ne sçaurois vous entendre."

In a gay French company, where every one sang a little song or stanza, of which the burden was, "Bannissons la Melancholie:" when it came to his turn to sing, after the performance of a young lady that sat next him, he produced these extemporary lines:

Mais cette voix, et ces beaux yeux,
Font Cupidon trop dangereux;
Et je suis triste quand je crie,
Bannissons la Melancholie.

Tradition represents him as willing to descend from the dignity of the poet and statesman to the low delights of mean company. His Chloe probably was sometimes ideal; but the woman with whom he cohabited was a despicable drab* of the lowest species. One of his wenches, perhaps Chloe, while he was absent from his house, stole his plate, and ran away; as was related by a woman who had been his servant. Of this propensity to sordid converse I have seen an account so seriously ridiculous, that it seems to deserve insertion.†

"I have been assured that Prior, after having spent the evening with Oxford, Bolingbroke, Pope, and Swift, would go and smoke a pipe and drink a bottle of ale, with a common soldier and his wife, in Long Acre, before he went to bed; not from any remains of the lowness of his original, as one said, but, I suppose, that his faculties,

—— Strain'd to the height,
In that celestial colloquy sublime,
Dazzled and spent, sunk down, and sought repair."

Poor Prior, why was he so *strained*, and by such *want of repair*, after a conversation with men, not, in the opinion of the world, much wiser than himself? But such are the conceits of speculatists, who *strain* their *faculties* to find in a mine what lies upon the surface.

* Spence; and see Gent. Mag. vol. lvii. p. 1039.
† Richardsoniana.

His opinions, so far as the means of judging e left us, seem to have been right; but his life as, it seems, irregular, negligent, and sensual.

Prior has written with great variety; and s variety has made him popular. He has tried l styles, from the grotesque to the solemn, and as not so failed in any as to incur derision or isgrace.

His works may be distinctly considered, as mprising Tales, Love-verses, Occasional oems, "Alma" and "Solomon."

His Tales have obtained general approbation, eing written with great familiarity and great rightliness; the language is easy, but seldom ross, and the numbers smooth, without appearnce of care. Of these Tales there are only ur. "The Ladle;" which is introduced by a reface, neither necessary nor pleasing, neither ave nor merry. "Paulo Purganti;" which as likewise a preface, but of more value than e Tale. "Hans Carvel," not over decent; nd "Protogenes and Apelles," an old story, ingled, by an affectation not disagreeable, with odern images. "The Young Gentleman in ove" has hardly a just claim to the title of a ale. I know not whether he be the original uthor of any Tale which he has given us. The dventure of "Hans Carvel" has passed through any successions of merry wits; for it is to be und in Ariosto's "Satires," and is perhaps t older. But the merit of such stories is the t of telling them.

In his amorous effusions he is less happy; for ey are not dictated by nature or by passion, nd have neither gallantry nor tenderness. hey have the coldness of Cowley, without his it, the dull exercises of a skilful versifier, revolved at all adventures to write something out Chloe, and trying to be amorous by dint study. His fictions therefore are mythologil. Venus, after the example of the Greek pigram, asks when she was seen *naked and thing*. Then Cupid is *mistaken;* then Cupid *disarmed;* then he loses his darts to Ganyede; then Jupiter sends him a summons by ercury. Then Chloe goes a hunting, with an *ory quiver graceful at her side;* Diana mistakes r for one of her nymphs, and Cupid laughs at e blunder. All this is surely despicable; and en when he tries to act the lover, without the lp of gods or goddesses, his thoughts are unfecting or remote. He talks not "like a man this world."

The greatest of all his amorous essays is Henry and Emma;" a dull and tedious diague, which excites neither esteem for the man, r tenderness for the woman. The example Emma, who resolves to follow an outlawed urderer wherever fear and guilt shall drive m, deserves no imitation; and the experiment by which Henry tries the lady's constancy, is such as must end either in infamy to her, or in disappointment to himself.

His Occasional Poems necessarily lost part of their value, as their occasions, being less remembered, raised less emotion. Some of them, however, are preserved by their inherent excellence. The burlesque of Boileau's Ode on Namur has, in some parts, such airiness and levity as will always procure it readers, even among those who cannot compare it with the original. The epistle to Boileau is not so happy. The poems to the King are now perused only by young students, who read merely that they may learn to write; and of the "Carmen Seculare," I cannot but suspect that I might praise or censure it by caprice, without danger of detection; for who can be supposed to have laboured through it? Yet the time has been when this neglected work was so popular, that it was translated into Latin by no common master.

His poem on the battle of Ramillies is necessarily tedious by the form of the stanza: an uniform mass of ten lines thirty-five times repeated, inconsequential and slightly connected, must weary both the ear and the understanding. His imitation of Spenser, which consists principally in *I ween* and *I weet*, without exclusion of later modes of speech, makes his poem neither ancient nor modern. His mention of Mars and Bellona, and his comparison of Marlborough to the eagle that bears the thunder of Jupiter, are all puerile and unaffecting; and yet more despicable is the long tale told by Lewis in his despair, of Brute and Troynovante, and the teeth of Cadmus, with his similies of the raven and eagle, and wolf and lion. By the help of such easy fictions, and vulgar topics, without acquaintance with life, and without knowledge of art or nature, a poem of any length, cold and lifeless like this, may be easily written on any subject.

In his Epilogues to *Phædra* and to *Lucius* he is very happily facetious; but in the prologue before the Queen, the pedant has found his way, with Minerva, Perseus, and Andromeda.

His Epigrams and lighter pieces are, like those of others, sometimes elegant, sometimes trifling, and sometimes dull; amongst the best are the "Camelion," and the epitaph on *John* and *Joan*.

Scarcely any one of our poets has written so much and translated so little: the version of Callimachus is sufficiently licentious; the paraphrase on St. Paul's Exhortation to Charity is eminently beautiful.

"Alma" is written in professed imitation of "Hudibras," and has at least one accidental resemblance: "Hudibras" wants a plan, because it is left imperfect; "Alma" is imperfect, because it seems never to have had a plan. Prior

appears not to have proposed to himself any drift or design, but to have written the casual dictates of the present moment.

What Horace said, when he imitated Lucilius, might be said of Butler by Prior; his numbers were not smooth or neat. Prior excelled him in versification: but he was, like Horace, *inventore minor:* he had not Butler's exuberance of matter and variety of illustration. The spangles of wit which he could afford he knew how to polish; but he wanted the bullion of his master. Butler pours out a negligent profusion, certain of the weight, but careless of the stamp. Prior has comparatively little, but with that little he makes a fine show. "Alma" has many admirers, and was the only piece among Prior's works, of which Pope said that he should wish to be the author.

"Solomon" is the work to which he intrusted the protection of his name, and which he expected succeeding ages to regard with veneration. His affection was natural; it had undoubtedly been written with great labour; and who is willing to think that he has been labouring in vain? He had infused into it much knowledge and much thought; had often polished it to elegance, often dignified it with splendour, and sometimes heightened it to sublimity: he perceived in it many excellences, and did not discover that it wanted that without which all others are of small avail, the power of engaging attention and alluring curiosity.

Tediousness is the most fatal of all faults: negligences or errors are single and local, but tediousness pervades the whole; other faults are censured and forgotten, but the power of tediousness propagates itself. He that is weary the first hour, is more weary the second; as bodies forced into motion contrary to their tendency pass more and more slowly through every successive interval of space.

Unhappily this pernicious failure is that which an author is least able to discover. We are seldom tiresome to ourselves; and the act of composition fills and delights the mind with change of language and succession of images; every couplet when produced is new, and novelty is the great source of pleasure. Perhaps no man ever thought a line superfluous when he first wrote it, or contracted his work till his ebullitions of invention had subsided. And even if he should control his desire of immediate renown, and keep his work nine years unpublished, he will be still the author, and still in danger of deceiving himself: and if he consults his friends, he will probably find men who have more kindness than judgment, or more fear to offend than desire to instruct.

The tediousness of this poem proceeds not from the uniformity of the subject, for it is sufficiently diversified, but from the continued tenor of the narration; in which Solomon relates the successive vicissitudes of his own mind, wh out the intervention of any other speaker, or mention of any other agent, unless it be Ab the reader is only to learn what he thought, a to be told that he thought wrong. The eve of every experiment is foreseen, and therefo the process is not much regarded.

Yet the work is far from deserving to be neglected. He that shall peruse it will be able mark many passages to which he may recur instruction or delight; many from which poet may learn to write, and the philosopher reason.

If Prior's poetry be generally considered, praise will be that of correctness and industry rather than of compass, of comprehension, activity of fancy. He never made any effort invention: his greater pieces are only tissues common thoughts; and his smaller, which co sist of light images or single conceits, are always his own. I have traced him among French epigrammatists, and have been inform that he poached for prey among obscure autho The "Thief and Cordelier" is, I suppose, ge erally considered as an original production; w how much justice this epigram may tell, whi was written by Georgius Sabinus, a poet n little known or read, though once the friend Luther and Melancthon:

De Sacerdote Furem consolante.

Quidam sacrificus furem comitatus euntem
Huc ubi dat sontes carnificina neci,
Ne sis mœstus, ait; summi conviva Tonantis
Jam cum cœlitibus (si modo credis) eris.

Ille gemens, si vera mihi solatia præbes,
Hospes apud superos sis meus oro, refert.
Sacrificus contra; mihi non convivia fas est
Ducere, jejunans hac edo luce nihil.

What he has valuable he owes to his diligen and his judgment. His diligence has jus placed him amongst the most correct of the En lish poets; and he was one of the first that re lutely endeavoured at correctness. He nev sacrifices accuracy to haste, nor indulges hims in contemptuous negligence, or impatient id ness: he has no careless lines, or entangled se timents: his words are nicely selected, and thoughts fully expanded. If this part of character suffers an abatement, it must be fro the disproportion of his rhymes, which have always sufficient consonance, and from the mission of broken lines into his "Solomon but perhaps he thought, like Cowley, that he isticks ought to be admitted into heroic poetry

He had apparently such rectitude of judgme as secured him from every thing that approac ed to the ridiculous or absurd; but as laws ope ate in civil agency not to the excitement of vi tue, but the repression of wickedness, so jud ment in the operations of intellect can hind faults, but not produce excellence. Prior

ver low, nor very often sublime. It is said by onginus of Euripides, that he forces himself metimes into grandeur by violence of effort, as e lion kindles his fury by the lashes of his own il. Whatever Prior obtains above mediocrity ems the effort of struggle and of toil. He has any vigorous but few happy lines; he has ery thing by purchase, and nothing by gift; had no nightly visitations of the muse, no in- sions of sentiment or felicities of fancy.

His diction, however, is more his own than of y among the successors of Dryden; he bor- ws no lucky turns, or commodious modes of nguage, from his predecessors. His phrases e original, but they are sometimes harsh: as inherited no elegances, none has he bequeath- . His expression has every mark of laborious dy; the line seldom seems to have been form- at once; the words did not come till they re called, and were then put by constraint o their places, where they do their duty, but it sullenly. In his greater compositions there y be found more rigid stateliness than grace- dignity.

Of versification he was not negligent; what received from Dryden he did not lose; nei- er did he increase the difficulty of writing by necessary severity, but uses triplets and Alex- drines without scruple. In his preface to Solomon" he proposes some improvements, extending the sense from one couplet to an- ier, with variety of pauses. This he has at- npted, but without success; his interrupted es are unpleasing, and his sense as less dis- ct is less striking.

He has altered the stanza of Spenser, as a use is altered by building another in its place a different form. With how little resem- nce he has formed his new stanza to that of master, these specimens will show:

SPENSER.

She flying fast from Heaven's hated face,
And from the world that her discovered wide,
Fled to the wasteful wilderness apace,
From living eyes her open shame to hide,
And lurk'd in rocks and caves long unespy'd.
But that fair crew of knights, and Una fair,
Did in that castle afterwards abide,
To rest themselves, and weary powers repair,
Where store they found of all, that dainty was and rare.

PRIOR.

To the close rock the frighted raven flies
Soon as the rising eagle cuts the air:
The shaggy wolf unseen and trembling lies,
When the hoarse roar proclaims the lion near.
Ill-starr'd did we our forts and lines forsake,
To dare our British foes to open fight:
Our conquest we by stratagem should make:
Our triumph had been founded in our flight.
'Tis ours, by craft and by surprise to gain:
'Tis theirs to meet in arms, and battle in the plain.

By this new structure of his lines he has avoided difficulties; nor am I sure that he has lost any of the power of pleasing: but he no longer imitates Spenser.

Some of his poems are written without regularity of measure; for, when he commenced poet, he had not recovered from our Pindaric infatuation; but he probably lived to be convinced, that the essence of verse is order and consonance.

His numbers are such as mere diligence may attain; they seldom offend the ear, and seldom soothe it; they commonly want airiness, lightness, and facility: what is smooth is not soft. His verses always roll, but they seldom flow.

A survey of the life and writings of Prior may exemplify a sentence which he doubtless understood well, when he read Horace at his uncle's; "the vessel long retains the scent which it first receives." In his private relaxation he revived the tavern, and in his amorous pedantry he exhibited the college. But on higher occasions, and nobler subjects, when habit was overpowered by the necessity of reflection, he wanted not wisdom as a statesman, or elegance as a poet.

CONGREVE.

ILLIAM CONGREVE descended from a family Staffordshire, of so great antiquity that it ims a place among the few that extend their e beyond the Norman Conquest; and was e son of William Congreve, second son of chard Congreve, of Congreve and Stratton. He visited, once at least, the residence of his ancestors; and, I believe, more places than one are still shown, in groves and gardens, where he is related to have written his "Old Bachelor."

Neither the time nor place of his birth is certainly known: if the inscription upon his monu-

ment be true, he was born in 1672. For the place, it was said by himself, that he owed his nativity to England, and by every body else, that he was born in Ireland. Southern mentioned him, with sharp censure, as a man that meanly disowned his native country. The biographers assign his nativity to Bardsa, near Leeds, in Yorkshire, from the account given by himself, as they suppose, to Jacob.

To doubt whether a man of eminence has told the truth about his own birth, is, in appearance, to be very deficient in candour; yet, nobody can live long without knowing that falsehoods of convenience or vanity, falsehoods from which no evil immediately visible ensues, except the general degradation of human testimony, are very lightly uttered; and, once uttered, are sullenly supported. Boileau, who desired to be thought a rigorous and steady moralist, having told a petty lie to Lewis the Fourteenth, continued it afterwards by false dates; thinking himself obliged *in honour*, says his admirer, to maintain what, when he said it, was so well received.

Wherever Congreve was born, he was educated first at Kilkenny, and afterwards at Dublin, his father having some military employment that stationed him in Ireland; but, after having passed through the usual preparatory studies, as may be reasonably supposed, with great celerity and success, his father thought it proper to assign him a profession by which something might be gotten; and, about the time of the Revolution, sent him, at the age of sixteen, to study law in the Middle Temple, where he lived for several years, but with very little attention to statutes or reports.

His disposition to become an author appeared very early, as he very early felt that force of imagination, and possessed that copiousness of sentiment, by which intellectual pleasure can be given. His first performance was a novel, called "Incognita, or Love and Duty reconciled:" it is praised by the biographers, who quote some part of the preface, that is, indeed, for such a time of life, uncommonly judicious. I would rather praise it than read it.

His first dramatic labour was "The Old Bachelor;" of which he says, in his defence against Collier, "that comedy was written, as several know, some years before it was acted. When I wrote it, I had little thoughts of the stage; but did it to amuse myself in a slow recovery from a fit of sickness. Afterwards, through my indiscretion, it was seen, and, in some little time more, it was acted; and I, through the remainder of my indiscretion, suffered myself to be drawn into the prosecution of a difficult and thankless study, and to be involved in a perpetual war with knaves and fools."

There seems to be a strange affectation in authors of appearing to have done every thing by chance. "The Old Bachelor" was writte for amusement in the languor of convalescenc Yet it is apparently composed with great ela orateness of dialogue, and incessant ambition wit. The age of the writer considered, it indeed, a very wonderful performance; fo whenever written, it was acted (1693) when was not more than twenty one years old; a was then recommended by Mr. Dryden, M Southern, and Mr. Mainwaring. Dryden sa that he never had seen such a first play; b they found it deficient in some things requis to the success of its exhibition, and, by th greater experience, fitted it for the stage. Sout ern, used to relate of one comedy, probably this, that, when Congreve read it to the pla ers, he pronounced it so wretchedly, that th had almost rejected it; but they were afterwar so well persuaded of its excellence, that, half a year before it was acted, the manager lowed its Author the privilege of the house.

Few plays have ever been so beneficial to t writer; for it procured him the patronage Halifax, who immediately made him one the commissioners for licensing coaches, a soon after gave him a place in the Pipe-offi and another in the Customs of six hundr pounds a year. Congreve's conversation mu surely have been at least equally pleasing wi his writings.

Such a comedy, written at such an age, quires some consideration. As the lighter sp cies of dramatic poetry professes the imitati of common life, of real manners, and daily cidents, it apparently pre-supposes a famili knowledge of many characters, and exact o servation of the passing world; the difficul therefore is, to conceive how this knowledge c be obtained by a boy.

But if "The Old Bachelor" be more nea examined, it will be found to be one of th comedies which may be made by a mind vigo ous and acute, and furnished with comic cha acters by the perusal of other poets, witho much actual commerce with mankind. T dialogue is one constant reciprocation of concei or clash of wit, in which nothing flows nec sarily from the occasion, or is dictated by n ture. The characters, both of men and wome are either fictitious and artificial, as those Heartwell and the ladies; or easy and comme as Wittol, a tame idiot, Bluff, a swaggeri coward, and Fondlewife, a jealous purita and the catastrophe arises from a mistake n very probably produced, by marrying a wom in a mask.

Yet this gay comedy, when all these dedu tions are made, will still remain the work very powerful and fertile faculties; the dialog is quick and sparkling, the incidents such seize the attention, and the wit so exuberan that it "o'er-informs its tenement.

Next year he gave another specimen of his
lities in "The Double Dealer," which was
: received with equal kindness. He writes
his patron, the Lord Halifax, a dedication,
which he endeavours to reconcile the reader
that which found few friends among the
lience. These apologies are always useless:
e gustibus non est disputandum;" men may
convinced, but they cannot be pleased against
ir will. But, though taste is obstinate, it is
y variable; and time often prevails when
uments have failed.

Queen Mary conferred upon both those plays
honour of her presence; and when she
d, soon after, Congreve testified his grati-
le by a despicable effusion of elegiac pastoral;
composition in which all is unnatural, and
nothing is new.

In another year (1695) his prolific pen pro-
ced "Love for Love," a comedy of nearer al-
ice to life, and exhibiting more real manners
n either of the former. The character of
resight was then common. Dryden calcu-
ed nativities; both Cromwell and King Wil-
n had their lucky days; and Shaftesbury
iself, though he had no religion, was said to
ard predictions. The Sailor is not accounted
y natural, but he is very pleasant.

With this play was opened the New Theatre,
der the direction of Betterton, the tragedian;
ere he exhibited, two years afterwards,
97) "The Mourning Bride," a tragedy, so
itten as to show him sufficiently qualified for
ner kind of dramatic poetry.

In this play, of which, when he afterwards
ised it, he reduced the versification to greater
ularity, there is more bustle than sentiment,
plot is busy and intricate, and the events
e hold on the attention; but except a very
y passages, we are rather amused with noise,
l perplexed with stratagem, than entertained
th any true delineation of natural characters.
is, however, was received with more benevo-
ce than any other of his works, and still con-
ues to be acted and applauded.

But whatever objections may be made either
his comic or tragic excellence, they are lost a
ce in the blaze of admiration, when it is re-
mbered that he had produced these four plays
ore he had passed his twenty-fifth year; be-
e other men, even such as are some time to
ne in eminence, have passed their probation
literature, or presume to hope for any other
lce than such as is bestowed on diligence and
uiry. Among all the efforts of early genius,
ich literary history records, I doubt whether
y one can be produced that more surpasses the
mmon limits of nature than the plays of Con-
ve.

About this time began the long continued
troversy between Collier and the poets. In
reign of Charles the First, the puritans had raised a violent clamour against the drama, which they considered as an entertainment not lawful to Christians, an opinion held by them in common with the church of Rome; and Prynne published "Histrio-Mastix," a huge volume, in which stage-plays were censured. The outrages and crimes of the puritans brought afterwards their whole system of doctrine into disrepute, and from the Restoration the poets and players were left at quiet; for to have molested them would have had the appearance of tendency to puritanical malignity.

This danger, however, was worn away by time; and Collier, a fierce and implacable nonjuror, knew that an attack upon the theatre would never make him suspected for a puritan; he therefore (1698) published "A short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage," I believe with no other motive than religious zeal and honest indignation. He was formed for a controvertist; with sufficient learning; with diction vehement and pointed, though often vulgar and incorrect; with unconquerable pertinacity; with wit in the highest degree keen and sarcastic; and with all those powers exalted and invigorated by just confidence in his cause.

Thus qualified, and thus incited, he walked out to battle, and assailed at once most of the living writers, from Dryden to D'Urfey. His onset was violent; those passages, which, while they stood single had passed with little notice, when they were accumulated and exposed together, excited horror; the wise and the pious caught the alarm; and the nation wondered why it had so long suffered irreligion and licentiousness to be openly taught at the public charge.

Nothing now remained for the poets but to resist or fly. Dryden's conscience, or his prudence, angry as he was, withheld him from the conflict: Congreve and Vanbrugh attempted answers. Congreve, a very young man, elated with success, and impatient of censure, assumed an air of confidence and security. His chief artifice of controversy is to retort upon his adversary his own words; he is very angry, and, hoping to conquer Collier with his own weapons, allows himself in the use of every term of contumely and contempt; but he has the sword without the arm of Scanderbeg; he has his antagonist's coarseness, but not his strength. Collier replied; for contest was his delight; he was not to be frighted from his purpose or his prey.

The cause of Congreve was not tenable; whatever glosses he might use for the defence or palliation of single passages, the general tenor and tendency of his plays must always be condemned. It is acknowledged, with universal conviction, that the perusal of his works will make no man better; and that their ultimate effect is to represent pleasure in alliance with

vice, and to relax those obligations by which life ought to be regulated.

The stage found other advocates, and the dispute was protracted through ten years; but at last comedy grew more modest, and Collier lived to see the reward of his labour in the reformation of the theatre.

Of the powers by which this important victory was achieved, a quotation from "Love for Love," and the remark upon it, may afford a specimen:

Sir Samps. Sampson's a very good name; for your Sampsons were very strong dogs from the beginning.

Angel. Have a care—If you remember, the strongest Sampson of your name pulled an old house over his head at last.

"Here you have the Sacred History burlesqued, and Sampson once more brought into the house of Dagon, to make sport for the Philistines!"

Congreve's last play was "The Way of the World;" which, though as he hints in his dedication it was written with great labour and much thought, was received with so little favour, that, being in a high degree offended and disgusted, he resolved to commit his quiet and his fame no more to the caprices of an audience.

From this time his life ceased to the public; he lived for himself and for his friends, and among his friends was able to name every man of his time whom wit and elegance had raised to reputation: it may be, therefore, reasonably supposed that his manners were polite and his conversation pleasing.

He seems not to have taken much pleasure in writing, as he contributed nothing to the "Spectator," and only one paper to the "Tatler," though published by men with whom he might be supposed willing to associate; and though he lived many years after the publication of his Miscellaneous Poems, yet he added nothing to them, but lived on in literary indolence; engaged in no controversy, contending with no rival, neither soliciting flattery by public commendations, nor provoking enmity by malignant criticism, but passing his time among the great and splendid, in the placid enjoyment of his fame and fortune.

Having owed his fortune to Halifax, he continued always of his patron's party, but, as it seems, without violence or acrimony: and his firmness was naturally esteemed, as his abilities were reverenced. His security, therefore, was never violated; and when, upon the extrusion of the whigs, some intercession was used lest Congreve should be displaced, the Earl of Oxford made this answer:

"Non obtusa adeo gestamus pectora Pœni,
Nec tam aversus equos Tyria sol jungit ab urbe."

He that was thus honoured by the adverse party might naturally expect to be advanced when his friends returned to power, and he was accordingly made secretary for the Island of Jamaica; a place, I suppose, without trust or care, but which, with his post in the Custom-house, is said to have afforded him twelve hundred pounds a year.

His honours were yet far greater than his profits. Every writer mentioned him with respect; and, among other testimonies to his merit, Steele made him the patron of his Miscellany, and Pope inscribed to him his translation of the "Iliad."

But he treated the Muses with ingratitude for, having long conversed familiarly with the great, he wished to be considered rather as a man of fashion than of wit; and, when he received a visit from Voltaire, disgusted him by the despicable foppery of desiring to be considered not as an author but a gentleman; to which the Frenchman replied, "that if he had been only a gentleman he should not have come to visit him."

In his retirement he may be supposed to have applied himself to books; for he discovers more literature than the poets have commonly attained. But his studies were in his latter days obstructed by cataracts in his eyes, which at last terminated in blindness. This melancholy state was aggravated by the gout, for which he sought relief by a journey to Bath; but, being overturned in his chariot, complained from that time of a pain in his side, and died, at his house in Surrey-street, in the Strand, January 29, 1728-9. Having lain in state in the Jerusalem Chamber, he was buried in Westminster Abbey, where a monument is erected to his memory by Henrietta, Dutchess of Marlborough, to whom, for reasons either not known or not mentioned, he bequeathed a legacy, of about ten thousand pounds, the accumulation of attentive parsimony; which, though to him superfluous and useless, might have given great assistance to the ancient family from which he descended, at that time, by the imprudence of his relation, reduced to difficulties and distress.

Congreve has merit of the highest kind; he is an original writer, who borrowed neither the models of his plot nor the manner of his dialogue. Of his plays I cannot speak distinctly, for since I inspected them many years have passed; but what remains upon my memory is, that his characters are commonly fictitious and artificial, with very little of nature and not much of life. He formed a peculiar idea of comic excellence, which he supposed to consist in gay remarks and unexpected answers; but that which he endeavoured he seldom failed of performing. His scenes exhibit not much humour, imagery, or passion; his personages are a kind of intellectual gladiators; every sen-

nce is to ward or strike; the contest of smart-
ss is never intermitted; his wit is a meteor
aying to and fro with alternate coruscations.
is comedies have, therefore, in some degree,
e operation of tragedies; they surprise rather
an divert. and raise admiration oftener than
erriment. But they are the works of a mind
plete with images and quick in combination.

Of his miscellaneous poetry I cannot say any
ing very favourable. The powers of Congreve
em to desert him when he leaves the stage, as
ntæus was no longer strong than when he
uld touch the ground. It cannot be observed
thout wonder, that a mind so vigorous and
rtile in dramatic compositions, should on any
ner occasion discover nothing but impotence
d poverty. He has in these little pieces
ither elevation of fancy, selection of language,
r skill in versification; yet, if I were required
select from the whole mass of English poetry
e most poetical paragraph, I know not what
could prefer to an exclamation in "The
ourning Bride:

ALMERIA.

It was a fancied noise; for all is hush'd.

LEONORA.

It bore the accent of a human voice.

ALMERIA.

It was thy fear, or else some transient wind
Whistling through hollows of this vaulted aisle:
We'll listen—

LEONORA.

Hark!

ALMERIA.

No, all is hush'd and still as death.—'Tis dreadful!
w reverend is the face of this tall pile,
hose ancient pillars rear their marble heads,
bear aloft its arch'd and pond'rous roof,
its own weight made steadfast and immoveable,
king tranquillity! it strikes an awe
d terror on my aching sight; the tombs
d monumental caves of death look cold,
d shoot a chillness to my trembling heart.
e me thy hand, and let me hear thy voice,
y, quickly speak to me, and let me hear
voice—my own affrights me with its echoes.

He who reads these lines enjoys for a moment
powers of a poet; he feels what he remem-
s to have felt before; but he feels it with
at increase of sensibility; he recognizes a
iliar image, but meets it again amplified and
anded, embellished with beauty and enlarged
h majesty.

Yet could the Author, who appears here to
e enjoyed the confidence of Nature, lament
death of Queen Mary in lines like these:

he rocks are cleft, and new-descending rills
row the brows of all th' impending hills.
water-gods to flood their rivulets turn,
each, with streaming eyes, supplies his wanting
urn.
fauns forsake the woods, the nymphs the grove,
round the plain in sad distraction rove:
In prickly brakes their tender limbs they tear,
And leave on thorns their locks of golden hair.
With their sharp nails, themselves the satyrs wound,
And tug their shaggy beards, and bite with grief the
ground.
Lo Pan himself, beneath a blasted oak,
Dejected lies, his pipe in pieces broke.
See Pales weeping too, in wild despair,
And to the piercing winds her bosom bare.
And see you fading myrtle, where appears
The Queen of Love, all bath'd in flowing tears!
See how she wrings her hands, and beats her breast,
And tears her useless girdle from her waist?
Hear the sad murmurs of her sighing doves
For grief they sigh, forgetful of their loves.

And, many years after, he gave no proof that time had improved his wisdom or his wit; for, on the death of the Marquis of Blandford, this was his song:

And now the winds, which had so long been still,
Began the swelling air with sighs to fill:
The water-nymphs, who motionless remain'd,
Like images of ice, while she complain'd,
Now loos'd their streams; as when descending rains
Roll the steep torrents headlong o'er the plains.
The prone creation who so long had gazed,
Charm'd with her cries, and at her griefs amazed,
Began to roar and howl with horrid yell,
Dismal to hear and terrible to tell!
Nothing but groans and sighs were heard around,
And echo multiplied each mournful sound.

In both these funeral poems, when he has *yelled* out many *syllables* of senseless *dolour*, he dismisses his reader with senseless consolation: from the grave of Pastora rises a light that forms a star; and where Amaryllis wept for Amyntas, from every tear sprung up a violet.

But William is his hero, and of William he will sing:

The hovering winds on downy wings shall wait
around,
And catch and waft to foreign lands, the flying
sound.

It cannot but be proper to show what they shall have to catch and carry:

'Twas now, when flowery lawns the prospect
made,
And flowing brooks beneath a forest-shade,
A lowing heifer, loveliest of the herd,
Stood feeding by; while two fierce bulls prepared
Their armed heads for fight, by fate of war to prove
The victor worthy of the fair one's love;
Unthought presage of what met next my view
For soon the shady scene withdrew.
And now, for woods, and fields, and springing
flowers,
Behold a town arise, bulwark'd with walls and lof-
ty towers;
Two rival armies all the plain o'erspread,
Each in battalia ranged, and shining arms array'd;
With eager eyes beholding both from far
Namur, the prize and mistress of the war.

"The Birth of the Muse" is a miserable fiction. One good line it has, which was bor-

rowed from Dryden. The concluding verses are these:

This said, no more remain'd. Th' ethereal host
Again impatient crowd the crystal coast.
The father now, within his spacious hands,
Encompass'd all the mingled mass of seas and lands;
And, having heaved aloft the ponderous sphere,
He launch'd the world, to float in ambient air.

Of his irregular poems, that to Mrs. Arabella Hunt seems to be the best; his "Ode for St. Cecilia's Day," however, has some lines which Pope had in his mind when he wrote his own.

His imitations of Horace are feebly paraphrastical, and the additions which he makes are of little value. He sometimes retains what were more properly omitted, as when he talks of *vervain* and *gums* to propitiate Venus.

Of his translations, the satire of Juvenal was written very early, and may therefore be forgiven, though it have not the massiness and vigour of the original. In all his versions strength and sprightliness are wanting; his Hymn to Venus, from Homer, is perhaps the best. His lines are weakened with expletives, and his rhymes are frequently imperfect.

His petty poems are seldom worth the cost of criticism; sometimes the thoughts are false, and sometimes common. In his verses on Lady Gethin, the latter part is in imitation of Dr[yden]'s Ode on Mrs. Killigrew; and Doris, th[at] has been so lavishly flattered by Steele, h[as] indeed some lively stanzas, but the expressi[on] might be mended; and the most striking p[art] of the character had been already shown [in] "Love for Love." His "Art of Pleasin[g]" is founded on a vulgar, but perhaps impra[c]cable, principle, and the staleness of the sense not concealed by any novelty of illustration elegance of diction.

This tissue of poetry, from which he seems have hoped a lasting name, is totally neglect[ed] and known only as it appended to his plays.

While comedy or while tragedy is regarde[d] his plays are likely to be read; but, excep[t] what relates to the stage, I know not that has ever written a stanza that is sung or couplet that is quoted. The general charact[er] of his Miscellanies is, that they show little w[it] and little virtue.

Yet to him it must be confessed that we a[re] indebted for the correction of a national err[or] and for the cure of our Pindaric madness. H[e] first taught the English writers that Pinda[ric] odes were regular; and, though certainly [he] had not the fire requisite for the higher spec[ies] of lyric poetry, he has shown us, that enthusias[m] has its rules, and that in mere confusion the[re] is neither grace nor greatness.

BLACKMORE.

Sir Richard Blackmore is one of those men whose writings have attracted much notice, but of whose life and manners very little has been communicated, and whose lot it has been to be much oftener mentioned by enemies than by friends.

He was the son of Robert Blackmore, of Corsham, in Wiltshire, styled by Wood, Gentleman, and supposed to have been an attorney. Having been for some time educated in a country school, he was sent, at thirteen, to Westminster; and, in 1668, was entered at Edmund Hall, in Oxford, where he took the degree of M. A. June 3, 1676, and resided thirteen years; a much longer time than it is usual to spend at the university; and which he seems to have passed with very little attention to the business of the place; for, in his poems, the ancient names of nations or places, which he often produces, are pronounced by chance. He afterwards travelled: at Padua he was made doctor of physic; and, after having wandered about a y[ear] and a half on the Continent, returned home.

In some part of his life, it is not know[n] when, his indigence compelled him to teach school, an humiliation with which, though certainly lasted but a little while, his enem[ies] did not forget to reproach him, when he becam[e] conspicuous enough to excite malevolence; a[nd] let it be remembered for his honour, that [to] have been once a school-master, is the on[ly] reproach which all the perspicacity of malig[n] animated by wit, has ever fixed upon his priv[ate] life.

When he first engaged in the study of physi[c] he inquired, as he says, of Dr. Sydenham what authors he should read, and was direct[ed]

* "Except!" Dr. Warton exclaims, "Is not th[is] a high sort of poetry!" He mentions, likewise, th[at] Congreve's Opera, or Oratorio, of "Semele" w[as] set to music by Handel, I believe in 1743.—C.

by Sydenham to "Don Quixote;" "which," said he, "is a very good book; I read it still." The perverseness of mankind makes it often mischievous in men of eminence to give way to merriment; the idle and the illiterate will long shelter themselves under this foolish apophthegm.

Whether he rested satisfied with this direction, or sought for better, he commenced physician, and obtained high eminence and extensive practice. He became fellow of the College of Physicians, April 12, 1687, being one of the thirty which, by the new charter of King James, were added to the former fellows. His residence was in Cheapside,* and his friends were chiefly in the city. In the early part of Blackmore's time, a citizen was a term of reproach; and his place of abode was another topic to which his adversaries had recourse, in the penury of scandal.

Blackmore, therefore, was made a poet not by necessity but inclination, and wrote not for a livelihood but for fame, or, if he may tell his own motives, for a nobler purpose, to engage poetry in the cause of virtue.

I believe it is peculiar to him, that his first public work was an heroic poem. He was not known as a maker of verses till he published (in 1695) "Prince Arthur," in ten books, written, as he relates, "by such catches and starts, and in such occasional uncertain hours, as his profession afforded, and for the greatest part in coffee-houses, or in passing up and down the streets." For the latter part of this apology he was accused of writing "to the rumbling of his chariot-wheels." He had read, he says, "but little poetry throughout his whole life; and for fifteen years before had not written a hundred verses, except one copy of Latin verses in praise of a friend's book."

He thinks, and with some reason, that from such a performance perfection cannot be expected; but he finds another reason for the severity of his censures, which he expresses in language such as Cheapside easily furnished. "I am not free of the poet's company, having never kissed the governor's hands: mine is therefore not so much as a permission-poem, but a downright interloper. Those gentlemen who carry on their poetical trade in a joint stock would certainly do what they could to sink and ruin an unlicensed adventurer, notwithstanding I disturbed none of their factories, nor imported any goods they have ever dealt in." He had lived in the city till he had learnt its note.

That "Prince Arthur" found many readers is certain; for in two years it had three editions; a very uncommon instance of favourable reception, at a time when literary curiosity was yet confined to particular classes of the nation.

* At Sadlers' Hall.

Such success naturally raised animosity; and Dennis attacked it by a formal criticism, more tedious and disgusting than the work which he condemns. To this censure may be opposed the approbation of Locke and the admiration of Molineaux, which are found in their printed letters. Molineaux is particularly delighted with the song of *Mopas*, which is therefore subjoined to this narrative.

It is remarked by Pope, that what "raises the hero often sinks the man." Of Blackmore it may be said, that as the poet sinks, the man rises; the animadversions of Dennis, insolent and contemptuous as they were, raised in him no implacable resentment: he and his critic were afterwards friends; and in one of his latter works he praises Dennis as "equal to Boileau in poetry, and superior to him in critical abilities."

He seems to have been more delighted with praise than pained by censure, and, instead of slackening, quickened his career. Having in two years produced ten books of "Prince Arthur," in two years more (1697) he sent into the world "King Arthur" in twelve. The provocation was now doubled, and the resentment of wits and critics may be supposed to have increased in proportion. He found, however, advantages more than equivalent to all their outrages; he was this year made one of the physicians in ordinary to King William, and advanced by him to the honour of knighthood, with the present of a gold chain and a medal.

The malignity of the wits attributed his knighthood to his new poem; but King William was not very studious of poetry; and Blackmore perhaps had other merit, for he says, in his dedication to "Alfred," that "he had a greater part in the succession of the house of Hanover than ever he had boasted."

What Blackmore could contribute to the succession, or what he imagined himself to have contributed, cannot now be known. That he had been of considerable use, I doubt not but he believed, for I hold him to have been very honest; but he might easily make a false estimate of his own importance: those whom their virtue restrains from deceiving others are often disposed by their vanity to deceive themselves. Whether he promoted the succession or not, he at least approved it, and adhered invariably to his principles and party through his whole life.

His ardour of poetry still continued; and not long after (1700) he published "A Paraphrase on the Book of Job," and other parts of the Scripture. This performance Dryden, who pursued him with great malignity, lived long enough to ridicule in a prologue.

The wits easily confederated against him, as Dryden, whose favour they almost all courted, was his professed adversary. He had besides given them reason for resentment; as, in his

preface to Prince Arthur, he had said of the dramatic writers almost all that was alleged afterwards by Collier; but Blackmore's censure was cold and general, Collier's was personal and ardent; Blackmore taught his reader to dislike what Collier incited him to abhor.

In his preface to "King Arthur" he endeavoured to gain at least one friend, and propitiated Congreve by higher praise of his "Mourning Bride" than it has obtained from any other critic.

The same year he published "A Satire on Wit;" a proclamation of defiance, which united the poets almost all against him, and which brought upon him lampoons and ridicule from every side. This he doubtless foresaw, and evidently despised; nor should his dignity of mind be without its praise, had he not paid the homage to greatness which he denied to genius, and degraded himself by conferring that authority over the national taste which he takes from the poets upon men of high rank and wide influence, but of less wit and not greater virtue.

Here is again discovered the inhabitant of Cheapside, whose head cannot keep his poetry unmingled with trade. To hinder that intellectual bankruptcy which he affects to fear, he will erect a *Bank for Wit*.

In this poem he justly censured Dryden's impurities, but praised his powers: though in a subsequent edition he retained the satire and omitted the praise. What was his reason, I know not; Dryden was then no longer in his way.

His head still teemed with heroic poetry; and (1705) he published "Eliza," in ten books. I am afraid that the world was now weary of contending about Blackmore's heroes: for I do not remember that by any author, serious or comical, I have found "Eliza" either praised or blamed. She "dropped," as it seems, "deadborn from the press." It is never mentioned, and was never seen by me till I borrowed it for the present occasion. Jacob says, "it is corrected and revised for another impression;" but the labour of revision was thrown away.

From this time he turned some of his thoughts to the celebration of living characters; and wrote a poem on the Kit-cat Club, and Advice to the Poets how to celebrate the Duke of Marlborough; but on occasion of another year of success, thinking himself qualified to give more instruction, he again wrote a poem of "Advice to a Weaver of Tapestry." Steele was then publishing the "Tatler;" and, looking around him for something at which he might laugh, unluckily lighted on Sir Richard's work, and treated it with such contempt, that, as Fenton observes, he put an end to the species of writers that gave Advice to Painters.

Not long after (1712) he published "Creation," a philosophical poem, which has been by my recommendation inserted in the late collection. Whoever judges of this by any other of Blackmore's performances will do it injury. The praise given it by Addison (Spec. 339.) is too well known to be transcribed: but some notice is due to the testimony of Dennis, who calls it a "philosophical poem, which has equalled that of Lucretius in the beauty of its versification, and infinitely surpassed it in the solidity and strength of its reasoning."

Why an author surpasses himself, it is natural to inquire. I have heard from Mr. Draper, an eminent bookseller, an account received by him from Ambrose Philips, "That Blackmore, as he proceeded in this poem, laid his manuscript from time to time before a club of wits with whom he associated; and that every man contributed, as he could, either improvement or correction: so that," said Philips, 'there are perhaps no where in the book thirty lines together that now stand as they were originally written."

The relation of Philips, I suppose, was true; but when all reasonable, all credible, allowance is made for this friendly revision, the Author will still retain an ample dividend of praise: for to him must always be assigned the plan of the work, the distribution of its parts, the choice of topics, the train of argument, and, what is yet more, the general predominance of philosophical judgment and poetical spirit. Correction seldom effects more than the suppression of faults; a happy line, or a single elegance, may perhaps be added; but of a large work the general character must always remain; the original constitution can be very little helped by local remedies; inherent and radical dulness will never be much invigorated by extrinsic animation.

This poem, if he had written nothing else, would have transmitted him to posterity among the first favourites of the English muse; but to make verses was his transcendent pleasure, and as he was not deterred by censure he was not satiated with praise.

He deviated, however, sometimes into other tracks of literature, and condescended to entertain his readers with plain prose. When the "Spectator" stopped, he considered the polite world as destitute of entertainment: and, in concert with Mr. Hughes, who wrote every third paper, published three times a week "The Lay Monastery," founded on the supposition that some literary men, whose characters are described, had retired to a house in the country to enjoy philosophical leisure, and resolved to instruct the public, by communicating their disquisitions and amusements. Whether any real persons were concealed under fictitious names is not known. The hero of the club is one Mr Johnson; such a constellation of excellence, that his character shall not be suppressed, though there is no great genius in the design nor skill in the delineation.

"The first I shall name is Mr. Johnson, a gentleman that owes to nature excellent faculties and an elevated genius, and to industry and application many acquired accomplishments. His taste is distinguishing, just, and delicate: his judgment clear, and his reason strong, accompanied with an imagination full of spirit, of great compass, and stored with refined ideas. He is a critic of the first rank; and, what is his peculiar ornament, he is delivered from the ostentation, malevolence, and supercilious temper, that so often blemish men of that character. His remarks result from the nature and reason of things, and are formed by a judgment free and unbiassed by the authority of those who have lazily followed each other in the same beaten track of thinking, and are arrived only at the reputation of acute grammarians and commentators: men, who have been copying one another many hundred years, without any improvement; or, if they have ventured farther, have only applied in a mechanical manner the rules of ancient critics to modern writings, and with great labour discovered nothing but their own want of judgment and capacity. As Mr. Johnson penetrates to the bottom of his subject, by which means his observations are solid and natural, as well as delicate, so his design is always to bring to light something useful and ornamental; whence his character is the reverse to theirs, who have eminent abilities in insignificant knowledge, and a great felicity in finding out trifles. He is no less industrious to search out the merit of an author than sagacious in discerning his errors and defects; and takes more pleasure in commending the beauties than exposing the blemishes of a laudable writing; like Horace, in a long work, he can bear some deformities, and justly lay them on the imperfection of human nature, which is incapable of faultless productions. When an excellent drama appears in public, and by its intrinsic worth attracts a general applause, he is not stung with envy and spleen; nor does he express a savage nature, in fastening upon the celebrated author, dwelling upon his imaginary defects, and passing over his conspicuous excellences. He treats all writers upon the same impartial footing; and is not, like the little critics, taken up entirely in finding out only the beauties of the ancient, and nothing but the errors of the modern writers. Never did any one express more kindness and good nature to young and unfinished authors; he promotes their interests, protects their reputation, extenuates their faults, and sets off their virtues, and by his candour guards them from the severity of his judgment. He is not like those dry critics who are morose because they cannot write themselves, but is himself master of a good vein in poetry; and though he does not often employ it, yet he has sometimes entertained his friends with his unpublished performances."

The rest of the Lay Monks seem to be but feeble mortals, in comparison with the gigantic Johnson; who yet, with all his abilities, and the help of the fraternity, could drive the publication but to forty papers, which were afterwards collected into a volume, and called in the title "A Sequel to the Spectators."

Some years afterwards (1716 and 1717) he published two volumes of Essays in prose, which can be commended only as they are written for the highest and noblest purpose—the promotion of religion. Blackmore's prose is not the prose of a poet: for it is languid, sluggish, and lifeless; his diction is neither daring nor exact, his flow neither rapid nor easy, and his periods neither smooth nor strong. His account of Wit will show with how little clearness he is content to think, and how little his thoughts are recommended by his language.

"As to its efficient cause, wit owes its production to an extraordinary and peculiar temperament in the constitution of the possessor of it, in which is found a concurrence of regular and exalted ferments, and an affluence of animal spirits, refined and rectified to a great degree of purity; whence, being endowed with vivacity, brightness, and celerity, as well in their reflections as direct motions, they become proper instruments for the sprightly operations of the mind; by which means the imagination can with great facility range the wide field of nature, contemplate an infinite variety of objects, and, by observing the similitude and disagreement of their several qualities, single out and abstract, and then suit and unite, those ideas which will best serve its purpose. Hence beautiful allusions, surprising metaphors, and admirable sentiments, are always ready at hand; and while the fancy is full of images, collected from innumerable objects and their different qualities, relations, and habitudes, it can at pleasure dress a common notion in a strange but becoming garb; by which, as before observed, the same thought will appear a new one, to the great delight and wonder of the hearer. What we call genius results from this particular happy complexion in the first formation of the person that enjoys it, and is Nature's gift, but diversified by various specific characters and limitations, as its active fire is blended and allayed by different proportions of phlegm, or reduced and regulated by the contrast of opposite ferments. Therefore, as there happens in the composition of a facetious genius a greater or less, though still an inferior, degree of judgment and prudence, one man of wit will be varied and distinguished from another."

In these Essays he took little care to propitiate the wits; for he scorns to avert their malice at the expense of virtue or of truth.

"Several, in their books, have many sarcastical and spiteful strokes at religion in general; while others make themselves pleasant with the principles of the Christian. Of the last kind, this age has seen a most audacious example in the book entitled "A Tale of a Tub." Had this writing been published in a pagan or popish nation, who are justly impatient of all indignity offered to the established religion of their country, no doubt but the author would have received the punishment he deserved. But the fate of this impious buffoon is very different; for in a protestant kingdom, zealous of their civil and religious immunities, he has not only escaped affronts and the effects of public resentment, but has been caressed and patronised by persons of great figure and of all denominations. Violent party-men, who differed in all things besides, agreed in their turn to show particular respect and friendship to this insolent derider of the worship of his country, till at last the reputed writer is not only gone off with impunity, but triumphs in his dignity and preferment. I do not know that any inquiry or search was ever made after this writing, or that any reward was ever offered for the discovery of the author, or that the infamous book was ever condemned to be burnt in public: whether this proceeds from the excessive esteem and love that men in power, during the late reign, had for wit, or their defect of zeal and concern for the Christian religion, will be determined best by those who are best acquainted with their character."

In another place he speaks with becoming abhorrence of a *godless author*, who has burlesqued a Psalm. This author was supposed to be Pope, who published a reward for any one that would produce the coiner of the accusation, but never denied it; and was afterwards the perpetual and incessant enemy of Blackmore.

One of his essays is upon the Spleen, which is treated by him so much to his own satisfaction, that he has published the same thoughts in the same words; first in the "Lay Monastery;" then in the Essay; and then in the preface to a Medical Treatise on the Spleen. One passage, which I have found already twice, I will here exhibit, because I think it better imagined, and better expressed, than could be expected from the common tenor of his prose:

"—As the several combinations of splenetic madness and folly produce an infinite variety of irregular understanding, so the amicable accommodation and alliance between several virtues and vices produce an equal diversity in the dispositions and manners of mankind; whence it comes to pass, that as many monstrous and absurd productions are found in the moral as in the intellectual world. How surprising is it to observe, among the least culpable men, some whose minds are attracted by heaven and earth with a seeming equal force; some who are proud of humility; others who are censorious and uncharitable, yet self-denying and devout; some who join contempt of the world with sordid avarice; and others who preserve a great degree of piety, with ill-nature and ungoverned passions! Nor are instances of this inconsistent mixture less frequent among bad men, where we often, with admiration, see persons at once generous and unjust, impious lovers of their country and flagitious heroes, good-natured sharpers, immoral men of honour, and libertines who will sooner die than change their religion; and though it is true that repugnant coalitions of so high a degree are found but in a part of mankind, yet none of the whole mass, either good or bad, are entirely exempted from some absurd mixture."

He about this time (Aug. 22, 1716) became one of the Elects of the College of Physicians; and was soon after (Oct. 1) chosen Censor. He seems to have arrived late, whatever was the reason, at his medical honours.

Having succeeded so well in his book on "Creation," by which he established the great principle of all religion, he thought his undertaking imperfect, unless he likewise enforced the truth of revelation; and for that purpose added another poem, on "Redemption." He had likewise written, before his "Creation," three books on the "Nature of Man."

The lovers of musical devotion have always wished for a more happy metrical version than they have yet obtained of the "Book of Psalms." This wish the piety of Blackmore led him to gratify; and he produced (1721) "A new Version of the Psalms of David, fitted to the Tunes used in Churches;" which, being recommended by the archbishops and many bishops, obtained a licence for its admission into public worship; but no admission has it yet obtained, nor has it any right to come where Brady and Tate had got possession. Blackmore's name must be added to those of many others who, by the same attempt, have obtained only the praise of meaning well.

He was not yet deterred from heroic poetry. There was another monarch of this island (for he did not fetch his heroes from foreign countries) whom he considered as worthy of the epic muse; and he dignified "Alfred" (1723) with twelve books. But the opinion of the nation was now settled; a hero introduced by Blackmore was not likely to find either respect or kindness; "Alfred" took his place by "Eliza" in silence and darkness; benevolence was ashamed to favour, and malice was weary of insulting. Of his four epic poems, the first had such reputation and popularity as enraged the critics; the second was at least known enough to be ridiculed; the two last had neither friends nor enemies.

Contempt is a kind of gangrene, which, if it

izes one part of a character, corrupts all the
st by degrees. Blackmore, being despised as
oet, was in time neglected as a physician; his
actice, which was once invidiously great, for-
ok him in the latter part of his life; but being
nature, or by principle, averse from idleness,
employed his unwelcome leisure in writing
oks on physic, and teaching others to cure
ose whom he could himself cure no longer. I
ow not whether I can enumerate all the
eatises by which he has endeavoured to diffuse
e art of healing; for there is scarcely any dis-
mper, of dreadful name, which he has not
ught the reader how to oppose. He has writ-
n on the small-pox, with a vehement invective
ainst inoculation; on consumption, the spleen,
e gout, the rheumatism, the king's evil, the
opsy, the jaundice, the stone, the diabetes,
d the plague.

Of those books, if I had read them, it could
t be expected that I should be able to give a
tical account. I have been told that there is
nething in them of vexation and discontent,
covered by a perpetual attempt to degrade
ysic from its sublimity, and to represent it as
ainable without much previous or concomi-
nt learning. By the transient glances which
ave thrown upon them, I have observed an
ected contempt of the ancients, and a super-
ious derision of transmitted knowledge. Of
s indecent arrogance the following quotation
m his preface to the "Treatise on the Small-
x" will afford a specimen: in which, when
e reader finds, what I fear is true, that, when
was censuring Hippocrates, he did not know
e difference between *aphorism* and *apophthegm*,
will not pay much regard to his determina-
ns concerning ancient learning.

'As for his book of Aphorisms, it is like my
rd Bacon's of the same title, a book of jests,
a grave collection of trite and trifling observa-
ns; of which though many are true and
tain, yet they signify nothing, and may afford
ersion, but no instruction; most of them
ng much inferior to the sayings of the wise
n of Greece, which yet are so low and mean,
t we are entertained every day with more
uable sentiments at the table conversation of
enious and learned men."

I am unwilling, however to leave him in total
grace, and will therefore quote from another
face a passage less reprehensible.

'Some gentlemen have been disingenuous
l unjust to me, by wresting and forcing my
aning, in the preface to another book, as if I
demned and exposed all learning, though
y knew I declared that I greatly honoured
l esteemed all men of superior literature and
dition; and that I only undervalued false or
erficial learning, that signifies nothing for
service of mankind; and that as to physic,
xpressly affirmed that learning must be joined
with native genius to make a physician of the first rank; but if those talents are separated, I asserted, and do still insist, that a man of native sagacity and diligence will prove a more able and useful practiser than a heavy notional scholar, encumbered with a heap of confused ideas."

He was not only a poet and a physician, but produced likewise a work of a different kind, "A true and impartial History of the Conspiracy against King William, of glorious Memory, in the Year 1695." This I have never seen, but suppose it at least compiled with integrity. He engaged likewise in theological controversy, and wrote two books against the Arians; "Just Prejudices against the Arian Hypothesis;" and "Modern Arians unmasked." Another of his works is "Natural Theology, or Moral Duties considered apart from Positive; with some Observations on the Desirableness and Necessity of a supernatural Revelation." This was the last book that he published. He left behind him "The accomplished Preacher, or an Essay upon Divine Eloquence;" which was printed after his death by Mr. White, of Nayland, in Essex, the minister who attended his death-bed, and testified the fervent piety of his last hours. He died on the eighth of October, 1729.

Blackmore, by the unremitted enmity of the wits, whom he provoked more by his virtue than his dulness, has been exposed to worse treatment than he deserved. His name was so long used to point every epigram upon dull writers, that it became at last a bye-word of contempt; but it deserves observation, that malignity takes hold only of his writings, and that his life passed without reproach, even when his boldness of reprehension naturally turned upon him many eyes desirous to espy faults, which many tongues would have made haste to publish. But those who could not blame could at least forbear to praise, and therefore of his private life and domestic character there are no memorials.

As an author he may justly claim the honours of magnanimity. The incessant attacks of his enemies, whether serious or merry, are never discovered to have disturbed his quiet or to have lessened his confidence in himself; they neither awed him to silence nor to caution; they neither provoked him to petulance nor depressed him to complaint. While the distributors of literary fame were endeavouring to depreciate and degrade him, he either despised or defied them, wrote on as he had written before, and never turned aside to quiet them by civility or repress them by confutation.

He depended with great security on his own powers, and perhaps was for that reason less diligent in perusing books. His literature was,

I think, but small. What he knew of antiquity I suspect him to have gathered from modern compilers; but, though he could not boast of much critical knowledge, his mind was stored with general principles, and he left minute researches to those whom he considered as little minds.

With this disposition he wrote most of his poems. Having formed a magnificent design, he was careless of particular and subordinate elegances; he studied no niceties of versification, he waited for no felicities of fancy, but caught his first thoughts in the first words in which they were presented; nor does it appear that he saw beyond his own performances, or had ever elevated his views to that ideal perfection which every genius born to excel is condemned always to pursue, and never overtake. In the first suggestions of his imagination he acquiesced; he thought them good, and did not seek for better. His works may be read a long time without the occurrence of a single line that stands prominent from the rest.

The poem on "Creation" has, however, the appearance of more circumspection; it wants neither harmony of numbers, accuracy of thought, nor elegance of diction; it has either been written with great care, or, what cannot be imagined of so long a work, with such felicity as made care less necessary.

Its two constituent parts are ratiocination and description. To reason in verse is allowed to be difficult; but Blackmore not only reasons in verse, but very often reasons poetically, and finds the art of uniting ornament with strength, and ease with closeness. This is a skill which Pope might have condescended to learn from him, when he needed it so much in his "Moral Essays."

In his descriptions, both of life and nature, the poet and the philosopher happily co-operate; truth is recommended by elegance, and elegance sustained by truth.

In the structure and order of the poem, not only the greater parts are properly consecutive, but the didactic and illustrative paragraphs are so happily mingled, that labour is relieved by pleasure, and the attention is led on through a long succession of varied excellence to the original position, the fundamental principle of wisdom and of virtue.

As the heroic poems of Blackmore are now little read, it is thought proper to insert, as a specimen from "Prince Arthur," the song of Mopas, mentioned by Molineux:

But that which Arthur with most pleasure heard
Were noble strains, by Mopas sung, the bard,
Who to his harp in lofty verse began,
And through the secret maze of Nature ran.
He the Great Spirit sung, that all things fill'd,
That the tumultuous waves of Chaos still'd;
Whose nod disposed the jarring seeds to peace,
And made the wars of hostile atoms cease.
All beings, we in fruitful nature find,
Proceeded from the Great Eternal mind;
Streams of his unexhausted spring of power,
And, cherish'd with his influence, endure.
He spread the pure cerulean fields on high,
And arch'd the chambers of the vaulted sky,
Which he, to suit their glory with their height,
Adorn'd with globes, that reel, as drunk with ligh
His hand directed all the tuneful spheres,
He turn'd their orbs and polished all the stars.
He fill'd the Sun's vast lamp with golden light,
And bid the silver Moon adorn the night.
He spread the airy Ocean without shores,
Where birds are wafted with their feather'd oars.
Then sung the bard how the light vapours rise
From the warm earth, and cloud the smiling skies
He sung how some, chill'd in their airy flight,
Fall scatter'd down in pearly dew by night;
How some, raised higher, sit in secret steams
On the reflected points of bounding beams,
Till, chill'd with cold, they shape the ethereal pla
Then on the thirsty earth descend in rain;
How some, whose parts a slight contexture show,
Sink, hovering through the air, in fleecy snow;
How part is spun in silken threads, and clings
Entangled in the grass in glewy strings;
How others stamp to stones, with rushing sound
Fall from their crystal quarries to the ground;
How some are laid in trains, that kindled fly,
In harmless fires by night, above the sky;
How some in winds blow with impetuous force,
And carry ruin where they bend their course,
While some conspire to form a gentle breeze,
To fan the air and play among the trees;
How some, enraged, grow turbulent and loud,
Pent in the bowels of a frowning cloud,
That cracks, as if the axis of the world
Was broke, and heaven's bright towers were do
wards hurl'd.
He sung how earth's wide ball, at Jove's comman
Did in the midst on airy columns stand;
And how the soul of plants, in prison held,
And bound with sluggish fetters, lies conceal'd
Till, with the Spring's warm beams, almost relea
From the dull weight with which it lay oppress'd,
Its vigour spreads, and makes the teeming earth
Heave up, and labour with the sprouting birth:
The active spirit freedom seeks in vain,
It only works and twists a stronger chain;
Urging its prison's sides to break away,
It makes that wider where 'tis forced to stay:
Till, having form'd its living house, it rears
Its head, and in a tender plant appears.
Hence springs the oak, the beauty of the grove,
Whose stately trunk fierce storms can scarcely mo
Hence grows the cedar, hence the swelling vine
Does round the elm its purple clusters twine,
Hence painted flowers the smiling gardens bless,
Both with their fragrant scent and gaudy dress.
Hence the white lily in full beauty grows,
Hence the blue violet, and blushing rose.
He sung how sun-beams brood upon the earth,
And in the glebe hatch such a numerous birth;
Which way the genial warmth in Summer storms
Turns putrid vapours to a bed of worms;
How rain, transform'd by this prolific power,
Falls from the clouds an animated shower.
He sung the embryo's growth within the womb,
And how the parts their various shapes assume

ith what rare art the wondrous structure's wrought
om one crude mass to such perfection brought;
That no part useless, none misplaced we see,
None are forgot, and more would monstrous be.

FENTON.

HE brevity with which I am to write the account of ELIJAH FENTON is not the effect of difference or negligence. I have sought intelligence among his relations in his native county, but have not obtained it.

He was born near Newcastle, in Staffordshire, an ancient family,* whose estate was very considerable; but he was the youngest of eleven children, and being, therefore, necessarily destined to some lucrative employment, was sent first to school, and afterwards to Cambridge;† but, with many other wise and virtuous men, who, at that time of discord and debate, consulted conscience, whether well or ill-informed, more than interest, he doubted the legality of the government, and, refusing to qualify himself for public employment by the oaths required, left the university without a degree; but I never heard that the enthusiasm of opposition impelled him to separation from the church.

By this perverseness of integrity he was driven out a commoner of Nature, excluded from the regular modes of profit and prosperity, and reduced to pick up a livelihood uncertain and fortuitous; but it must be remembered that he kept his name unsullied, and never suffered himself to be reduced, like too many of the same sect, to mean arts and dishonourable shifts. Whoever mentioned Fenton, mentioned him with honour.

The life that passes in penury must necessarily pass in obscurity. It is impossible to trace Fenton from year to year, or to discover what means he used for his support. He was awhile secretary to Charles, Earl of Orrery, in Flanders, and tutor to his young son, who afterwards mentioned him with great esteem and tenderness. He was at one time assistant in the school of Mr. Bonwicke, in Surrey; and at another kept a school for himself, at Seven-oaks, in Kent, which he brought into reputation; but was persuaded to leave it (1710) by Mr. St. John, with promises of a more honourable employment.

His opinions as he was a nonjuror, seem not to have been remarkably rigid. He wrote with great zeal and affection the praises of Queen Anne, and very willingly and liberally extolled the Duke of Marlborough, when he was (1707) at the height of his glory.

He expressed still more attention to Marlborough and his family, by an elegiac pastoral on the Marquis of Blandford, which could be prompted only by respect or kindness; for neither the Duke nor Dutchess desired the praise, or liked the cost of patronage.

The elegance of his poetry entitled him to the company of the wits of his time, and the amiableness of his manners made him loved wherever he was known. Of his friendship to Southern and Pope there are lasting monuments.

He published in 1707 a collection of poems.

By Pope he was once placed in a station that might have been of great advantage. Craggs, when he was advanced to be secretary of state (about 1720) feeling his own want of literature, desired Pope to procure him an instructor, by whose help he might supply the deficiencies of his education. Pope recommended Fenton, in

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* He was born at Shelton, near Newcastle, May 1683; and was the youngest of eleven children of Jan Fenton, an attorney at law, and one of the coroners of the county of Stafford. His father died in 1704; and his grave, in the church-yard of Stoke upon Trent, is distinguished by the following elegant Latin inscription, from the pen of his son:

H. S. E.
JOANNES FENTON
de Shelton
antiquâ stirpe generosus;
juxta reliquias conjugis
CATHERINÆ
formâ, moribus, pietate,
optimo viro dignissimæ:
Qui
intemeratâ in ecclesiam fide,
et virtutibus intaminatis enituit;
necnon ingenii lepore
bonis artibus expoliti,
ac animo erga omnes benevolo,
sibi suisque jucundus vixit.
Decem annos uxori dilectæ superstes
magnum sui desiderium bonis
omnibus reliquit,
Anno { salutis humanæ 1604,
ætatis suæ 56.

See Gent. Mag. 1791, vol. LXI. p. 703.—N.

† He was entered of Jesus College, and took a bachelor's degree in 1704; but it appears by the list of Cambridge graduates that he removed in 1726 to Trinity Hall.—N.

whom Craggs found all that he was seeking. There was now a prospect of ease and plenty, for Fenton had merit and Craggs had generosity; but the small-pox suddenly put an end to the pleasing expectation.

When Pope, after the great success of his "Iliad," undertook the "Odyssey," being, as it seems, weary of translating, he determined to engage auxiliaries.—Twelve books he took to himself, and twelve he distributed between Broome and Fenton: the books allotted to Fenton were the first, the fourth, the nineteenth, and the twentieth. It is observable, that he did not take the eleventh, which he had before translated into blank verse; neither did Pope claim it, but committed it to Broome. How the two associates performed their parts is well known to the readers of poetry, who have never been able to distinguish their books from those of Pope.

In 1723 was performed his tragedy of "Mariamne;" to which Southern, at whose house it was written, is said to have contributed such hints as his theatrical experience supplied.—When it was shown to Cibber, it was rejected by him, with the additional insolence of advising Fenton to engage himself in some employment of honest labour, by which he might obtain that support which he could never hope from his poetry. The play was acted at the other theatre; and the brutal petulance of Cibber was confuted, though, perhaps, not shamed, by general applause. Fenton's profits are said to have amounted to near a thousand pounds, with which he discharged a debt contracted by his attendance at court.

Fenton seems to have had some peculiar system of versification. "Mariamne" is written in lines of ten syllables, with few of those redundant terminations which the drama not only admits, but requires, as more nearly approaching to real dialogue. The tenor of his verse is so uniform that it cannot be thought casual: and yet upon what principle he so constructed it, is difficult to discover.

The mention of his play brings to my mind a very trifling occurrence. Fenton was one day in the company of Broome, his associate, and Ford, a clergyman, at that time too well known, whose abilities, instead of furnishing convivial merriment to the voluptuous and dissolute, might have enabled him to excel among the virtuous and the wise. They determined all to see "The Merry Wives of Windsor," which was acted that night; and Fenton, as a dramatic poet, took them to the stage-door, where the door-keeper, inquiring who they were, was told that they were three very necessary men, Ford, Broome, and Fenton. The name in the play which Pope restored to *Brook* was then *Broome*.

It was perhaps after this play that he undertook to revise the punctuation of Milton's poems, which, as the author neither wrote the origin copy nor corrected the press, was supposed cap ble of amendment. To this edition he pr fixed a short and elegant account of Milto life written at once with tenderness and inte rity.

He published likewise (1729) a very splend edition of Waller, with notes, often useful, oft entertaining, but too much extended by lo quotations from Clarendon. Illustrations draw from a book so easily consulted should be ma by reference rather than transcription.

The latter part of his life was calm and ple sant. The relict of Sir William Trumbull i vited him, by Pope's recommendation, to ed cate her son; whom he first instructed at hon and then attended to Cambridge. The lady a terwards detained him with her as the audit of her accompts. He often wandered to Lo don, and amused himself with the conversati of his friends.

He died, in 1730, at Easthamstead in Ber shire, the seat of Lady Trumbull; and Po who had been always his friend, honoured h with an epitaph, of which he borrowed the t first lines from Crashaw.

Fenton was tall and bulky, inclined to corp lence, which he did not lessen by much exercis for he was very sluggish and sedentary, r late, and when he had risen, sat down to books or papers. A woman that once wait on him in a lodging told him, as she said, th that he would "lie a-bed, and be fed with spoon." This, however, was not the worst th might have been prognosticated; for Pope sa in his Letters, that "he died of indolence;" h his immediate distemper was the gout.

Of his morals and his conversation the accou is uniform; he was never named but with pra and fondness, as a man in the highest deg amiable and excellent. Such was the charac given him by the Earl of Orrery, his pup such is the testimony of Pope;* and such w the suffrages of all who could boast of his quaintance.

By a former writer of his life a story is t which ought not to be forgotten. He used, the latter part of his time, to pay his relations the country a yearly visit. At an entertai ment made for the family by his elder broth he observed, that one of his sisters, who h married unfortunately, was absent; and foun upon inquiry, that distress had made her thou unworthy of invitation. As she was at no gr distance, he refused to sit at the table till s was called, and when she had taken her pl was careful to show her particular attention.

His collection of poems is now to be consid ed. The "Ode to the Sun" is written upo common plan, without uncommon sentimen

* Spence.

ut its greatest fault is its length. No poem hould be long, of which the purpose is only to trike the fancy, without enlightening the unerstanding by precept, ratiocination, or narative. A blaze first pleases and then tires the ight.

Of "Florelio" it is sufficient to say, that it an occasional pastoral, which implies somehing neither natural nor artificial, neither omic nor serious.

The next Ode is irregular, and therefore deective. As the sentiments are pious, they annot easily be new; for what can be added o topics on which successive ages have been mployed?

Of the "Paraphrase on Isaiah" nothing very avourable can be said. Sublime and solemn rose gains little by a change to blank verse; nd the paraphrast has deserted his original, y admitting images not Asiatic, at least not udaical;

——Returning Peace,
Dove-eyed, and robed in white—

Of his petty poems some are very trifling, vithout any thing to be praised, either in the hought or expression. He is unlucky in his ompetitions; he tells the same idle tale with Congreve, and does not tell it so well. He ranslates from Ovid the same epistle as Pope; ut I am afraid not with equal happiness.

To examine his performances one by one vould be tedious. His translation from Hoer into blank verse will find few readers, vhile another can be had in rhyme. The piece ddressed to Lambarde is no disagreeable speciien of epistolary poetry; and his ode to Lord Gower was pronounced by Pope the next ode n the English language to Dryden's "Cecilia." Fenton may be justly styled an excellent versier and a good poet.

Whatever I have said of Fenton is confirmed y Pope in a letter, by which he communicated o Broome an account of his death.

To the Revd. Mr. Broome.
At Pulham, near Harlstone
Nor
[By Beccles Bag.] Suffolke.

Dr. Sir,

I intended to write to you on this melanholy subject, the death of Mr. Fenton, before rs came; but stay'd to have informed myself nd you of ye circumstances of it. All I hear , that he felt a Gradual Decay, tho' so early Life, and was declining for 5 or 6 months. t was not, as I apprehended, the Gout in his Stomach, but I believe rather a Complication first of Gross Humours, as he was naturally corpulent, not discharging themselves, as he used no sort of Exercise. No man better bore ye approaches of his Dissolution (as I am told) or with less ostentation yielded up his Being. The great modesty wch you know was natural to him, and ye great Contempt he had for all sorts of Vanity and Parade, never appeared more than in his last moments: He had a conscious Satisfaction (no doubt) in acting right, in feeling himself honest, true, and unpretending to more than was his own. So he died, as he lived, with that secret, yet sufficient, Contentment.

As to any Papers left behind him, I dare say they can be but few; for this reason, he never wrote out of Vanity, or thought much of the Applause of men. I know an instance where he did his utmost to conceal his own merit that way; and if we join to this his natural Love of Ease, I fancy we must expect little of this sort; at least I hear of none except some few further remarks on Waller (wch his cautious integrity made him leave an order to be given to Mr. Tonson) and perhaps, tho' 'tis many years since I saw it, a Translation of ye first Book of Oppian. He had begun a tragedy of Dion, but made small progress in it.

As to his other Affairs, he died poor, but honest, leaving no Debts, or Legacies; except of a few pds to Mr. Trumbull and my Lady, in token of respect, Gratefulness, and mutual Esteem.

I shall with pleasure take upon me to draw this amiable, quiet, deserving, unpretending Christian and Philosophical character, in his Epitaph. There truth may be spoken in a few words: as for Flourish, & Oratory, & Poetry, I leave them to younger and more lively Writers, such as love writing for writing sake, and wd rather shew their own Fine Parts, yn Report the valuable ones of any other man. So the Elegy I renounce.

I condole with you from my heart, on the loss of so worthy a man, and a Friend to us both. Now he is gone, I must tell you he has done you many a good office, and set your character in ye fairest light to some who either mistook you, or knew you not. I doubt not he has done the same for me.

Adieu: Let us love his memory, and profit by his example. I am very sincerely

Dr Sir
Your affectionate
& real Servant
Aug. 29th, 1730. A. Pope.

GAY.

JOHN GAY, descended from an old family, that had been long in possession of the manor of Goldworthy,* in Devonshire, was born in 1688, at or near Barnstaple, where he was educated by Mr. Luck, who taught the school of that town with good reputation, and a little before he retired from it, published a volume of Latin and English verses. Under such a master he was likely to form a taste for poetry. Being born without prospect of hereditary riches, he was sent to London in his youth, and placed apprentice with a silk-mercer.

How long he continued behind the counter, or with what degree of softness and dexterity he received and accommodated the ladies, as he probably took no delight in telling it, is not known. The report is, that he was soon weary of either the restraint or servility of his occupation, and easily persuaded his master to discharge him.

The Dutchess of Monmouth, remarkable for inflexible perseverance in her demand to be treated as a princess, in 1712 took Gay into her service as secretary: by quitting a shop for such service he might gain leisure, but he certainly advanced little in the boast of independence. Of his leisure he made so good use, that he published next year a poem on "Rural Sports," and inscribed it to Mr. Pope, who was then rising fast into reputation. Pope was pleased with the honour; and, when he became acquainted with Gay, found such attractions in his manners and conversation, that he seems to have received him into his inmost confidence; and a friendship was formed between them which lasted to their separation by death, without any known abatement on either part. Gay was the general favourite of the whole association of wits; but they regarded him as a playfellow rather than a partner, and treated him with more fondness than respect.

Next year he published "The Shepherd's Week," six English pastorals, in which the images are drawn from real life, such as it appears among the rustics in parts of England remote from London. Steele, in some papers of "The Guardian," had praised Ambrose Philips, as the pastoral writer that yielded only to Theocritus, Virgil, and Spenser. Pope, who had also published pastorals, not pleased to be overlooked, drew up a comparison of his ow compositions with those of Philips, in which covertly gave himself the preference, while seemed to disown it. Not content with this, is supposed to have incited Gay to write "T Shepherd's Week;" to show, that if it be n cessary to copy nature with minuteness, rur life must be exhibited such as grossness ar ignorance have made it. So far the plan w reasonable: but the pastorals are introduced a *proeme*, written with such imitation as th could obtain of obsolete language, and by co sequence in a style that was never spoken n written in any age or in any place.

But the effect of reality and truth becan conspicuous, even when the intention was show them grovelling and degraded. The Pastorals became popular, and were read wi delight, as just representations of rural ma ners and occupations, by those who had no i terest in the rivalry of the poets, nor knowled of the critical dispute.

In 1713 he brought a comedy called "T Wife of Bath" upon the stage, but it receiv no applause; he printed it, however, and seve teen years after, having altered it, and, as thought, adapted it more to the public taste, offered it again to the town: but, though was flushed with the success of the "Beggar Opera," had the mortification to see it aga rejected.

In the last year of Queen Anne's life, G was made secretary to the Earl of Clarendo ambassador to the court of Hanover. This w a station that naturally gave him hopes of kin ness from every party; but the Queen's dea put an end to her favours, and he had dedicat his "Shepherd's Week" to Bolingbroke, whi Swift considered as the crime that obstructed kindness from the house of Hanover.

He did not, however, omit to improve t right which his office had given him to t notice of the royal family. On the arrival the Princess of Wales, he wrote a poem, ar obtained so much favour, that both the Prin and Princess went to see his "What d'ye c it," a kind of mock-tragedy, in which the im ges were comic, and the action grave; so tha as Pope relates, Mr. Cromwell, who could n hear what was said, was at a loss how to reco cile the laughter of the audience with the solem nity of the scene.

Of this performance the value certainly but little; but it was one of the lucky trifles th

* *Goldworthy* does not appear in the *Villare*.—Dr. J. Holdsworthy is probably meant.—C.

give pleasure by novelty, and was so much favoured by the audience, that envy appeared against it in the form of criticism; and Griffin, a player, in conjunction with Mr. Theobald, a man afterwards more remarkable, produced a pamphlet called "The Key to the What d'ye call it;" which, says Gay, "calls me a blockhead, and Mr. Pope a knave."

But fortune has always been inconstant. Not long afterwards (1717) he endeavoured to entertain the town with "Three hours after Marriage;" a comedy written, as there is sufficient reason for believing, by the joint assistance of Pope and Arbuthnot. One purpose of it was to bring into contempt Dr. Woodward, the Fossilist, a man not really or justly contemptible. It had the fate which such outrages deserve; the scene in which Woodward was directly and apparently ridiculed, by the introduction of a mummy and a crocodile, disgusted the audience, and the performance was driven off the stage with general condemnation.

Gay is represented as a man easily incited to hope, and deeply depressed when his hopes were disappointed. This is not the character of a hero; but it may naturally imply something more generally welcome, a soft and civil companion. Whoever is apt to hope good from others is diligent to please them; but he that believes his powers strong enough to force their own way, commonly tries only to please himself.

He had been simple enough to imagine that those who laughed at the "What d'ye call it" would raise the fortune of its Author; and, finding nothing done, sunk into dejection. His friends endeavoured to divert him. The Earl of Burlington sent him (1716) into Devonshire; the year after, Mr. Pulteney took him to Aix; and in the following year Lord Harcourt invited him to his seat, where, during his visit, the two rural lovers were killed with lightning, as is particularly told in Pope's Letters.

Being now generally known, he published (1720) his poems by subscription, with such success, that he raised a thousand pounds; and called his friends to a consultation, what use might be best made of it. Lewis, the steward of Lord Oxford, advised him to intrust it to the funds, and live upon the interest; Arbuthnot bade him to intrust it to Providence, and live upon the principal; Pope directed him, and was seconded by Swift, to purchase an annuity.

Gay in that disastrous year* had a present from young Craggs of some South-sea stock, and once supposed himself to be master of twenty thousand pounds. His friends persuaded him to sell his share; but he dreamed of dignity and splendour and could not bear to obstruct his own fortune. He was then importuned to sell as much as would purchase a hundred a year for life, "which," says Fenton, "will make you sure of a clean shirt and a shoulder of mutton every day." This council was rejected; the profit and principal were lost, and Gay sunk under the calamity so low that his life became in danger.

By the care of his friends, among whom Pope appears to have shown particular tenderness, his health was restored; and, returning to his studies, he wrote a tragedy called "The Captives," which he was invited to read before the Princess of Wales. When the hour came, he saw the Princess and her ladies all in expectation, and advancing with reverence too great for any other attention, stumbled at a stool, and falling forwards, threw down a weighty japan screen. The Princess started, the ladies screamed, and poor Gay, after all the disturbance, was still to read his play.

The fate of "The Captives," which was acted at Drury Lane in 1723-4, I know not; * but he now thought himself in favour, and undertook (1726) to write a volume of Fables for the improvement of the young Duke of Cumberland. For this he is said to have been promised a reward, which he had doubtless magnified with all the wild expectations of indigence and vanity.

Next year the Prince and Princess became King and Queen, and Gay was to be great and happy; but upon the settlement of the household he found himself appointed gentleman usher to the Princess Louisa. By this offer he thought himself insulted, and sent a message to the Queen, that he was too old for the place. There seem to have been many machinations employed afterwards in his favour; and diligent court was paid to Mrs. Howard, afterwards Countess of Suffolk, who was much beloved by the King and Queen, to engage her interest for his promotion; but solicitations, verses, and flatteries, were thrown away; the lady heard them, and did nothing.

All the pain which he suffered from the neglect, or as he perhaps termed it, the ingratitude of the court, may be supposed to have been driven away by the unexampled success of the "Beggar's Opera." This play, written in ridicule of the musical Italian drama, was first offered to Cibber and his brethren at Drury Lane, and rejected; it being then carried to Rich, had the effect, as was ludicrously said, of making Gay *rich*, and Rich *gay*.

Of this lucky piece, as the reader cannot but wish to know the original and progress, I have inserted the relation which Spence has given in Pope's words.

"Dr. Swift had been observing once to Mr. Gay, what an odd pretty sort of a thing a New-

* Spence.

* It was acted seven nights. The Author's third night was by command of their Royal Highnesses. R.

gate pastoral might make. Gay was inclined to try at such a thing for some time; but afterwards thought it would be better to write a comedy on the same plan. This was what gave rise to the "Beggar's Opera." He began on it; and when first he mentioned it to Swift, the Doctor did not much like the project. As he carried it on, he showed what he wrote to both of us, and we now and then gave a correction, or a word or two of advice; but it was wholly of his own writing.—When it was done, neither of us thought it would succeed. We showed it to Congreve, who, after reading it over, said, it would either take greatly, or be damned confoundedly.—We were all, at the first night of it, in great uncertainty of the event; till we were very much encouraged by overhearing the Duke of Argyle, who sat in the next box to us, say, 'It will do—it must do! I see it in the eyes of them.' This was a good while before the first act was over, and so gave us ease soon; for that Duke (besides his own good taste) has a particular knack, as any one now living, in discovering the taste of the public. He was quite right in this as usual; the good nature of the audience appeared stronger and stronger every act, and ended in a clamour of applause."

Its reception is thus recorded in the notes to the "Dunciad:"

"This piece was received with greater applause than was ever known. Besides being acted in London sixty-three days without interruption, and renewed the next season with equal applause, it spread into all the great towns of England; was played in many places to the thirtieth and fortieth time; at Bath and Bristol fifty, &c. It made its progress into Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, where it was performed twenty-four days successively. The ladies carried about with them the favourite songs of it in fans, and houses were furnished with it in screens. The fame of it was not confined to the Author only. The person who acted Polly, till then obscure, became all at once the favourite of the town; her pictures were engraved, and sold in great numbers; her life written, books of letters and verses to her published, and pamphlets made even of her sayings and jests. Furthermore, it drove out of England (for that season) the Italian opera, which had carried all before it for ten years."

Of this performance, when it was printed, the reception was different, according to the different opinion of its readers. Swift commended it for the excellence of its morality, as a piece that "placed all kinds of vice in the strongest and most odious light;" but others and among them Dr. Herring, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, censured it as giving encouragement not only to vice but to crimes, by making a highwayman the hero, and dismissing him at last unpunished. It has been even said, that after the exhibition of the "Beggar's Opera," the gangs of robbers were evidently multiplied.

Both these decisions are surely exaggerated. The play, like many others, was plainly written only to divert, without any moral purpose, and is therefore not likely to do good; nor can it be conceived, without more speculation than life requires or admits, to be productive of much evil. Highwaymen and housebreakers seldom frequent the playhouse, or mingle in any elegant diversion; nor is it possible for any one to imagine that he may rob with safety, because he sees Macheath reprieved upon the stage.

This objection, however, or some other, either political than moral, obtained such prevalence, that when Gay produced a second part under the name of "Polly," it was prohibited by the Lord Chamberlain; and he was forced to recompense his repulse by a subscription which is said to have been so liberally bestowed that what he called oppression ended in profit. The publication was so much favoured, that though the first part gained him four hundred pounds, near thrice as much was the profit of the second.*

He received yet another recompence for the supposed hardship in the affectionate attention of the Duke and Dutchess of Queensberry, into whose house he was taken, and with whom he passed the remaining part of his life. The Duke, considering his want of economy, undertook the management of his money, and gave it to him as he wanted it.* But it is supposed that the discountenance of the court sunk deep into his heart, and gave him more discontent than the applauses or tenderness of his friends could overpower. He soon fell into his old distemper, an habitual cholic, and languished though with many intervals of ease and cheerfulness, till a violent fit at last seized him, and hurried him to the grave, as Arbuthnot reported, with more precipitance than he had ever known. He died on the 4th of December 1732, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. The letter which brought an account of his death to Swift was laid by for some days unopened, because when he received it he was impressed with the preconception of some misfortune.

After his death, was published a second volume of "Fables," more political than the former. His opera of "Achilles" was acted and the profits were given to two widow sisters who inherited what he left, as his lawful heirs for he died without a will, though he had gathered* three thousand pounds. There has appeared likewise under his name a comedy called "The Distressed Wife," and "The Rehearsal at Gotham," a piece of humour

* Spence.

The character given him by Pope is this: at "he was a natural man, without design, no spoke what he thought, and just as he ought it;" and that "he was of a timid nper, and fearful of giving offence to the eat;"* which caution, however, says Pope, s of no avail.

As a poet, he cannot be rated very high. He s, as I once heard a female critic remark, f a lower order." He had not in any great gree the *mens divinior*, the dignity of genius. uch however must be allowed to the author a new species of composition, though it be not the highest kind. We owe to Gay the ballad era; a mode of comedy which at first was pposed to delight only by its novelty, but has w by the experience of half a century been nd so well accommodated to the disposition a popular audience, that it is likely to keep g possession of the stage. Whether this new ma was the product of judgment or of luck, e praise of it must be given to the inventor; d there are many writers read with more erence, to whom such merit of originality not be attributed.

His first performance, "The Rural Sports," uch as was easily planned and executed; it never contemptible nor ever excellent. The Fan" is one of those mythological fictions ich antiquity delivers ready to the hand, but ich, like other things that lie open to every 's use, are of little value. The attention turally retires from a new tale of Venus, ana, and Minerva.

His "Fables" seem to have been a favourite rk; for, having published one volume, he another behind him. Of this kind of fables, authors do not appear to have formed any tinct or settled notion. Phædrus evidently founds them with tales; and Gay both with es and allegorical prosopopœias. A fable or logue, such as is now under consideration, ms to be, in its genuine state, a narrative in ich beings irrational, and sometimes inani- te, *arbores loquuntur, non tantum feræ*, are, the purpose of moral instruction, feigned to and speak with human interests and passions. this description the compositions of Gay do not always conform. For a fable he gives now and then a tale, or an abstracted allegory; and from some, by whatever name they may be called, it will be difficult to extract any moral principle. They are, however, told with liveliness; the versification is smooth; and the diction, though now and then a little constrained by the measure or the rhyme, is generally happy.

To "Trivia" may be allowed all that it claims; it is sprightly, various, and pleasant. The subject is of that kind which Gay was by nature qualified to adorn; yet some of his decorations may be justly wished away. An honest blacksmith might have done for Patty what is performed by Vulcan. The appearance of Cloacina is nauseous and superfluous; a shoe-boy could have been produced by the casual cohabitation of mere mortals. Horace's rule is broken in both cases; there is no *dignus vindice nodus*, no difficulty that required any supernatural interposition. A patten may be made by the hammer of a mortal; and a bastard may be dropped by a human strumpet. On great occasions, and on small, the mind is repelled by useless and apparent falsehood.

Of his little poems the public judgment seems to be right; they are neither much esteemed nor totally despised. The story of the apparition is borrowed from one of the tales of Poggio. Those that please least are the pieces to which Gulliver gave occasion; for who can much delight in the echo of unnatural fiction?

"Dione" is a counterpart to "Amynta" and "Pastor Fido," and other trifles of the same kind, easily imitated, and unworthy of imitation. What the Italians call comedies from a happy conclusion, Gay calls a tragedy from a mournful event; but the style of the Italians and of Gay is equally tragical. There is something in the poetical arcadia so remote from known reality and speculative possibility, that we can never support its representation through a long work. A pastoral of a hundred lines may be endured; but who will hear of sheep and goats, and myrtle bowers and purling rivulets, through five acts? Such scenes please barbarians in the dawn of literature, and children in the dawn of life; but will be for the most part thrown away, as men grow wise, and nations grow learned.

* Spence.

GRANVILLE.

George Granville, or, as others write enville, or Grenville, afterwards Lord Landsdown, of Bideford in the county of Devon, less is known than his name and high

rank might give reason to expect. He was born about 1667, the son of Bernard Greenville, who was entrusted by Monk with the most private transactions of the Restoration, and the grandson of Sir Bevil Greenville, who died in the King's cause, at the battle of Landsdowne.

His early education was superintended by Sir William Ellis; and his progress was such, that before the age of twelve he was sent to Cambridge,* where he pronounced a copy of his own verses to the Princess Mary d'Este of Modena, then Dutchess of York, when she visited the University.

At the accession of King James, being now at eighteen, he again exerted his poetical powers, and addressed the new monarch in three short pieces, of which the first is profane, and the two others such as a boy might be expected to produce; but he was commended by old Waller, who perhaps was pleased to find himself imitated in six lines, which, though they begin with nonsense, and end with dulness, excited in the young Author a rapture of acknowledgment.

In numbers such as Waller's self might use.

It was probably about this time that he wrote the poem to the Earl of Peterborough, upon his accomplishment of the Duke of York's marriage with the Princess of Modena, whose charms appear to have gained a strong prevalence over his imagination, and upon whom nothing ever has been charged but imprudent piety, an intemperate and misguided zeal for the propagation of popery.

However faithful Granville might have been to the King, or however enamoured of the Queen, he has left no reason for supposing that he approved either the artifices or the violence with which the King's religion was insinuated or obtruded. He endeavoured to be true at once to the King and to the Church.

Of this regulated loyalty he has transmitted to posterity a sufficient proof, in the letter which he wrote to his father about a month before the Prince of Orange landed.

"Mar, near Doncaster, Oct 6, 1688.

"To the Honourable Mr. Barnard Granville, at the Earl of Bathe's, St. James's.

"Sir,

"Your having no prospect of obtaining a commission for me can no way alter or cool my desire at this important juncture to venture my life, in some manner or other, for my king and my country.

I cannot bear living under the reproach of lying obscure and idle in a country retirement, when every man, who has the least sen honour, should be preparing for the field.

"You may remember, Sir, with what r tance I submitted to your commands upon mouth's rebellion, when no importunity prevail with you to permit me to leav academy: I was too young to be hazarded; give me leave to say, it is glorious at any a die for one's country; and the sooner the n the sacrifice.

"I am now older by three years. My Bathe was not so old when he was left a the slain at the battle of Newbury; no yourself, Sir, when you made your escape your tutor's, to join your brother at the de of Scilly.

"The same cause has now come round again. The King has been misled; let who have misled him be answerable fo Nobody can deny but he is sacred in his person; and it is every honest man's du defend it.

"You are pleased to say, it is yet doubt the Hollanders are rash enough to make an attempt; but be that as it will, I beg to insist upon it, that I may be presented Majesty, as one whose utmost ambition it devote his life to his service, and my coun after the example of all my ancestors.

"The gentry assembled at York, to upon the choice of representatives for the co have prepared an address, to assure his M they are ready to sacrifice their lives and tunes for him upon this and all other occas but at the same time they humbly beseech to give them such magistrates as may be a able to the laws of the land; for, at pr there is no authority to which they can l submit.

"They have been beating up for volunte York and the towns adjacent, to suppl regiments at Hull; but nobody will list.

"By what I can hear, every body wishe to the King; but they would be glad his n ters were hanged.

"The winds continue so contrary, th landing can be so soon as was apprehen therefore I may hope, with your leave a sistance, to be in readiness before any actio begin. I beseech you, Sir, most humbly most earnestly to add this one act of indul more to so many other testimonies which I constantly received of your goodness; a pleased to believe me always, with the u duty and submission, Sir,

"Your most dutiful son,

"And most obedient servant

"Geo. Granvil

Through the whole reign of King Willia is supposed to have lived in literary retire and indeed had for some time few other

* To Trinity College. By the University register it appears that he was admitted to his master's degree in 1679; we must, therefore, set the year of his birth some years back.—H.

es but those of study in his power. He was, the biographers observe, the younger son of a unger brother; a denomination by which our cestors proverbially expressed the lowest state penury and dependence. He is said, how-er, to have preserved himself at this time from sgrace and difficulties by economy, which he rgot or neglected in life more advanced and in tter fortune.

About this time he became enamoured of the untess of Newburgh, whom he has celebrated ith so much ardour by the name of Mira. e wrote verses to her before he was three-and-enty, and may be forgiven if he regarded the ce more than the mind. Poets are sometimes too much haste to praise.

In the time of his retirement it is probable at he composed his dramatic pieces, the "She allants" (acted 1696), which he revised and lled "Once a Lover and always a Lover;" The Jew of Venice," altered from Shak-eare's "Merchant of Venice" (1698); "He-ic Love," a tragedy (1701); "The British nchanters" (1706), a dramatic poem; and Peleus and Thetis," a mask, written to ac-mpany "The Jew of Venice."

The comedies, which he has not printed in s own edition of his works, I never saw; Once a Lover and always a Lover" is said be in a great degree indecent and gross. ranville could not admire without bigotry; copied the wrong as well as the right from s masters, and may be supposed to have rned obscenity from Wycherley, as he learned ythology from Waller.

In his "Jew of Venice," as Rowe remarks, e character of Shylock is made comic, and we e prompted to laughter instead of detestation. It is evident that "Heroic Love" was writ-n and presented on the stage before the death Dryden. It is a mythological tragedy, upon e love of Agamemnon and Chryseis, and erefore easily sunk into neglect, though alsed in verse by Dryden, and in prose by ope.

It is concluded by the wise Ulysses with this eech:

te holds the strings, and men like children move t as they're led; success is from above.

At the accession of Queen Anne, having his rtune improved by bequests from his father, d his uncle the Earl of Bath, he was chosen o parliament for Fowey. He soon after en-ged in a joint translation of the "Invectives ainst Philip," with a design, surely weak d puerile, of turning the thunder of Demos-enes upon the head of Louis.

He afterwards (in 1706) had his estate again gmented by an inheritance from his elder other, Sir Bevil Grenville, who, as he re-rned from the government of Barbadoes, died at sea. He continued to serve in parliament; and in the ninth year of Queen Anne was chosen knight of the shire for Cornwall.

At the memorable change of the ministry (1710) he was made secretary at war, in the place of Mr. Robert Walpole.

Next year, when the violence of party made twelve peers in a day, Mr. Granville became Lord Lansdown Baron Bideford, by a promotion justly remarked to be not invidious, because he was the heir of a family in which two peerages, that of the Earl of Bath and Lord Granville of Potheridge, had lately become extinct. Being now high in the Queen's favour, he (1712) was appointed comptroller of the household, and a privy counsellor, and to his other honours was added the dedication of Pope's "Windsor Forest." He was advanced next year to be treasurer of the household.

Of these favours he soon lost all but his title; for at the accession of King George his place was given to the Earl of Cholmondeley, and he was persecuted with the rest of his party. Having protested against the bill for attainting Ormond and Bolingbroke, he was, after the insurrection in Scotland, seized Sept. 26, 1715, as a suspected man, and confined in the Tower till Feb. 8, 1717, when he was at last released, and restored to his seat in parliament; where (1719) he made a very ardent and animated speech against the repeal of the bill to prevent occasional conformity, which, however, though it was then printed, he has not inserted into his works.

Some time afterwards, (about 1722) being perhaps embarrassed by his profusion, he went into foreign countries, with the usual pretence of recovering his health. In this state of leisure and retirement he received the first volume of Burnet's History, of which he cannot be supposed to have approved the general tendency, and where he thought himself able to detect some particular falsehoods. He therefore undertook the vindication of General Monk from some calumnies of Dr. Burnet, and some misrepresentations of Mr. Echard. This was answered civilly by Mr. Thomas Burnet and Oldmixon; and more roughly by Dr. Colbatch.

His other historical performance is a defence of his relation Sir Richard Greenville, whom Lord Clarendon has shown in a form very unamiable. So much is urged in this apology to justify many actions that have been represented as culpable, and to palliate the rest, that the reader is reconciled for the greater part; and it is made very probable that Clarendon was by personal enmity disposed to think the worst of Greenville, as Greenville was also very willing to thing the worst of Clarendon. These pieces were published at his return to England.

Being now desirous to conclude his labours,

and enjoy his reputati n, he published (1732) a very beautiful and splendid edition of his works, in which he omitted what he disapproved, and enlarged what seemed deficient.

He now went to court, and was kindly received by Queen Caroline; to whom and to the Princess Anne he presented his works, with verses on the blank leaves, with which he concluded his poetical labours.

He died in Hanover-square, Jan. 30, 1735, having a few days before buried his wife, the Lady Anne Villiers, widow to Mr. Thynne, by whom he had four daughters, but no son.

Writers commonly derive their reputation from their works; but there are works which owe their reputation to the character of the writer. The public sometimes has its favourites whom it rewards for one species of excellence with the honour due to another. From him whom we reverence for his beneficence, we do not willingly withhold the praise of genius: a man of exalted merit becomes at once an accomplished writer, as a beauty finds no great difficulty in passing for a wit.

Granville was a man illustrious by his birth, and therefore attracted notice; since he is by Pope styled "the polite," he must be supposed elegant in his manners, and generally loved; he was in times of contest and turbulence steady to his party, and obtained that esteem which is always conferred upon firmness and consistency. With those advantages, having learned the art of versifying, he declared himself a poet: and his claim to the laurel was allowed.

But by a critic of a later generation, who takes up his book without any favourable prejudices, the praise already received will be thought sufficient; for his works do not show him to have had much comprehension from nature or illumination from learning. He seems to have had no ambition above the imitation of Waller, of whom he has copied the faults, and very little more. He is for ever amusing himself with puerilities of mythology; his King is Jupiter; who, if the Queen brings no children, has a barren Juno. The Queen is compounded of Juno, Venus, and Minerva. His poem on the Dutchess of Grafton's law-suit, after having rattled awhile with Juno and Pallas, Mars and Alcides, Cassiope, Niobe, and the Propetides, Hercules, Minos, and Rhadamanthus, at last concludes its folly with profaneness.

His verses to Mira, which are most frequently mentioned, have little in them of either art or nature, of the sentiments of a lover or the language of a poet: there may be found, now and then, a happier effort; but they are commonly feeble and unaffecting, or forced and extravagant.

His little pieces are seldom either sprightly or elegant, either keen or witty. They are trifles written by idleness and published by vanity. But his prologues and epilogues have a just claim to praise.

The "Progress of Beauty" seems one of his most elaborate pieces, and is not deficient in splendour and gayety; but the merit of original thought is wanting. Its highest praise is the spirit with which he celebrates King James's consort, when she was a queen no longer.

The "Essay on unnatural Flights in Poetry" is not inelegant nor injudicious, and has something of vigour beyond most of his other performances: his precepts are just, and his cautions proper; they are indeed not new, but in a didactic poem novelty is to be expected only in the ornaments and illustrations. His poetical precepts are accompanied with agreeable and instructive notes.

The Mask of "Peleus and Thetis" has here and there a pretty line; but it is not always melodious, and the conclusion is wretched.

In his "British Enchanters" he has bidden defiance to all chronology, by confounding the inconsistent manners of different ages; but the dialogue has often the air of Dryden's rhyming plays: and his songs are lively, though not very correct. This is, I think, far the best of his works; for, if it has many faults, it has likewise passages which are at least pretty, though they do not rise to any high degree of excellence.

YALDEN.

Thomas Yalden, the sixth son of Mr. John Yalden, of Sussex, was born in the city of Exeter, in 1671. Having been educated in the grammar school belonging to Magdalen College, in Oxford, he was, in 1690, at the age of nineteen, admitted commoner of Magdalen Hall, under the tuition of Josiah Pullen, a man whose name is still remembered in the University. He became next year one of the scholars of Magdalen College, where he was distinguished by a lucky accident.

It was his turn, one day, to pronounce a de

mation: and Dr. Hough, the president, happening to attend, thought the composition too good to be the speaker's. Some time after, the doctor finding him a little irregularly busy in the library, set him an exercise for punishment; and, that he might not be deceived by any artifice, locked the door. Yalden, as it happened, had been lately reading on the subject given, and produced with little difficulty a composition which so pleased the president, that he told him his former suspicions, and promised to favour him.

Among his contemporaries in the College were Addison and Sacheverell, men who were in those times friends, and who both adopted Yalden to their intimacy. Yalden continued, throughout life, to think as probably he thought at first, and did not forfeit the friendship of Addison.

When Namur was taken by King William, Yalden made an ode. There never was any reign more celebrated by the poets than that of William, who had very little regard for song himself, but happened to employ ministers who abused themselves with the praise of patronage. Of this ode mention is made in a humorous poem of that time, called "The Oxford Lauret:" in which, after many claims had been made and rejected, Yalden is represented as demanding the laurel, and as being called to his trial, instead of receiving a reward:

> "crime was for being a felon in verse,
> And presenting his theft to the King;
> The first was a trick not uncommon or scarce.
> But the last was an impudent thing;
> For what he had stolen was so little worth stealing,
> They forgave him the damage and costs,
> And he ta'en the whole ode as he took it peace-
> meal,
> They had fined him but ten-pence at most.

The poet whom he was charged with robbing was Congreve.

He wrote another poem, on the death of the Duke of Gloucester.

In 1700 he became fellow of the College; and that year, entering into orders, was presented by the society with a living in Warwickshire,* assistent with his fellowship, and chosen lecturer of moral philosophy, a very honourable office.

On the accession of Queen Anne he wrote another poem; and is said, by the author of the "Biographia," to have declared himself of the party who had the honourable distinction of high-churchmen.

In 1706 he was received into the family of the Duke of Beaufort. Next year he became doctor in divinity, and soon after resigned his fellowship and lecture, and, as a token of his gratitude, gave the College a picture of their founder.

He was made rector of Chalton and Cleanville,* two adjoining towns and benefices in Hertfordshire; and had the prebends, or sinecures, of Deans, Hains, and Pendles, in Devonshire. He had before† been chosen, in 1698, preacher of Bridewell Hospital, upon the resignation of Dr. Atterbury.‡

From this time he seems to have led a quiet and inoffensive life, till the clamour was raised about Atterbury's plot. Every loyal eye was on the watch for abettors or partakers of the horrid conspiracy; and Dr. Yalden, having some acquaintance with the bishop, and being familiarly conversant with Kelly, his secretary, fell under suspicion, and was taken into custody.

Upon his examination he was charged with a dangerous correspondence with Kelly. The correspondence he acknowledged; but maintained that it had no treasonable tendency. His papers were seized; but nothing was found that could fix a crime upon him, except two words in his pocket-book, *thorough-paced doctrine*. This expression the imagination of his examiners had impregnated with treason, and the Doctor was enjoined to explain them. Thus pressed, he told them that the words had lain unheeded in his pocket-book from the time of Queen Anne, and that he was ashamed to give an account of them; but the truth was, that he had gratified his curiosity one day, by hearing Daniel Burgess in the pulpit, and those words were a memorial hint of a remarkable sentence by which he warned his congregation to "beware of thorough-paced doctrine, that doctrine which, coming in at one ear, passes through the head, and goes out at the other."

Nothing worse than this appearing in his papers, and no evidence arising against him, he was set at liberty.

It will not be supposed that a man of this character attained high dignities in the church; but he still retained the friendship and frequented the conversation of a very numerous and splended set of acquaintance. He died July 16, 1736, in the 66th year of his age.

Of his poems, many are of that irregular kind which, when he formed his poetical character, was supposed to be Pindaric. Having fixed his attention on Cowley as a model, he has attempted in some sort to rival him, and has

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* The vicarage of Willoughby, which he resigned 1708.—N.

* This preferment was given him by the Duke of Beaufort.—N.

† Not long after.

‡ Dr. Atterbury retained the office of preacher at Bridewell till his promotion to the bishopric of Rochester. Dr. Yalden succeeded him as preacher, in June, 1713.—N.

written a "Hymn to Darkness," evidently as a counterpart to Cowley's "Hymn to Light."

This Hymn seems to be his best performance, and is, for the most part, imagined with great vigour and expressed with great propriety. I will not transcribe it. The seven first stanzas are good; but the third, fourth, and seventh, are the best; the eighth seems to involve a contradiction; the tenth is exquisitely beautiful; the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth, are partly mythological and partly religious, and therefore not suitable to each other: he might better have made the whole merely philosophical.

There are two stanzas in this poem where Yalden may be suspected, though hardly convicted, of having consulted the "Hymnus ad Umbram" of Wowerus, in the sixth stanza, which answers in some sort to these lines:

Illa suo præest nocturnis numine sacris—
Perque vias errare novis dat spectra figuris,
Manesque excitos medios ululare per agros
Sub noctem, et questu notos complere penates.

And again, at the conclusion:

Illa suo senium secludit corpore toto
Haud numerans jugi fugientia secula lapsu,
Ergo ubi postremum mundi compage solutâ
Hanc rerum molem suprema absumpserit hora
Ipsa leves cineres nube amplectetur opacâ,
Et prisco imperio rursus dominabitur UMBRA.

His "Hymn to Light" is not equal to the oth
He seems to think that there is an east absol
and positive where the morning rises.

In the last stanza, having mentioned the su
den irruption of new-created light, he says,

Awhile the Almighty wondering stood.

He ought to have remembered that infin
knowledge can never wonder. All wonder
the effect of novelty upon ignorance.

Of his other poems it is sufficient to say, th
they deserve perusal, though they are not alwa
exactly polished, though the rhymes are som
times very ill sorted, and though his faults see
rather the omissions of idleness than the neg
gences of enthusiasm.

TICKELL.

Thomas Tickell, the son of the Reverend Richard Tickell, was born in 1686, at Bridekirk, in Cumberland; and in April, 1701, became a member of Queen's College, in Oxford; in 1708 he was made master of arts; and, two years afterwards, was chosen fellow; for which, as he did not comply with the statutes by taking orders, he obtained a dispensation from the crown. He held his fellowship till 1726, and then vacated it, by marrying, in that year, at Dublin.

Tickell was not one of those scholars who wear away their lives in closets; he entered early into the world, and was long busy in public affairs, in which he was initiated under the patronage of Addison, whose notice he is said to have gained by his verses in praise of "Rosamond."

To those verses it would not have been just to deny regard, for they contain some of the most elegant encomiastic strains; and, among the innumerable poems of the same kind, it will be hard to find one with which they need to fear a comparison. It may deserve observation, that, when Pope wrote long afterwards in praise of Addison, he has copied, at least has resembled, Tickell:

Let joy salute fair Rosamonda's shade,
And leaves of myrtle crown the lovely maid.
While now perhaps with Dido's ghost she roves
And hears and tells the story of their loves:
Alike they mourn, alike they bless their fate
Since love, which made them wretched, made th
great;
Nor longer that relentless doom bemoan,
Which gain'd a Virgil and an Addison.

Tick

Then future ages with delight shall see
How Plato's, Bacon's, Newton's, looks agree;
Or in fair series laurelled bards be shown,
A Virgil there, and here an Addison.

Po

He produced another piece of the same ki
at the appearance of "Cato," with equal sk
but not equal happiness.

When the ministers of Queen Anne were n
gotiating with France, Tickell published "T
Prospect of Peace," a poem, of which the te
dency was to reclaim the nation from the pr
of conquest to the pleasures of tranquilli
How far Tickell, whom Swift afterwards me
tioned as *Whiggissimus*, had then connected hi
self with any party, I know not; this poem c
tainly did not flatter the practices or promo

he opinions of the men by whom he was afterwards befriended.

Mr. Addison, however he hated the men then n power, suffered his friendship to prevail over is public spirit, and gave in the "Spectator" uch praises of Tickell's poem, that when, after aving long wished to peruse it, I laid hold on at last, I thought it unequal to the honours hich it had received, and found it a piece to e approved rather than admired. But the ope excited by a work of genius being general nd indefinite, is rarely gratified. It was read t that time with so much favour, that six edi- ions were sold.

At the arrival of King George he sung "The Royal Progress;" which being inserted in the Spectator" is well known; and of which it is ast to say, that it is neither high nor low.

The poetical incident of most importance in Tickell's life was his publication of the first ook of the "Iliad," as translated by himself, n apparent opposition to Pope's "Homer," of hich the first part made its entrance into the orld at the same time.

Addison declared that the rival versions were oth good, but that Tickell's was the best that ver was made; and with Addison, the wits, is adherents and followers, were certain to oncur. Pope does not appear to have been uch dismayed; "for," says he, "I have the own, that is the mob, on my side." But he emarks, that "it is common for the smaller arty to make up in diligence what they want numbers; he appeals to the people as his roper judges; and, if they are not inclined to ondemn him, he is in little care about the high- yers at Button's."

Pope did not long think Addison an impar- al judge; for he considered him as the writer f Tickell's version. The reasons for his sus- icion I will literally transcribe from Mr. pence's Collection.

"There had been a coldness (said Mr. Pope) etween Mr. Addison and me for some time; nd we had not been in company together, for a ood while, any where but at Button's Coffee- ouse, where I used to see him almost every ay.—On his meeting me there one day in par- icular, he took me aside, and said he should be lad to dine with me, at such a tavern, if I tayed till those people were gone (Budgell and Philips). We went accordingly; and after inner Mr. Addison said, 'That he had wanted or some time to talk with me; that his friend Tickell had formerly, whilst at Oxford, trans- ated the first book of the 'Iliad;' that he de- igned to print it, and had desired him to look t over; that he must therefore beg that I would ot desire him to look over my first book, be- ause, if he did, it would have the air of double- lealing.' I assured him that I did not at all ake it ill of Mr. Tickell that he was going to publish his translation; that he certainly had as much right to translate any author as myself; and that publishing both was entering on a fair stage. I then added, that I would not desire him to look over my first book of the 'Iliad,' because he had looked over Mr. Tickell's; but could wish to have the benefit of his observations on the second, which I had then finished, and which Mr. Tickell had not touched upon. Accordingly I sent him the second book the next morning; and Mr. Addison a few days after returned it, with very high commendations. Soon after it was generally known that Mr. Tickell was publishing the first book of the 'Iliad,' I met Dr. Young in the street; and, upon our falling into that subject, the Doctor expressed a great deal of surprise at Tickell's having had such a translation so long by him. He said, that it was inconceivable to him, and that there must be some mistake in the matter; that each used to communicate to the other whatever verses they wrote, even to the least things; that Tickell could not have been busied in so long a work there without his knowing something of the matter; and that he had never heard a single word of it till on this occasion. The surprise of Dr. Young, together with what Steele has said against Tickell, in relation to this affair, make it highly probable that there was some underhand dealing in that business; and indeed Tickell himself, who is a very fair worthy man, has since in a manner as good as owned it to me. When it was introduced into a conversation between Mr. Tickell and Mr. Pope, by a third person, Tickell did not deny it; which, considering his honour and zeal for his departed friend, was the same as owning it."

Upon these suspicions, with which Dr. Warburton hints that other circumstances concurred, Pope always in his "Art of Sinking" quotes this book as the work of Addison.

To compare the two translations would be tedious; the palm is now given universally to Pope; but I think the first lines of Tickell's were rather to be preferred; and Pope seems to have since borrowed something from them in the correction of his own.

When the Hanover succession was disputed, Tickell gave what assistance his pen would supply. His "Letter to Avignon" stands high among party poems; it expresses contempt without coarseness, and superiority without insolence. It had the success which it deserved, being five times printed.

He was now intimately united to Mr. Addison, who, when he went into Ireland as secretary to the Lord Sunderland, took him thither and employed him in public business; and when (1717) afterwards he rose to be secretary of state, made him under secretary. Their friendship seems to have continued without abatement; for when Addison died, he left him

the charge of publishing his works, with a solemn recommendation to the patronage of Craggs.

To these works he prefixed an Elegy on the Author, which could owe none of its beauties to the assistance which might be suspected to have strengthened or embellished his earlier compositions; but neither he nor Addison ever produced nobler lines than are contained in the third and fourth paragraphs; nor is a more sublime or more elegant funeral-poem to be found in the whole compass of English literature.

He was afterwards (about 1725) made secretary to the Lords Justices of Ireland, a place of great honour; in which he continued till 1740, when he died on the 23d of April, at Bath.

Of the poems yet unmentioned the longest "Kensington Gardens," of which the versifica tion is smooth and elegant, but the fiction un skilfully compounded of Grecian deities an Gothic fairies. Neither species of those e ploded beings could have done much; and wh they are brought together they only make ea other contemptible. To Tickell, however, ca not be refused a high place among the min poets: nor should it be forgotten that he w one of the contributors to the "Spectator." With respect to his personal character, he is said to have been a man of gay conversatio at least a temperate lover of wine and co pany, and in his domestic relations witho censure.

HAMMOND.

Of Mr. Hammond, though he be well remembered as a man esteemed and caressed by the elegant and the great, I was at first able to obtain no other memorials than such as are supplied by a book called "Cibber's Lives of the Poets;" of which I take this opportunity to testify, that it was not written, nor, I believe, ever seen, by either of the Cibbers: but was the work of Robert Shiels, a native of Scotland, a man of very acute understanding, though with little scholastic education, who, not long after the publication of his work, died in London of a consumption. His life was virtuous, and his end was pious. Theophilus Cibber, then a prisoner for debt, imparted, as I was told, his name for ten guineas. The manuscript of Shiels is now in my possession.

I have since found that Mr. Shiels, though he was no negligent inquirer, had been misled by false accounts; for he relates that James Hammond, the Author of the Elegies, was the son of a Turkey merchant, and had some office at the Prince of Wales's court, till love of a lady, whose name was Dashwood, for a time disordered his understanding. He was unextinguishably amorous, and his mistress inexorably cruel.

Of this narrative, part is true and part false. He was the second son of Anthony Hammond, a man of note among the wits, poets, and parliamentary orators, in the beginning of this century, who was allied to Sir Robert Walpole by marrying his sister.* He was born about 1710, and educated at Westminster schoo but it does not appear that he was of any u versity.* He was equerry to the Prince Wales, and seems to have come very early in public notice, and to have been distinguished those whose friendships prejudiced mankind that time in favour of the man on whom th were bestowed; for he was the companion Cobham, Lyttelton, and Chesterfield. He said to have divided his life between pleasu and books; in his retirement forgetting town, and in his gayety losing the student. his literary hours all the effects are here hibited, of which the Elegies were writt very early, and the prologue not long before death.

In 1741, he was chosen into parliament Truro, in Cornwall, probably one of those w were elected by the Prince's influence; a died next year, in June, at Stowe, the famo seat of Lord Cobham. His mistress long o lived him, and in 1779 died unmarried. T character which her lover bequeathed her w indeed, not likely to attract courtship.

The Elegies were published after his deat and while the writer's name was remembere with fondness, they were read with a resoluti to admire them.

The recommendatory preface of the edit

* This account is still erroneous. James Hammond, our Author, was of a different family, the second son of Anthony Hammond, of Somersham-place, the county of Huntingdon, Esq. See Gent. M Vol. lvii. p. 780.—R.

* Mr. Cole gives him to Cambridge. MSS. At ae Cantab. in Mus. Brit.—C.

who was then believed, and is now affirmed, by Dr. Maty to be the Earl of Chesterfield, raised strong prejudices in their favour.

But of the prefacer, whoever he was, it may be reasonably suspected that he never read the poems; for he professes to value them for a very high species of excellence, and recommends them as the genuine effusions of the mind, which expresses a real passion in the language of nature. But the truth is, these Elegies have neither passion, nature, nor manners. Where there is fiction, there is no passion; he that describes himself as a shepherd, and his Neæra or Delia as a shepherdess, and talks of goats and lambs, feels no passion. He that courts his mistress with Roman imagery deserves to lose her: for she may with good reason suspect his sincerity. Hammond has few sentiments drawn from nature, and few images from modern life. He produces nothing but frigid pedantry. It would be hard to find in all his productions three stanzas that deserve to be remembered.

Like other lovers, he threatens the lady with dying; and what then shall follow?

Wilt thou in tears thy lover's corse attend?
With eyes averted light the solemn pyre;
Till all around the doleful flames ascend,
Then, slowly sinking, by degrees expire?

To soothe the hovering soul be thine the care,
With plaintive cries to lead the mournful band;
In sable weeds the golden vase to bear,
And cull my ashes with thy trembling hand.

Panchaia's odours be their costly feast,
And all the pride of Asia's fragrant year;
Give them the treasures of the farthest east;
And, what is still more precious, give thy tear.

Surely no blame can fall upon a nymph who rejected a swain of so little meaning.

His verses are not rugged, but they have no sweetness; they never glide in a stream of melody. Why Hammond or other writers have thought the quatrain of ten syllables elegiac, it is difficult to tell. The character of the Elegy is gentleness and tenuity; but this stanza has been pronounced by Dryden, whose knowledge of English metre was not inconsiderable, to be the most magnificent of all the measures which our language affords.

SOMERVILE.

Of Mr. * Somervile's life I am not able to say any thing that can satisfy curiosity.

He was a gentleman whose estate was in Warwickshire: his house, where he was born in 1692, is called Edston, a seat inherited from a long line of ancestors; for he was said to be of the first family in his county. He tells of himself that he was born near the Avon's banks. He was bred at Winchester-school, and was elected fellow of New College. It does not appear that in the places of his education he exhibited any uncommon proofs of genius or literature. His powers were first displayed in the country, where he was distinguished as a poet, a gentleman, and a skilful and useful justice of the peace.

Of the close of his life, those whom his poems have delighted will read with pain the following account, copied from the letters of his friend Shenstone, by whom he was too much resembled.

"— Our old friend Somervile is dead! I did not imagine I could have been so sorry as I find myself on this occasion.—*Sublatum quærimus.* I can now excuse all his foibles; impute them to age, and to distress of circumstances; the last of these considerations wrings my very soul to think on. For a man of high spirit, conscious of having (at least in one production) generally pleased the world, to be plagued and threatened by wretches that are low in every sense; to be forced to drink himself into pains of the body, in order to get rid of the pains of the mind, is a misery."

He died July 19, 1742, and was buried at Wotton, near Henley on Arden.

His distresses need not be much pitied; his estate is said to have been fifteen hundred a year, which by his death devolved to Lord Somervile of Scotland. His mother, indeed, who lived till ninety, had a jointure of six hundred.

It is with regret that I find myself not better enabled to exhibit memorials of a writer who at least must be allowed to have set a good example to men of his own class, by devoting part of his time to elegant knowledge; and who has shown, by the subjects which his poetry has adorned,

* William.

that it is practicable to be at once a skilful sportsman and a man of letters.

Somervile has tried many modes of poetry; and though perhaps he has not in any reached such excellence as to raise much envy, it may commonly be said at least, that "he writes very well for a gentleman." His serious pieces are sometimes elevated, and his trifles are sometimes elegant. In his verses to Addison, the couplet which mentions Clio is written with the most exquisite delicacy of praise; it exhibits one of those happy strokes that is seldom attained. In his Odes to Marlborough there are beautiful lines; but in the second ode he shows that he knew little of his hero, when he talks of his private virtues. His subjects are commonly such as require no great depth of thought or energy of expression. His Fables are generally stale, and therefore excite no curiosity. Of his favourite, "The Two Springs," the fiction is unnatural and the moral inconsequential. In his Tales there is too much coarseness, with too little care of language, and not sufficient rapidity of narration.

His great work is his "Chase," which h undertook in his maturer age, when his ear wa improved to the approbation of blank verse, which however his two first lines gave a ba specimen. To this poem praise cannot be totall denied. He is allowed by sportsmen to writ with great intelligence of his subject, which the first requisite to excellence; and though it impossible to interest the common readers verse in the dangers or pleasures of the chase, h has done all that transition and variety coul easily effect; and has with great propriety en larged his plan by the modes of hunting used i other countries.

With still less judgment did he choose blan verse as the vehicle of rural sports. If blan verse be not tumid and gorgeous, it is cripple prose; and familiar images in laboured la guage have nothing to recommend them b absurd novelty, which, wanting the attra tions of nature, cannot please long. One e cellence of "The Splendid Shilling" is, that is short. Disguise can gratify no longer th it deceives.

SAVAGE.*

It has been observed in all ages, that the advantages of nature or of fortune have contributed very little to the promotion of happiness; and that those whom the splendour of their rank or the extent of their capacity have placed upon the summits of human life, have not often given any just occasion to envy in those who look up to them from a lower station; whether it be that apparent superiority incites great designs, and great designs are naturally liable to fatal miscarriages, or that the general lot of mankind is misery, and the misfortunes of those whose eminence drew upon them an universal attention have been more carefully recorded, because they were more generally observed, and have in reality been only more conspicuous than those of others, not more frequent or more severe.

That affluence and power advantages extrinsic and adventitious, and therefore easily separab from those by whom they are possessed, shou very often flatter the mind with expectations felicity which they cannot give, raises no a tonishment; but it seems rational to hope, th intellectual greatness should produce better e fects; that minds qualified for great attai ments should first endeavour their own benefi and that they who are most able to teach othe the way to happiness, should with most ce tainty follow it themselves.

But this expectation, however plausible, h been very frequently disappointed. The hero of literary as well as civil history have bee very often no less remarkable for what they ha suffered, than for what they have achieve and volumes have been written only to enumera the miseries of the learned, and relate their u happy lives and untimely deaths.

To these mournful narratives, I am about add the life of Richard Savage, a man who writings entitle him to an eminent rank in t classes of learning, and whose misfortunes clai a degree of compassion not always due to t unhappy, as they were often the consequenc of the crimes of others, rather than his own.

In the year 1697, Anne Countess of Maccle

* The first edition of this interesting narrative, according to Mr. Boswell, was published in 1744, by Roberts. The second, now before me, bears date 1748, and was published by Cave. Very few alterations were made by the Author when he added it to the present collection.—C.

eld, having lived some time upon very uneasy erms with her husband, thought a public con-ession of adultery the most obvious and expedi-ous method of obtaining her liberty; and herefore declared, that the child with which ie was then great was begotten by the Earl Rivers. This, as may be imagined, made her usband no less desirous of a separation than erself, and he prosecuted his design in the most ffectual manner; for he applied not to the ec-lesiastical courts for a divorce, but to the par-ament for an act, by which his marriage night be dissolved, the nuptial contract totally nnulled, and the children of his wife illegiti-nated. This act, after the usual deliberation, e obtained, though without the approbation of ome, who considered marriage as an affair only ognizable by ecclesiastical judges;* and on March 3d was separated from his wife, whose ortune, which was very great, was repaid her, nd who, having, as well as her husband, the iberty of making another choice, was in a short ime married to Colonel Brett.

While the Earl of Macclesfield was prosecut-ng this affair, his wife was, on the 10th of January, 1697-8, delivered of a son; and the Earl Rivers, by appearing to consider him as his own, left none any reason to doubt of the sin-erity of her declaration; for he was his god-father, and gave him his own name, which was by his direction inserted in the register of St. Andrew's parish, in Holborn, but unfortunate-y left him to the care of his mother, whom, as she was now set free from her husband, he probably imagined likely to treat with great tenderness the child that had contributed to so pleasing an event. It is not indeed easy to dis-cover what motives could be found to over-balance that natural affection of a parent, or what interest could be promoted by neglect or cruelty. The dread of shame or of poverty, by which some wretches have been incited to aban-don or to murder their children, cannot be sup-posed to have affected a woman who had pro-claimed her crimes and solicited reproach, and on whom the clemency of the legislature had undeservedly bestowed a fortune, which would have been very little diminished by the expenses which the care of her child could have brought upon her. It was therefore not likely that she would be wicked without temptation; that she would look upon her son from his birth with a kind of resentment and abhorrence; and, in-stead of supporting, assisting, and defending him, delight to see him struggling with misery, or that she would take every opportunity of ag-gravating his misfortunes, and obstructing his resources, and with an implacable and restless cruelty continue her persecution from the first hour of his life to the last.

But whatever were her motives, no sooner was her son born, than she discovered a resolu-tion of disowning him; and in a very short time removed him from her sight, by committ-ing him to the care of a poor woman, whom she directed to educate him as her own, and enjoined never to inform him of his true parents.

Such was the beginning of the life of Richard Savage. Born with a legal claim to honour and to affluence, he was in two months illegiti-mated by the parliament, and disowned by his mother, doomed to poverty and obscurity, and launched upon the ocean of life, only that he might be swallowed by its quicksands, or dashed upon its rocks.

His mother could not indeed infect others with the same cruelty. As it was impossible to avoid the inquiries which the curiosity or ten-derness of her relations made after her child, she was obliged to give some account of the measures she had taken; and her mother, the Lady Mason, whether in approbation of her design, or to prevent more criminal contri-vances, engaged to transact with the nurse, to pay her for her care, and to superintend the education of the child.

In this charitable office she was assisted by his godmother, Mrs. Lloyd, who, while she lived, always looked upon him with that ten-derness which the barbarity of his mother made peculiarly necessary; but her death, which hap-pened in his tenth year, was another of the misfortunes of his childhood; for though she kindly endeavoured to alleviate his loss by a legacy of three hundred pounds, yet, as he had none to prosecute his claim, to shelter him from oppression, or call in law to the assistance of justice, her will was eluded by the executors, and no part of the money was ever paid.

He was, however, not yet wholly abandoned. The Lady Mason still continued her care, and directed him to be placed at a small grammar-school near St. Alban's, where he was called by the name of his nurse, without the least intima-tion that he had a claim to any other.

Here he was initiated in literature, and passed through several of the classes, with what rapidity or with what applause cannot now be known. As he always spoke with respect of his master, it is probable that the mean rank in which he

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* This year was made remarkable by the dissolu-tion of a marriage solemnized in the face of the church.—Salmon's Review.

The following protest is registered in the books of the House of Lords.

Dissentient,

Because we conceive that this is the first bill of that nature that hath passed, where there was not a divorce first obtained in the Spiritual Court; which we look upon as an ill precedent, and may be of dangerous consequences in the future.

Halifax. Rochester.

then appeared did not hinder his genius from being distinguished, or his industry from being rewarded; and if in so low a state he obtained distinction and rewards, it is not likely that they were gained but by genius and industry.

It is very reasonable to conjecture, that his application was equal to his abilities, because his improvement was more than proportioned to the opportunities which he enjoyed; nor can it be doubted, that if his earliest productions had been preserved, like those of happier students, we might in some have found vigorous sallies of that sprightly humour which distinguishes "The Author to be let," and in others strong touches of that ardent imagination which painted the solemn scenes of "The Wanderer."

While he was thus cultivating his genius, his father the Earl Rivers was seized with a distemper, which in a short time put an end to his life.* He had frequently inquired after his son, and had always been amused with fallacious and evasive answers; but, being now in his own opinion on his deathbed, he thought it his duty to provide for him among his other natural children, and therefore demanded a positive account of him, with an importunity not to be diverted or denied. His mother, who could no longer refuse an answer, determined at least to give such as should cut him off for ever from that happiness which competence affords, and therefore declared that he was dead; which is perhaps the first instance of a lie invented by a mother to deprive her son of a provision which was designed him by another, and which she could not expect herself, though he should lose it.

This was therefore an act of wickedness which could not be defeated, because it could not be suspected; the Earl did not imagine there could exist in a human form a mother that would ruin her son without enriching herself, and therefore bestowed upon some other person six thousand pounds, which he had in his will bequeathed to Savage.

The same cruelty which incited his mother to intercept this provision which had been intended him, prompted her in a short time to another project, a project worthy of such a disposition. She endeavoured to rid herself from the dangers of being at any time made known to him, by sending him secretly to the American plantations.†

By whose kindness this scheme was counteracted, or by whose interposition she was induced to lay aside her design, I know not: it is not improbable that the Lady Mason might persuade or compel her to desist, or perhaps she could not easily find accomplices wicked enough to concur in so cruel an action; for it may be conceived, that those who had a long gradation of guilt hardened their hear against the sense of common wickedness, wou yet be shocked at the design of a mother to e pose her son to slavery and want, to expose hi without interest, and without provocation; ar Savage might on this occasion find protecto and advocates among those who had long trad in crimes, and whom compassion had nev touched before.

Being hindered, by whatever means, fro banishing him into another country, she form soon after a scheme for burying him in pover and obscurity in his own; and that his stati of life, if not the place of his residence, mig keep him for ever at a distance from her, a ordered him to be placed with a shoemaker Holborn, that, after the usual time of trial, might become his apprentice.*

It is generally reported, that this project w for some time successful, and that Savage w employed at the awl longer than he was willi to confess; nor was it perhaps any great adva tage to him that an unexpected discovery d termined him to quit his occupation.

About this time his nurse, who had alwa treated him as her own son, died; and it w natural for him to take care of those effec which by her death were, as he imagined, b come his own; he therefore went to her hou opened her boxes, and examined her pape among which he found some letters written her by the Lady Mason, which informed hi of his birth, and the reasons for which it w concealed.

He was no longer satisfied with the emplo ment which had been allotted him, but thoug he had a right to share the affluence of h mother; and therefore without scruple appli to her as her son, and made use of every art awaken her tenderness, and attract her regar But neither his letters, nor the interposition those friends which his merit or his distre procured him, made any impression upon h mind. She still resolved to neglect, though s could no longer disown him.

It was to no purpose that he frequently so cited her to admit him to see her; she avoid him with the most vigilant precaution, and o dered him to be excluded from her house, whomsoever he might be introduced, and wh reason soever he might give for entering it.

Savage was at the same time so touched wi the discovery of his real mother, that it was h frequent practice to walk in the dark evening for several hours before her door, in hopes seeing her as she might come by accident to th window, or cross her apartment with a cand in her hand.

* He died August 18th, 1712.—R.

† Savage's Preface to his Miscellanies.

* Savage's Preface to his Miscellanies.

† See the "Plain Dealer."

But all his assiduity and tenderness were without effect, for he could neither soften her heart nor open her hand, and was reduced to the utmost miseries of want, while he was endeavouring to awaken the affection of a mother. He was therefore obliged to seek some other means of support: and, having no profession, became by necessity an author.

At this time the attention of all the literary world was engrossed by the Bangorian controversy which filled the press with pamphlets, and the coffee-houses with disputants. Of this subject, as most popular, he made choice for his first attempt, and without any other knowledge of the question than he had casually collected from conversation, published a poem against the Bishop.*

What was the success or merit of this performance I know not, it was probably lost among the innumerable pamphlets to which that dispute gave occasion. Mr. Savage was himself in a little time ashamed of it, and endeavoured to suppress it, by destroying all the copies that he could collect.

He then attempted a more gainful kind of writing,† and in his eighteenth year offered to the stage a comedy borrowed from a Spanish plot, which was refused by the players, and was therefore given by him to Mr. Bullock, who, having more interest, made some slight alterations, and brought it upon the stage, under the title of "Woman's a Riddle,"‡ but allowed the unhappy Author no part of the profit.

Not discouraged however at his repulse, he wrote two years afterwards "Love in a Veil," another comedy, borrowed likewise from the Spanish, but with little better success than before; for though it was received and acted, yet it appeared so late in the year, that the Author obtained no other advantage from it, than the acquaintance of Sir Richard Steele and Mr. Wilks, by whom he was pitied, caressed, and relieved.

Sir Richard Steele, having declared in his favour with all the ardour of benevolence which constituted his character, promoted his interest with the utmost zeal, related his misfortunes, applauded his merit, took all the opportunities of recommending him, and asserted, that "the inhumanity of his mother, had given him a right to find every good man his father."§

Nor was Mr. Savage admitted to his acquaintance only, but to his confidence, of which he sometimes related an instance too extraordinary to be omitted, as it affords a very just idea of his patron's character.

He was once desired by Sir Richard, with an air of the utmost importance, to come very early to his house the next morning. Mr. Savage came as he had promised, found the chariot at the door, and Sir Richard waiting for him, and ready to go out. What was intended, and whither they were to go, Savage could not conjecture, and was not willing to inquire; but immediately seated himself with Sir Richard. The coachman was ordered to drive, and they hurried with the utmost expedition to Hyde-Park Corner, where they stopped at a petty tavern, and retired to a private room. Sir Richard then informed him, that he intended to publish a pamphlet, and that he had desired him to come thither that he might write for him. They soon sat down to the work. Sir Richard dictated, and Savage wrote, till the dinner that was ordered was put upon the table. Savage was surprised at the meanness of the entertainment, and after some hesitation ventured to ask for some wine, which Sir Richard, not without reluctance, ordered to be brought. They then finished their dinner, and proceeded in their pamphlet, which they concluded in the afternoon.

Mr. Savage then imagined his task was over, and expected that Sir Richard would call for the reckoning, and return home; but his expectations deceived him, for Sir Richard told him that he was without money, and that the pamphlet must be sold before the dinner could be paid for; and Savage was therefore obliged to go and offer their new production for sale for two guineas, which with some difficulty he obtained. Sir Richard then returned home, having retired that day only to avoid his creditors, and composed the pamphlet only to discharge his reckoning.

Mr. Savage related another fact equally uncommon, which, though it has no relation to his life, ought to be preserved. Sir Richard Steele having one day invited to his house a great number of persons of the first quality, they were surprised at the number of liveries which surrounded the table; and, after dinner, when wine and mirth had set them free from the observation of rigid ceremony, one of them inquired of Sir Richard, how such an expensive train of domestics could be consistent with his fortune. Sir Richard very frankly confessed, that they were fellows of whom he would very willingly be rid: and being then asked why he did not discharge them, declared that they were bailiffs, who had introduced themselves with an execution, and whom, since he could not send them away, he had thought it convenient to embellish with liveries, that they might do him credit while they stayed.

His friends were diverted with the expedient, and by paying the debt discharged their attendance, having obliged Sir Richard to promise

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* It was called "The Battle of the Pamphlets."

† Jacob's Lives of the Dramatic Poets.—Dr. J.

‡ This play was printed first in 8vo.; and afterwards in 12mo. the fifth edition.—Dr. J.

§ "Plain Dealer."—Dr. J.

that they should never again find him graced with a retinue of the same kind.

Under such a tutor Mr. Savage was not likely to learn prudence or frugality; and perhaps many of the misfortunes which the want of those virtues brought upon him in the following parts of his life, might be justly imputed to so unimproving an example.

Nor did the kindness of Sir Richard end in common favours. He proposed to have established him in some settled scheme of life, and to have contracted a kind of alliance with him, by marrying him to a natural daughter on whom he intended to bestow a thousand pounds. But, though he was always lavish of future bounties, he conducted his affairs in such a manner, that he was very seldom able to keep his promises, or execute his own intentions; and, as he never was able to raise the sum which he had offered, the marriage was delayed. In the mean time he was officiously informed, that Mr. Savage had ridiculed him; by which he was so much exasperated, that he withdrew the allowance which he had paid him, and never afterwards admitted him to his house.

It is not indeed unlikely that Savage might by his imprudence expose himself to the malice of a talebearer; for his patron had many follies, which, as his discernment easily discovered, his imagination might sometimes incite him to mention too ludicrously. A little knowledge of the world is sufficient to discover that such weakness is very common, and that there are few who do not sometimes, in the wantonness of thoughtless mirth, or the heat of transient resentment, speak of their friends and benefactors with levity and contempt, though in their cooler moments they want neither sense of their kindness, nor reverence for their virtue: the fault therefore of Mr. Savage was rather negligence than ingratitude. But Sir Richard must likewise be acquitted of severity, for who is there that can patiently bear contempt, from one whom he has relieved and supported, whose establishment he has laboured, and whose interest he has promoted?

He was now again abandoned to fortune without any other friend than Mr. Wilks; a man, who, whatever were his abilities or skill as an actor, deserves at least to be remembered for his virtues,* which are not often to be found in the world, and perhaps less often in his p fession than in others. To be humane, ger ous, and candid, is a very high degree of m in any case, but those qualities deserve s greater praise, when they are found in t condition which makes almost every other m for whatever reason, contemptuous, insole petulant, selfish, and brutal.

As Mr. Wilks was one of those to whom lamity seldom complained without relief, naturally took an unfortunate wit into his p tection, and not only assisted him in any cas distresses, but continued an equal and stea kindness to the time of his death.

By his interposition Mr. Savage once obtain from his mother* fifty pounds, and a prom of one hundred and fifty more; but it was t fate of this unhappy man, that few promi of any advantage to him were performed. H mother was infected, among others, with t general madness of the South Sea traffic; a having been disappointed in her expectatio refused to pay what perhaps nothing but t prospect of sudden affluence prompted her promise.

Being thus obliged to depend upon the frien ship of Mr. Wilks, he was consequently an siduous frequenter of the theatres; and in short time the amusements of the stage to such possession of his mind, that he never w absent from a play in several years.

This constant attendance naturally procur him the acquaintance of the players, ar among others, of Mrs. Oldfield, who was much pleased with his conversation, and touc ed with his misfortunes, that she allowed him settled pension of fifty pounds a year, whi was during her life regularly paid.

* As it is a loss to mankind when any good action is forgotten, I shall insert another instance of Mr. Wilks's generosity, very little known. Mr. Smith, a gentleman educated at Dublin, being hindered, by an impediment in his pronunciation, from engaging in orders, for which his friends designed him, left his own country, and came to London in quest of employment, but found his solicitations fruitless, and his necessities every day more pressing. In this distress he wrote a tragedy, and offered it to the players, by whom it was rejected. Thus were his last hopes defeated, and he had no other prosp than of the most deplorable poverty. But Wilks thought his performance, though not perfe at least worthy of some reward, and therefore fered him a benefit. This favour he improved w so much diligence, that the house afforded him considerable sum, with which he went to Leyd applied himself to the study of physic, and pro cuted his design with so much diligence and succe that, when Dr. Boerhaave was desired by the Cz ina to recommend proper persons to introduce i Russia the practice and study of physic, Dr. Sm was one of those whom he selected. He had considerable pension settled on him at his arriv and was one of the chief physicians at the Russ court.—Dr. J.

A letter from Dr. Smith in Russia, to Mr. Wil is printed in Chetwood's "History of the Stag —R.

* "This," says Dr. Johnson, "I write upon credit of the author of his life, which was publish in 1727; and was a small pamphlet, intended plead his cause with the public while under sente of death for the murder of Mr. James Sinclair, Robinson's Coffee house, at Charing Cross. P 6d. Roberts."—C.

That this act of generosity may receive its ue praise, and that the good actions of Mrs. ldfield may not be sullied by her general aracter, it is proper to mention what Mr. avage often declared, in the strongest terms, at he never saw her alone, or in any other ace than behind the scenes.

At her death he endeavoured to show his atitude in the most decent manner, by wear- g mourning as for a mother; but did not ce- brate her in elegies,* because he knew that o great a profusion of praise would only have vived those faults which his natural equity d not allow him to think less, because they ere committed by one who favoured him: but which, though his virtue would not endea- ur to palliate them, his gratitude would not ffer him to prolong the memory or diffuse the nsure.

In his "Wanderer" he has indeed taken an portunity of mentioning her; but celebrates r not for her virtue, but her beauty, an ex- llence which none ever denied her; this is the ly encomium with which he has rewarded r liberality, and perhaps he has even in this en too lavish of his praise. He seems to ve thought, that never to mention his bene- ctress would have an appearance of ingrati- ude, though to have dedicated any particular erformance to her memory would only have trayed an officious partiality, that, without altering her character, would have depressed s own.

He had sometimes, by the kindness of Mr. ilks, the advantage of a benefit, on which casions he often received uncommon marks regard and compassion; and was once told the Duke of Dorset, that it was just to con- der him as an injured nobleman, and that in is opinion the nobility ought to think them- lves obliged, without solicitation, to take every portunity of supporting him by their coun- nance and patronage. But he had generally e mortification to hear that the whole interest his mother was employed to frustrate his plications, and that she never left any ex- edient untried by which he might be cut off om the possibility of supporting life. The me disposition she endeavoured to diffuse mong all those over whom nature or fortune ave her any influence, and indeed succeeded o well in her design: but could not always ropagate her effrontery with her cruelty; for, me of those, whom she incited against him, ere ashamed of their own conduct, and boast- d of that relief which they never gave him.

In this censure I do not indiscriminately in- olve all his relations; for he has mentioned with gratitude the humanity of one lady, whose name I am now unable to recollect, and to whom therefore I cannot pay the praises which she deserves for having acted well in opposition to influence, precept, and example.

The punishment which our laws inflict upon those parents who murder their infants is well known, nor has its justice ever been contested; but, if they deserve death who destroy a child in its birth, what pains can be severe enough for her who forbears to destroy him only to inflict sharper miseries upon him; who prolongs his life only to make him miserable; and who exposes him, without care and without pity, to the malice of oppression, the caprices of chance, and the temptations of poverty; who rejoices to see him overwhelmed with calamities; and when his own industry or the charity of others has enabled him to rise for a short time above his miseries, plunges him again into his former distress!

The kindness of his friends not affording him any constant supply, and the prospect of improving his fortune by enlarging his acquaintance necessarily leading him to places of expense, he found it necessary* to endeavour once more at dramatic poetry, for which he was now better qualified by a more extensive knowledge, and longer observation. But having been unsuccessful in comedy, though rather for want of opportunities than genius, he resolved now to try whether he should not be more fortunate in exhibiting a tragedy.

The story which he chose for the subject, was that of Sir Thomas Overbury, a story well adapted to the stage, though perhaps not far enough removed from the present age to admit properly the fictions necessary to complete the plan; for the mind, which naturally loves truth, is always most offended with the violations of those truths of which we are most certain; and we of course conceive those facts most certain, which approach nearest to our own time.

Out of this story he formed a tragedy, which, if the circumstances in which he wrote it be considered, will afford at once an uncommon proof of strength of genius, and evenness of mind, of a serenity not to be ruffled, and an imagination not to be suppressed.

During a considerable part of the time in which he was employed upon this performance, he was without lodging, and often without meat; nor had he any other conveniences for study than the fields or the streets allowed him; there he used to walk and form his speeches, and afterwards step into a shop, beg for a few moments the use of the pen and ink, and write down what he had composed upon paper which he had picked up by accident.

* Chetwood, however, has printed a poem on her eath, which he ascribes to Mr. Savage. See "His- ry of the Stage," p. 206.—R.

* In 1724.

If the performance of a writer thus distressed is not perfect, its faults ought surely to be imputed to a cause very different from want of genius, and must rather excite pity than provoke censure.

But when under these discouragements the tragedy was finished, there yet remained the labour of introducing it on the stage, an undertaking, which, to an ingenuous mind, was in a very high degree vexatious and disgusting; for, having little interest or reputation, he was obliged to submit himself wholly to the players, and admit, with whatever reluctance, the emendations of Mr. Cibber, which he always considered as the disgrace of his performance.

He had indeed in Mr. Hill another critic of a very different class, from whose friendship he received great assistance on many occasions, and whom he never mentioned but with the utmost tenderness and regard. He had been for some time distinguished by him with very particular kindness, and on this occasion it was natural to apply to him as an author of an established character. He therefore sent this tragedy to him, with a short copy of verses,* in which he desired his correction. Mr. Hill, whose humanity and politeness are generally known, readily complied with his request: but as he is remarkable for singularity of sentiment and bold experiments in language, Mr. Savage did not think his play much improved by his innovation, and had even at that time the courage to reject several passages which he could not approve; and, what is still more laudable, Mr. Hill had the generosity not to resent the neglect of his alterations, but wrote the prologue and epilogue, in which he touches on the circumstances of the author with great tenderness.

After all these obstructions and compliances, he was only able to bring his play upon the stage in the summer when the chief actors had retired, and the rest were in possession of the house for their own advantage. Among these, Mr. Savage was admitted to play the part of Sir Thomas Overbury,† by which he gained no great reputation, the theatre being a province for which nature seems not to have designed him; for neither his voice, look, nor gesture, was such as was expected on the stage; and he was so much ashamed of having been reduced to appear as a player, that he always blotted out his name from the list, when a copy of his tragedy was to be shown to his friends.

In the publication of his performance he was more successful; for the rays of genius that glimmered in it, that glimmered through all the mists which poverty and Cibber had be able to spread over it, procured him the not and esteem of many persons eminent for th rank, their virtue, and their wit.

Of this play, acted, printed, and dedicat the accumulated profits arose to a hundr pounds, which he thought at that time a ve large sum, having never been master of so mu before.

In the dedication,* for which he received t guineas, there is nothing remarkable. The p face contains a very liberal encomium on t blooming excellences of Mr. Theophilus Cibb which Mr. Savage could not in the latter p of his life see his friends about to read witho snatching the play out of their hands. T generosity of Mr. Hill did not end on this casion; for afterwards, when Mr. Savage's cessities returned, he encouraged a subscripti to a miscellany of poems in a very extraordi ary manner, by publishing his story in "T Plain Dealer," with some affecting lines, wh he asserts to have been written by Mr. Sav upon the treatment received by him from mother, but of which he was himself the thor, as Mr. Savage afterwards declared. Th lines, and the paper† in which they were serted, had a very powerful effect upon all his mother, whom, by making her cruelty m public, they only hardened in her aversion.

Mr. Hill not only promoted the subscripti to the Miscellany, but furnished likewise greatest part of the poems of which it is co posed, and particularly "The Happy Ma which he published as a specimen.

The subscriptions of those whom these pap should influence to patronise merit in distre without any other solicitation, were directed be left at Button's coffee-house; and Mr. vage going thither a few days afterwards, wi out expectation of any effect from his propo found to his surprise seventy guineas,‡ wh had been sent him in consequence of the co

* Printed in the late collection of his poems.

† It was acted only three nights, the first on June 12, 1723. When the house opened for the winter season it was once more performed for the Author's benefit, Oct. 2.—R.

* To Herbert Tryst, Esq. of Herefordshire Dr. J.

† "The Plain Dealer" was a periodical pap written by Mr. Hill and Mr. Bond, whom Sav called the two contending powers of light and da ness. They wrote by turns each six essays; the character of the work was observed regula to rise in Mr. Hill's week, and fall in Mr. Bon —Dr. J.

‡ The names of those who so generously co buted to his relief, having been mentioned i former account, ought not to be omitted here. T were the Dutchess of Cleveland, Lady Chey Lady Castlemain, Lady Gower, Lady Lechmere, Dutchess Dowager and Dutchess of Rutland, L Strafford, the Countess Dowager of Warwick, Mary Flower, Mrs. Sofuel Noel, Duke of Rutl Lord Gainsborough, Lord Mislington, Mr. John vage.—Dr. J.

assion excited by Mr. Hill's pathetic repre-
ntation.

To this Miscellany he wrote a preface, in
hich he gives an account of his mother's
luelty in a very uncommon strain of humour,
d with a gayety of imagination, which the
ccess of his subscription probably produced.

The dedication is addressed to the Lady Mary
ortley Montagu, whom he flatters without
serve, and to confess the truth, with very
tle art.* The same observation may be ex-
nded to all his dedications; his compliments
e constrained and violent, heaped together
ithout the grace of order, or the decency of
troduction; he seems to have written his
negyrics for the perusal only of his patrons,
d to imagine that he had no other task than
pamper them with praises however gross,
d that flattery would make its way to the
art, without the assistance of elegance or in-
ntion.

Soon afterwards the death of the King fur-
shed a general subject for a poetical contest,
which Mr. Savage engaged, and is allowed
have carried the prize of honour from his
mpetitors; but I know not whether he gained
his performance any other advantage than
e increase of his reputation; though it must
rtainly have been with further views that he
evailed upon himself to attempt a species of
iting, of which all the topics had been long
fore exhausted, and which was made at once
ficult by the multitudes that had failed in it,
d those that had succeeded.

He was now advancing in reputation, and
ough frequently involved in very distressful
mplexities, appeared however to be gaining
on mankind, when both his fame and his life
re endangered by an event, of which it is not
t determined whether it ought to be men-
ned as a crime or a calamity.

On the 20th of November, 1727, Mr. Savage
me from Richmond, where he then lodged,
that he might pursue his studies with less in-
terruption, with an intent to discharge another
lodging which he had in Westminster; and ac-
cidentally meeting two gentlemen his acquaint-
ances, whose names were Merchant and Gre-
gory, he went in with them to a neighbouring
coffee-house, and sat drinking till it was late,
it being in no time of Mr. Savage's life any
part of his character to be the first of the com-
pany that desired to separate. He would will-
ingly have gone to bed in the same house; but
there was not room for the whole company, and
therefore they agreed to ramble about the streets
and divert themselves with such amusements
as should offer themselves till morning.

In this walk they happened unluckily to dis-
cover a light in Robinson's coffee-house, near
Charing Cross, and therefore went in. Mer-
chant with some rudeness demanded a room,
and was told that there was a good fire in the
next parlour, which the company were about to
leave, being then paying their reckoning. Mer-
chant, not satisfied with this answer, rushed
into the room, and was followed by his com-
panions. He then petulantly placed himself
between the company and the fire, and soon
after kicked down the table. This produced a
quarrel, swords were drawn on both sides, and
one Mr. James Sinclair was killed. Savage,
having wounded likewise a maid that held him,
forced his way with Merchant out of the
house; but being intimidated and confused,
without resolution either to fly or stay, they
were taken in a back court by one of the com-
pany, and some soldiers, whom he had called to
his assistance.

Being secured and guarded that night, they
were in the morning carried before three jus-
tices, who committed them to the gatehouse,
from whence, upon the death of Mr. Sinclair,
which happened the same day, they were re-
moved in the night to Newgate, where they
were however treated with some distinction,
exempted from the ignominy of chains, and
confined, not among the common criminals, but
in the press-yard.

When the day of trial came, the court was
crowded in a very unusual manner; and the
public appeared to interest itself as in a cause
of general concern. The witnesses against Mr.
Savage and his friends were, the woman who
kept the house, which was a house of ill fame,
and her maid, the men who were in the room
with Mr. Sinclair, and a woman of the town,
who had been drinking with them, and with
whom one of them had been seen in bed. They
swore in general, that Merchant gave the pro-
vocation, which Savage and Gregory drew their
swords to justify; that Savage drew first, and
that he stabbed Sinclair when he was not in a
posture of defence, or while Gregory command-
ed his sword; that after he had given the

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* This the following extract from it will prove:
' Since our country has been honoured with the
ry of your wit, as elevated and immortal as your
l, it no longer remains a doubt whether your sex
e a strength of mind in proportion to their sweet-
s. There is something in your verses as distin-
shed as your air.—They are as strong as truth, as
p as reason, as clear as innocence, and as
oth as beauty.—They contain a nameless and
uliar mixture of force and grace, which is at once
movingly serene, and so majestically lovely, that
e too amiable to appear any where but in your
es and in your writings.

As fortune is not more my enemy than I am the
my of flattery, I know not how I can forbear
application to your ladyship, because there is
rce a possibility that I should say more than I be-
e, when I am speaking of your excellence."
Dr. J.

thrust he turned pale, and would have retired, but that the maid clung round him, and one of the company endeavoured to detain him, from whom he broke by cutting the maid on the head, but was afterwards taken in a court.

There was some difference in their depositions; one did not see Savage give the wound, another saw it given when Sinclair held his point towards the ground; and the woman of the town asserted, that she did not see Sinclair's sword at all: this difference however was very far from amounting to inconsistency; but it was sufficient to show, that the hurry of the dispute was such, that it was not easy to discover the truth with relation to particular circumstances, and that therefore some deductions were to be made from the credibility of the testimonies.

Sinclair had declared several times before his death, that he received his wound from Savage: nor did Savage at his trial deny the fact, but endeavoured partly to extenuate it, by urging the suddenness of the whole action, and the impossibility of any ill design, or premeditated malice; and partly to justify it by the necessity of self-defence, and the hazard of his own life, if he had lost that opportunity of giving the thrust: he observed, that neither reason nor law obliged a man to wait for the blow which was threatened, and which, if he should suffer it, he might never be able to return; that it was always allowable to prevent an assault, and to preserve life by taking away that of the adversary by whom it was endangered.

With regard to the violence with which he endeavoured to escape, he declared, that it was not his design to fly from justice, or decline a trial, but to avoid the expenses and severities of a prison; and that he intended to have appeared at the bar without compulsion.

This defence, which took up more than an hour, was heard by the multitude that thronged the court with the most attentive and respectful silence; those who thought he ought not to be acquitted, owned that applause could not be refused him; and those who before pitied his misfortunes, now reverenced his abilities.

The witnesses which appeared against him were proved to be persons of characters which did not entitle them to much credit; a common strumpet, a woman by whom strumpets were entertained, and a man by whom they were supported; and the character of Savage was by several persons of distinction asserted to be that of a modest inoffensive man, not inclined to broils or to insolence, and who had to that time been only known for his misfortunes and his wit.

Had his audience been his judges, he had undoubtedly been acquitted; but Mr. Page, who was then upon the bench, treated him with his usual insolence and severity, and when he had summed up the evidence, endeavoured to de-perate the jury, as Mr. Savage used to relate with this eloquent harangue.

"Gentlemen of the jury, you are to consid that Mr. Savage is a very great man, a mu greater man than you or I, gentlemen of t jury; that he wears very fine clothes, mu finer clothes than you or I, gentlemen of t jury; that he has abundance of money in h pocket, much more money than you or I, ge tlemen of the jury; but, gentlemen of the jur is it not a very hard case, gentlemen of the jur that Mr. Savage should therefore kill you me, gentlemen of the jury?"

Mr. Savage, hearing his defence thus mis presented, and the men who were to decide h fate incited against him by invidious compa sons, resolutely asserted, that his case was n candidly explained, and began to recapitula what he had before said with regard to his co dition, and the necessity of endeavouring to e cape the expenses of imprisonment; but t judge having ordered him to be silent, and r peated his orders without effect, command that he should be taken from the bar by force.

The jury then heard the opinion of the judg that good characters were of no weight again positive evidence, though they might turn t scale where it was doubtful: and that thoug when two men attack each other, the death either is only manslaughter; but where one the aggressor, as in the case before them, ar in pursuance of his first attack, kills the other, t law supposes the action, however sudden, to malicious. They then deliberated upon th verdict, and determined that Mr. Savage a Mr. Gregory were guilty of murder; and M Merchant, who had no sword, only of ma slaughter.

Thus ended this memorable trial, which la ed eight hours. Mr. Savage and Mr. Grego were conducted back to prison, where th were more closely confined, and loaded wi irons of fifty pounds weight: four days aft wards they were sent back to the court to r ceive sentence; on which occasion Mr. Sava made, as far as it could be retained in memo the following speech:

"It is now, my Lord, too late to offer a thing by way of defence or vindication; n can we expect from your lordships, in t court, but the sentence which the laws requ you, as judges, to pronounce against men of c calamitous condition.—But we are also p suaded, that as mere men, and out of this s of rigorous justice, you are susceptive of t tender passions, and too humane not to co miserate the unhappy situation of those, wh the law sometimes perhaps—exacts—from y to pronounce upon. No doubt you distingu between offences which arise out of premedi tion, and a disposition habituated to vice or h

morality; and transgressions, which are the unhappy and unforeseen effects of casual absence of reason, and sudden impulse of passion: we therefore hope you will contribute all you can to an extension of that mercy, which the gentlemen of the jury have been pleased to show Mr. Merchant, who (allowing facts as sworn against us by the evidence) has led us into this our calamity. I hope this will not be construed as if we meant to reflect upon that gentleman, or remove any thing from us upon him, or that we repine the more at our fate, because he has no participation of it: no, my Lord; for my part, I declare nothing could more soften my grief, than to be without any companion in so great a misfortune."*

Mr. Savage had now no hopes of life, but from the mercy of the crown, which was very earnestly solicited by his friends, and which, with whatever difficulty the story may obtain belief, was obstructed only by his mother.

To prejudice the Queen against him, she made use of an incident, which was omitted in the order of time, that it might be mentioned together with the purpose which it was made to serve. Mr. Savage, when he had discovered his birth, had an incessant desire to speak to his mother, who always avoided him in public, and refused him admission into her house. One evening walking, as it was his custom, in the street that she inhabited, he saw the door of her house by accident open; he entered it, and, finding no person in the passage to hinder him, went up stairs to salute her. She discovered him before he could enter her chamber, alarmed the family with the most distressful outcries, and, when she had by her screams gathered them about her, ordered them to drive out of the house that villain, who had forced himself in upon her, and endeavoured to murder her. Savage, who had attempted with the most submissive tenderness to soften her rage, hearing her utter so detestable an accusation, thought it prudent to retire; and, I believe, never attempted afterwards to speak to her.

But shocked as he was with her falsehood and her cruelty, he imagined that she intended no other use of her lie, than to set herself free from his embraces and solicitations, and was very far from suspecting that she would treasure it in her memory as an instrument of future wickedness, or that she would endeavour for this fictitious assault to deprive him of his life.

But when the Queen was solicited for his pardon, and informed of the severe treatment which he had suffered from his judge, she answered that however unjustifiable might be the manner of his trial, or whatever extenuation the action for which he was condemned might admit, she could not think that man a proper object of the King's mercy, who had been capable of entering his mother's house in the night, with an intent to murder her.

By whom this atrocious calumny had been transmitted to the Queen; whether she that invented had the front to relate it; whether she found any one weak enough to credit it, or corrupt enough to concur with her in her hateful design, I know not; but methods had been taken to persuade the Queen so strongly of the truth of it, that she for a long time refused to hear any one of those who petitioned for his life.

Thus had Savage perished by the evidence of a bawd, a strumpet, and his mother, had not justice and compassion procured him an advocate of rank too great to be rejected unheard, and of virtue too eminent to be heard without being believed. His merit and his calamities happened to reach the ear of the Countess of Hertford, who engaged in his support with all the tenderness that is excited by pity, and all the zeal which is kindled by generosity; and, demanding an audience of the Queen, laid before her the whole series of his mother's cruelty, exposed the improbability of an accusation by which he was charged with an intent to commit a murder that could produce no advantage, and soon convinced her how little his former conduct could deserve to be mentioned as a reason for extraordinary severity.

The interposition of this lady was so successful, that he was soon after admitted to bail, and, on the 9th of March, 1728, pleaded the King's pardon.

It is natural to inquire upon what motives his mother could persecute him in a manner so outrageous and implacable; for what reason she could employ all the arts of malice, and all the snares of calumny, to take away the life of her own son—of a son who never injured her, who was never supported by her expense, nor obstructed any prospect of pleasure or advantage: why she would endeavour to destroy him by a lie—a lie which could not gain credit, but must vanish of itself at the first moment of examination, and of which only this can be said to make it probable, that it may be observed from her conduct, that the most execrable crimes are sometimes committed without apparent temptation.

This mother is still alive,* and may perhaps even yet, though her malice was so often defeated, enjoy the pleasure of reflecting, that the life which she often endeavoured to destroy, was at least shortened by her maternal offices; that though she could not transport her son to the plantations, bury him in the shop of a mechanic,

* Mr. Savage's Life.

* She died, Oct. 11, 1753, at her house in Old Bond-street, aged above fourscore.—R.

or hasten the hand of the public executioner, he has yet had the satisfaction of embittering ll his hours, and forcing him into exigences hat hurried on his death.

It is by no means necessary to aggravate the enormity of this woman's conduct, by placing it in opposition to that of the Countess of Hertford; no one can fail to observe how much more amiable it is to relieve, than to oppress, and to rescue innocence from destruction, than to destroy without an injury.

Mr. Savage, during his imprisonment, his trial, and the time in which he lay under sentence of death, behaved with great firmness and equality of mind, and confirmed by his fortitude the esteem of those who before admired him for his abilities.* The peculiar circumstances of his life were made more generally known by a short account,† which was then published, and of which several thousands were in a few weeks dispersed over the nation; and the compassion of mankind operated so powerfully in his favour, that he was enabled by frequent presents not only to support himself, but to assist Mr. Gregory in prison; and, when he was pardoned and released, he found the number of his friends not lessened.

The nature of the act for which he had been tried was in itself doubtful; of the evidences which appeared against him, the character of the man was not unexceptionable, that of the woman notoriously infamous; she, whose testimony chiefly influenced the jury to condemn him, afterwards retracted her assertions. He always himself denied that he was drunk, as had been generally reported. Mr. Gregory, who is now (in 1744) collector of Antigua, is said to declare him far less criminal than he was imagined, even by some who favoured him; and Page himself afterwards confessed, that he had treated him with uncommon rigour. When all these particulars are rated together, perhaps the memory of Savage may not be much sullied by his trial.

Some time after he obtained his liberty, he met in the street the woman who had sworn with so much malignity against him. She informed him, that she was in distress, and, with a degree of confidence not easily attainable, desired him to relieve her. He, instead of insulting her misery, and taking pleasure in the calamities of one who had brought his life into danger, reproved her gently for her perjury; and changing the only guinea that he had, divided it equally between her and himself.

This is an action which in some ages would have made a saint, and perhaps in others a hero, and which, without any hyperbolical encomiums, must be allowed to be an instance of uncommon generosity, an act of complicated virtue; by which he at once relieved the poor, corrected the vicious, and forgave an enemy; by which he at once remitted the strongest provocations, and exercised the most ardent charity.

Compassion was indeed the distinguishing quality of Savage; he never appeared inclined to take advantage of weakness, to attack the defenceless, or to press upon the falling: whoever was distressed, was certain at least of his good wishes; and when he could give no assistance to extricate them from misfortunes, he endeavoured to sooth them by sympathy and tenderness.

But when his heart was not softened by the sight of misery, he was sometimes obstinate in his resentment, and did not quickly lose the remembrance of an injury. He always continued to speak with anger of the insolence and partiality of Page, and a short time before his death revenged it by satire.*

It is natural to enquire in what terms Mr. Savage spoke of this fatal action, when the danger was over, and he was under no necessity of using art to set his conduct in the fairest light. He was not willing to dwell upon it; and, if he transiently mentioned it, appeared neither to consider himself as a murderer, nor as a man wholly free from the guilt of blood.† How much and how long he regretted it, appeared in a poem which he published many years afterwards. On occasion of a copy of verses, in which the failings of good men were recounted, and in which the author had endeavoured to illustrate his position, that "the best may sometimes deviate from virtue," by an instance of murder committed by Savage in the heat of wine, Savage remarked, that it was no very just representation of a good man to suppose him liable to drunkenness, and disposed in his riots to cut throats.

He was now indeed at liberty, but was, as before, without any other support than accidental favours and uncertain patronage afforded him; sources by which he was sometimes very

* It appears that during his confinement he wrote a letter to his mother, which he sent to Theophilus Cibber, that it might be transmitted to her through the means of Mr. Wilks. In his letter to Cibber he says—"As to death, I am easy, and dare meet it like a man—all that touches me is the concern of my friends, and a reconcilement with my mother—I cannot express the agony I felt when I wrote the letter to her—if you can find any decent excuse for showing it to Mrs. Oldfield, do; for I would have all my friends (and that admirable lady in particular) be satisfied I have done my duty towards it—Dr. Young to-day sent me a letter, most passionately kind."—R.

† Written by Mr. Beckingham and another gentleman.—Dr. J.

* Printed in the late collection.

† In one of his letters he styles it "a fatal quarrel, but too well known."—Dr. J

liberally supplied, and which at other times were suddenly stopped; so that he spent his life between want and plenty; or, what was yet worse, between beggary and extravagance; for, as whatever he received was the gift of chance, which might as well favour him at one time as another, he was tempted to squander what he had, because he always hoped to be immediately supplied.

Another cause of his profusion was the absurd kindness of his friends, who at once rewarded and enjoyed his abilities, by treating him at taverns, and habituating him to pleasures which he could not afford to enjoy, and which he was not able to deny himself, though he purchased the luxury of a single night by the anguish of cold and hunger for a week.

The experience of these inconveniences determined him to endeavour after some settled income, which having long found submission and entreaties fruitless, he attempted to extort from his mother by rougher methods. He had now, as he acknowledged, lost that tenderness for her, which the whole series of her cruelty had not been able wholly to repress, till he found, by the efforts which she made for his destruction, that she was not content with refusing to assist him, and being neutral in his struggles with poverty, but was ready to snatch every opportunity of adding to his misfortunes; and that she was to be considered as an enemy implacably malicious, whom nothing but his blood could satisfy. He therefore threatened to harass her with lampoons, and to publish a copious narrative of her conduct, unless she consented to purchase an exemption from infamy, by allowing him a pension.

This expedient proved successful. Whether shame still survived, though virtue was extinct, or whether her relations had more delicacy than herself, and imagined that some of the darts which satire might point at her would glance upon them; Lord Tyrconnel, whatever were his motives, upon his promise to lay aside his design of exposing the cruelty of his mother, received him into his family, treated him as his equal, and engaged to allow him a pension of two hundred pounds a year.

This was the golden part of Mr. Savage's life; and for some time he had no reason to complain of fortune; his appearance was splendid, his expenses large, and his acquaintance extensive. He was courted by all who endeavoured to be thought men of genius, and caressed by all who valued themselves upon a refined taste. To admire Mr. Savage, was a proof of discernment; and to be acquainted with him, was a title to poetical reputation. His presence was sufficient to make any place of public entertainment popular; and his approbation and example constituted the fashion. So powerful is genius, when it is invested with the glitter of affluence! Men willingly pay to fortune that regard which they owe to merit, and are pleased when they have an opportunity at once of gratifying their vanity, and practising their duty. This interval of prosperity furnished him with opportunities of enlarging his knowledge of human nature, by contemplating life from its highest gradations to its lowest; and, had he afterwards applied to dramatic poetry, he would, perhaps, not have had many superiors; for, as he never suffered any scene to pass before his eyes without notice, he had treasured in his mind all the different combinations of passions, and the innumerable mixtures of vice and virtue, which distinguish one character from another; and, as his conception was strong, his expressions were clear, he easily received impressions from objects, and very forcibly transmitted them to others.

Of his exact observations on human life he has left a proof, which would do honour to the greatest names, in a small pamphlet, called "The Author to be Let,"* where he introduces Iscariot Hackney, a prostitute scribbler, giving an account of his birth, his education, his disposition and morals, habits of life and maxims of conduct. In the introduction are related many secret histories of the petty writers of that time, but sometimes mixed with ungenerous reflections on their birth, their circumstances, or those of their relations; nor can it be denied, that some passages are such as Iscariot Hackney might himself have produced.

He was accused likewise of living in an appearance of friendship with some whom he satirized, and of making use of the confidence which he gained by a seeming kindness, to discover failings and expose them: it must be confessed, that Mr. Savage's esteem was no very certain possession, and that he would lampoon at one time those whom he had praised at another.

It may be alleged, that the same man may change his principles; and that he who was once deservedly commended may be afterwards satirized with equal justice; or, that the poet was dazzled with the appearance of virtue, and found the man whom he had celebrated, when he had an opportunity of examining him more narrowly, unworthy of the panegyric which he had too hastily bestowed; and that, as a false satire ought to be recanted, for the sake of him whose reputation may be injured, false praise ought likewise to be obviated, lest the distinction between vice and virtue should be lost, lest a bad man should be trusted upon the credit of his encomiast, or lest others should endeavour to obtain the like praises by the same means.

But though these excuses may be often plau-

* Printed in his Works, vol. ii. p. 231.

sible, and sometimes just, they are very seldom satisfactory to mankind; and the writer who is not constant to his subject, quickly sinks into contempt, his satire loses its force, and his panegyric its value; and he is only considered at one time as a flatterer, and as a calumniator at another.

To avoid these imputations, it is only necessary to follow the rules of virtue, and to preserve an unvaried regard to truth. For though it is undoubtedly possible that a man, however cautious, may be sometimes deceived by an artful appearance of virtue, or by false evidences of guilt, such errors will not be frequent; and it will be allowed, that the name of an author would never have been made contemptible, had no man ever said what he did not think, or misled others but when he was himself deceived.

"The Author to be Let" was first published in a single pamphlet, and afterwards inserted in a collection of pieces relating to the "Dunciad," which were addressed by Mr. Savage to the Earl of Middlesex, in a dedication* which he was prevailed upon to sign, though he did not write it, and in which there are some positions, that the true author would perhaps not have published under his own name, and on which Mr. Savage afterwards reflected with no great satisfaction: the enumeration of the bad effects of the uncontrolled freedom of the press, and the assertion that the liberties taken by the writers of journals with "their superiors, were exorbitant and unjustifiable," very ill became men, who have themselves not always shown the exactest regard to the laws of subordination in their writings, and who have often satirised those that at least thought themselves their superiors, as they were eminent for their hereditary rank, and employed in the highest offices of the kingdom. But this is only an instance of that partiality which almost every man indulges with regard to himself: the liberty of the press is a blessing when we are inclined to write against others, and a calamity when we find ourselves overborne by the multitude of our assailants; as the power of the crown is always thought too great by those who suffer by its influence, and too little by those in whose favour it is exerted; and a standing army is generally accounted necessary by those who command, and dangerous and oppressive by those who support it.

Mr. Savage was likewise very far from believing that the letters annexed to each species of bad poets in the Bathos were, as he was directed to assert, "set down at random;" for when he was charged by one of his friends with putting his name to such an improbability, he had no other answer to make than "he did not think of it;" and his friend had too much tenderness to reply, that next to the crime of writing contrary to what he thought, was that of writing without thinking.

After having remarked what is false in this dedication, it is proper that I observe the impartiality which I recommend, by declaring what Savage asserted, that the account of the circumstances which attended the publication of the "Dunciad," however strange and improbable, was exactly true.

The publication of this piece at this time raised Mr. Savage a great number of enemies among those that were attacked by Mr. Pope, with whom he was considered as a kind of confederate, and whom he was suspected of supplying with private intelligence and secret incidents; so that the ignominy of an informer was added to the terror of a satirist.

That he was not altogether free from literary hypocrisy, and that he sometimes spoke one thing and wrote another, cannot be denied; because he himself confessed, that, when he lived in great familiarity with Dennis, he wrote an epigram* against him.

Mr. Savage, however, set all the malice of all the pigmy writers at defiance, and thought the friendship of Mr. Pope cheaply purchased by being exposed to their censure and their hatred; nor had he any reason to repent of the preference, for he found Mr. Pope a steady and unalienable friend almost to the end of his life.

About this time, notwithstanding his avowed neutrality with regard to party, he published a panegyric on Sir Robert Walpole, for which he was rewarded by him with twenty guineas; a sum not very large, if either the excellence of the performance, or the affluence of the patron, be considered; but greater than he afterwards obtained from a person of yet higher rank, and more desirous in appearance of being distinguished as a patron of literature.

As he was very far from approving the conduct of Sir Robert Walpole, and in conversation mentioned him sometimes with acrimony, and generally with contempt; as he was one of those who was always zealous in his assertions of the justice of the late opposition, jealous of the rights of the people, and alarmed by the long-continued triumph of the court; it was natural to ask him what could induce him to

* See his Works, vol. ii. p. 233.

* This epigram was, I believe, never published.

Should Dennis publish you had stabb'd your brother,
Lampoon'd your monarch, or debauch'd your mother?
Say, what revenge on Dennis can be had,
Too dull for laughter, for reply too mad?
On one so poor you cannot take the law,
On one so old your sword you scorn to draw.
Uncaged then, let the harmless monster rage,
Secure in dulness, madness, want, and age.

Dr. S.

ıploy his poetry in praise of that man who
ıs, in his opinion, an enemy to liberty, and
oppressor of his country? He alleged, that
was then dependent upon the Lord Tyrcon-
l, who was an implicit follower of the minis-
y; and that, being enjoined by him, not with-
t menaces, to write in praise of his leader, he
d not resolution sufficient to sacrifice the plea-
re of affluence to that of integrity.

On this, and on many other occasions, he was
ady to lament the misery of living at the
bles of other men, which was his fate from
e beginning to the end of his life; for I know
t whether he ever had, for three months to-
ther, a settled habitation, in which he could
im a right of residence.

To this unhappy state it is just to impute
uch of the inconstancy of his conduct; for
ough a readiness to comply with the inclina-
n of others was no part of his natural cha-
cter, yet he was sometimes obliged to relax
s obstinacy, and submit his own judgment,
ıd even his virtue, to the government of those
y whom he was supported: so that, if his mi-
ries were sometimes the consequences of his
ults, he ought not yet to be wholly excluded
om compassion, because his faults were very
ten the effects of his misfortunes.

In this gay period* of his life, while he was
rrounded by affluence and pleasure, he pub-
shed "The Wanderer," a moral poem, of
hich the design is comprised in these lines:

fly all public care, all venal strife,
o try the still, compared with active life
o prove, by these, the sons of men may owe
he fruits of bliss to bursting clouds of woe;
hat even calamity, by thought refined,
spirits and adorns the thinking mind.

And more distinctly in the following passage:

y wo, the soul to daring action swells:
y wo, in plaintless patience it excels:
rom patience, prudent clear experience springs,
nd traces knowledge through the course of things!
hence hope is form'd, thence fortitude, success,
enown:—whate'er men covet and caress.

This performance was always considered by
imself as his masterpiece; and Mr. Pope,
vhen he asked his opinion of it, told him, that
e read it once over, and was not displeased
vith it; that it gave him more pleasure at the
econd perusal, and delighted him still more at
he third.

It has been generally objected to "The Wan-
lerer," that the disposition of the parts is irre-
ular: that the design is obscure, and the plan
erplexed; that the images, however beautiful,
ucceed each other without order; and that the
hole performance is not so much a regular
fabric, as a heap of shining materials thrown together by accident, which strikes rather with the solemn magnificence of a stupendous ruin, than the elegant grandeur of a finished pile.

The criticism is universal, and therefore it is reasonable to believe it at least in a great degree just; but Mr. Savage was always of a contrary opinion, and thought his drift could only be missed by negligence or stupidity, and that the whole plan was regular, and the parts distinct.

It was never denied to abound with strong representations of nature, and just observations upon life; and it may easily be observed, that most of his pictures have an evident tendency to illustrate his first great position, "that good is the consequence of evil." The sun that burns up the mountains, fructifies the vales; the deluge that rushes down the broken rocks with dreadful impetuosity, is separated into purling brooks; and the rage of the hurricane purifies the air.

Even in this poem he has not been able to forbear one touch upon the cruelty of his mother, which, though remarkably delicate and tender, is a proof how deep an impression it had upon his mind.

This must be at least acknowledged, which ought to be thought equivalent to many other excellences, that this poem can promote no other purposes than those of virtue, and that it is written with a very strong sense of the efficacy of religion.

But my province is rather to give the history of Mr. Savage's performances than to display their beauties, or to obviate the criticisms which they have occasioned; and therefore I shall not dwell upon the particular passages which deserve applause; I shall neither show the excellence of his descriptions, nor expatiate on the terrific portrait of suicide, nor point out the artful touches by which he has distinguished the intellectual features of the rebels who suffer death in his last canto. It is, however, proper to observe, that Mr. Savage always declared the characters wholly fictitious, and without the least allusion to any real persons or actions.

From a poem so diligently laboured, and so successfully finished, it might be reasonably expected that he should have gained considerable advantage; nor can it without some degree of indignation and concern be told, that he sold the copy for ten guineas, of which he afterwards returned two, that the two last sheets of the work might be reprinted, of which he had in his absence intrusted the correction to a friend, who was too indolent to perform it with accuracy.

A superstitious regard to the correction of his sheets was one of Mr. Savage's peculiarities: he often altered, revised, recurred to his first reading or punctuation, and again adopted

* 1729.

the alteration: he was dubious and irresolute without end, as on a question of the last importance and at last was seldom satisfied: the intrusion or omission of a comma was sufficient to discompose him, and he would lament an error of a single letter as a heavy calamity. In one of his letters relating to an impression of some verses, he remarks, that he had, with regard to the correction of the proof, "a spell upon him;" and indeed the anxiety with which he felt upon the minutest and most trifling niceties deserved no other name than that of fascination.

That he sold so valuable a performance for so small a price, was not to be imputed either to necessity, by which the learned and ingenious are often obliged to submit to very hard conditions; or to avarice, by which the booksellers are frequently incited to oppress that genius by which they are supported; but to that intemperate desire of pleasure, and habitual slavery to his passions, which involved him in many perplexities. He happened at that time to be engaged in the pursuit of some trifling gratification, and, being without money for the present occasion, sold his poem to the first bidder, and perhaps for the first price that was proposed, and would probably have been content with less, if less had been offered him.

This poem was addressed to the Lord Tyrconnel, not only in the first lines, but in a formal dedication filled with the highest strains of panegyric, and the warmest professions of gratitude, but by no means remarkable for delicacy of connection or elegance of style.

These praises in a short time he found himself inclined to retract, being discarded by the man on whom he had bestowed them, and whom he then immediately discovered not to have deserved them. Of this quarrel, which every day made more bitter, Lord Tyrconnel and Mr. Savage assigned very different reasons, which might perhaps all in reality concur, though they were not all convenient to be alleged by either party. Lord Tyrconnel affirmed that it was the constant practice of Mr. Savage to enter a tavern with any company that proposed it, drink the most expensive wines with great profusion, and when the reckoning was demanded, to be without money: if, as it often happened, his company were willing to defray his part, the affair ended without any ill consequences; but if they were refractory, and expected that the wine should be paid for by him that drank it, his method of composition was, to take them with him to his own apartment, assume the government of the house, and order the butler in an imperious manner to set the best wine in the cellar before his company, who often drank till they forgot the respect due to the house in which they were entertained, indulged themselves in the utmost extravagance of merriment, practised the most licenti frolics, and committed all the outrages of dru enness.

Nor was this the only charge which L Tyrconnel brought against him: having gi him a collection of valuable books, stam with his own arms, he had the mortificatio see them in a short time exposed to sale u the stalls, it being usual with Mr. Savage, w he wanted a small sum, to take his books to pawnbroker.

Whoever was acquainted with Mr. Sav easily credited both these accusations: for h ing been obliged, from his first entrance the world, to subsist upon expedients, affluc was not able to exalt him above them; and much was he delighted with wine and conve tion, and so long had he been accustomed to by chance, that he would at any time go to tavern without scruple, and trust for the re oning to the liberality of his company, and quently of company to whom he was very li known. This conduct indeed very sele drew upon him those inconveniences that mi be feared by any other person; for his con sation was so entertaining, and his addres pleasing, that few thought the pleasure wh they received from him dearly purchased, paying for his wine. It was his peculiar h piness, that he scarcely ever found a stran whom he did not leave a friend; but it m likewise be added, that he had not ofte friend long, without obliging him to becon stranger.

Mr. Savage, on the other hand, decla that Lord Tyrconnel* quarrelled with him cause he would not subtract from his own l ury and extravagance what he had promise allow him, and that his resentment was on plea for the violation of his promise. He serted, that he had done nothing that ough exclude him from that subsistence which thought not so much a favour as a debt, sinc was offered him upon conditions which he never broken; and that his only fault w that he could not be supported with nothing

He acknowledged, that Lord Tyrconnel o exhorted him to regulate his method of life, not to spend all his nights in taverns, and he appeared very desirous that he would those hours with him, which he so freely stowed upon others. This demand Mr. vage considered as a censure of his cond which he could never patiently bear, and wh in the latter and cooler parts of his life, wa offensive to him, that he declared it as his r lution, "to spurn that friend who should

* His expression in one of his letters was, " Lord Tyrconnel had involved his estate, and th fore poorly sought an occasion to quarrel w him."—Dr. J.

ne to dictate to him;" and it is not likely it in his earlier years he received admonitions h more calmness.

He was likewise inclined to resent such extations, as tending to infringe his liberty, of ich he was very jealous, when it was necesy to the gratification of his passions; and ared, that the request was still more unreaable, as the company to which he was to e been confined was insupportably disagree-e. This assertion affords another instance that inconsistency of his writings with his versation, which was so often to be observed. forgot how lavishly he had in his dedication "The Wanderer," extolled the delicacy and etration, the humanity and generosity, the dour and politeness, of the man, whom, en he no longer loved him, he declared to be retch without understanding, without goodure, and without justice; of whose name he ught himself obliged to leave no trace in any ure edition of his writings; and accordingly tted it out of that copy of "The Wanderer" ich was in his hands.

During his continuance with the Lord Tyrnel, he wrote "The Triumph of Health and rth," on the recovery of Lady Tyrconnel m a languishing illness. This performance remarkable, not only for the gayety of the as, and the melody of the numbers, but for agreeable fiction upon which it is formed. rth, overwhelmed with sorrow for the sickss of her favourite, takes a flight in quest of sister Health, whom she finds reclined on the brow of a lofty mountain, amidst the grance of perpetual spring, with the breezes of morning sporting about her. Being solied by her sister Mirth, she readily promises assistance, flies away in a cloud, and imegnates the waters of Bath with new virtues, which the sickness of Belinda is relieved.

As the reputation of his abilities, the particular circumstances of his birth and life, the endour of his appearance, and the distinction ich was for some time paid him by Lord rconnel, entitled him to familiarity with rsons of higher rank than those to whose versation he had been before admitted; he l not fail to gratify that curiosity which inced him to take a nearer view of those whom eir birth, their employments, or their forunes, necessarily place at a distance from the eatest part of mankind, and to examine whe-er their merit was magnified or diminished the medium through which it was contemated; whether the splendour with which they zzled their admirers was inherent in themves, or only reflected on them by the objects at surrounded them; and whether great men re selected for high stations, or high stations ade great men.

For this purpose he took all opportunities of conversing familiarly with those who were most conspicuous at that time for their power or their influence: he watched their looser moments, and examined their domestic behaviour, with that acuteness which nature had given him, and which the uncommon variety of his life had contributed to increase, and that inquisitiveness which must always be produced in a vigorous mind, by an absolute freedom from all pressing or domestic engagements.

His discernment was quick, and therefore he soon found in every person, and in every affair, something that deserved attention: he was supported by others without any care for himself, and was therefore at leisure to pursue his observations.

More circumstances to constitute a critic on human life could not easily concur; nor indeed could any man who assumed from accidental advantages more praise than he could justly claim from his real merit, admit any acquaintance more dangerous than that of Savage; of whom likewise it must be confessed, that abilities really exalted above the common level, or virtue refined from passion, or proof against corruption, could not easily find an abler judge, or a warmer advocate.

What was the result of Mr. Savage's inquiry, though he was not much accustomed to conceal his discoveries, it may not be entirely safe to relate, because the persons whose characters he criticised are powerful; and power and resentment are seldom strangers: nor would it perhaps be wholly just; because what he asserted in conversation might, though true in general, be heightened by some momentary ardour of imagination, and, as it can be delivered only from memory, may be imperfectly represented; so that the picture, at first aggravated, and then unskilfully copied, may be justly suspected to retain no great resemblance of the original.

It may, however, be observed, that he did not appear to have formed very elevated ideas of those to whom the administration of affairs, or the conduct of parties, have been entrusted; who have been considered as the advocates of the crown, or the guardians of the people; and who have obtained the most implicit confidence, and the loudest applauses. Of one particular person, who has been at one time so popular as to be generally esteemed, and at another so formidable as to be universally detested, he observed, that his acquisitions had been small, or that his capacity was narrow, and that the whole range of his mind was from obscenity to politics, and from politics to obscenity.

But the opportunity of indulging his speculations on great characters was now at an end. He was banished from the table of Lord Tyrconnel, and turned again adrift upon the world, without prospect of finding quickly any other harbour. As prudence was not one of the vir-

tues by which he was distinguished, he had made no provision against a misfortune like this. And though it is not to be imagined but that the separation must for some time have been preceded by coldness, peevishness, or neglect, though it was undoubtedly the consequence of accumulated provocations on both sides: yet every one that knew Savage will readily believe, that to him it was sudden as a stroke of thunder; that, though he might have transiently suspected it, he had never suffered any thought so unpleasing to sink into his mind; but that he had driven it away by amusements, or dreams of future felicity and affluence, and had never taken any measures by which he might prevent a precipitation from plenty to indigence.

This quarrel and separation, and the difficulties to which Mr. Savage was exposed by them, were soon known both to his friends and enemies: nor was it long before he perceived, from the behaviour of both, how much is added to the lustre of genius, by the ornaments of wealth.

His condition did not appear to excite much compassion; for he had not always been careful to use the advantages he enjoyed with that moderation which ought to have been with more than usual caution preserved by him, who knew, if he had reflected, that he was only a dependant on the bounty of another, whom he could expect to support him no longer than he endeavoured to preserve his favour by complying with his inclinations, and whom he nevertheless set at defiance, and was continually irritating by negligence or encroachments.

Examples need not be sought at any great distance to prove, that superiority of fortune has a natural tendency to kindle pride, and that pride seldom fails to exert itself in contempt and insult; and if this is often the effect of hereditary wealth, and of honours enjoyed only by the merit of others, it is some extenuation of any indecent triumphs, to which this unhappy man may have been betrayed, that his prosperity was heightened by the force of novelty, and made more intoxicating by a sense of the misery in which he had so long languished, and perhaps of the insults which he had formerly borne, and which he might now think himself entitled to revenge. It is too common for those who have unjustly suffered pain, to inflict it likewise in their turn with the same injustice, and to imagine that they have a right to treat others as they have themselves been treated.

That Mr. Savage was too much elevated by any good fortune, is generally known; and some passages of his Introduction to "The Author to be let," sufficiently show that he did not wholly refrain from such satire as he afterwards thought very unjust when he was exposed to it himself; for, when he was afterwards ridiculed in the character of a distressed poet, he very easily discovered, that distress was not a proper subject for merriment, nor topic of vective. He was then able to discern, tha misery be the effect of virtue, it ought to be verenced; if of ill-fortune, to be pitied: an of vice, not to be insulted, because it is perh itself a punishment adequate to the crime which it was produced. And the humanity that man can deserve no panegyric, who is pable of reproaching a criminal in the hands the executioner.

But these reflections, though they readily curred to him in the first and last parts of life, were, I am afraid, for a long time forg ten; at least they were, like many other m ims, treasured up in his mind rather for sh than use, and operated very little upon his co duct, however elegantly he might sometim explain, or however forcibly he might inculc them.

His degradation, therefore, from the conditi which he had enjoyed with such want thoughtlessness, was considered by many as occasion of triumph. Those who had bef paid their court to him without success, so returned the contempt which they had suffere and they who had received favours from hi (for of such favours as he could bestow he w very liberal,) did not always remember *he So much more certain are the effects of resen ment than of gratitude: it is not only to ma more pleasing to recollect those faults wh place others below them, than those virtues which they are themselves comparatively pressed; but it is likewise more easy to negl than to recompense; and though there are f who will practise a laborious virtue, there w never be wanting multitudes that will indu in easy vice.

Savage, however, was very little disturbed the marks of contempt which his ill-fortu brought upon him, from those whom he ne esteemed, and with whom he never conside himself as levelled by any calamities: a though it was not without some uneasiness t he saw some, whose friendship he valu change their behaviour; he yet observed th coldness without much emotion, considered th as the slaves of fortune, and the worshippers prosperity, and was more inclined to desp them, than to lament himself.

It does not appear that, after this return his wants, he found mankind equally favoura to him as at his first appearance in the wor His story, though in reality not less melanch was less affecting, because it was no lon new; it therefore procured him no new frien and those that had formerly relieved h thought they might now consign him to othe He was now likewise considered by many ther as criminal, than as unhappy; for friends of Lord Tyrconnel, and of his moth were sufficiently industrious to publish

aknesses, which were indeed very numerous; t nothing was forgotten that might make n either hateful or ridiculous.

It cannot but be imagined, that such repretations of his faults must make great nums less sensible of his distress: many, who l only an opportunity to hear one part, made scruple to propagate the account which they eived: many assisted their circulation from lice or revenge; and perhaps many pretended credit them, that they might with a better ce withdraw their regard, or withhold their istance.

Savage, however, was not one of those who fered himself to be injured without resist-e, nor was less diligent in exposing the faults Lord Tyrconnel; over whom he obtained at st this advantage, that he drove him first to practice of outrage and violence: for he s so much provoked by the wit and virulence Savage, that he came with a number of atdants, that did no honour to his courage, to at him at a coffee-house. But it happened at he had left the place a few minutes; and s Lordship had, without danger, the pleasure boasting how he would have treated him. r. Savage went next day to repay his visit at s own house; but was prevailed on, by his mestics, to retire without insisting upon see-g him.

Lord Tyrconnel was accused by Mr. Savage some actions, which scarcely any provocans will be thought sufficient to justify; such seizing what he had in his lodgings, and her instances of wanton cruelty, by which he creased the distress of Savage, without any vantage to himself.

These mutual accusations were retorted on th sides for many years, with the utmost dee of virulence and rage; and time seemed ther to augment than diminish their resentent. That the anger of Mr. Savage should kept alive, is not strange, because he felt ery day the consequences of the quarrel; but might reasonably have been hoped, that ord Tyrconnel might have relented, and at ngth have forgotten those provocations, which, owever they might have once inflamed him, d not in reality much hurt him.

The spirit of Mr. Savage indeed never suffred him to solicit a reconciliation; he returned proach for reproach, and insult for insult; s superiority of wit supplied the disadvantages his fortune, and enabled him to form a party, d prejudice great numbers in his favour.

But though this might be some gratification his vanity, it afforded very little relief to his ecessities; and he was very frequently reduced uncommon hardships, of which, however, he ever made any mean or importunate comlaints, being formed rather to bear misery with fortitude, than enjoy prosperity with moderation.

He now thought himself again at liberty to expose the cruelty of his mother; and, therefore, I believe, about this time published "The Bastard," a poem remarkable for the vivacious sallies of thought in the beginning, where he makes a pompous enumeration of the imaginary advantages of base birth; and the pathetic sentiments at the end, where he recounts the real calamities which he suffered by the crime of his parents.

The vigour and spirit of the verses, the peculiar circumstances of the author, the novelty of the subject, and the notoriety of the story to which the allusions are made, procured this performance a very favourable reception; great numbers were immediately dispersed, and editions were multiplied with unusual rapidity.

One circumstance attended the publication which Savage used to relate with great satisfaction. His mother, to whom the poem was with "due reverence" inscribed, happened then to be at Bath, where she could not conveniently retire from censure, or conceal herself from observation; and no sooner did the reputation of the poem begin to spread, than she heard it repeated in all places of concourse; nor could she enter the assembly-rooms, or cross the walks, without being saluted with some lines from "The Bastard."

This was perhaps the first time that she ever discovered a sense of shame, and on this occasion the power of wit was very conspicuous; the wretch who had without scruple proclaimed herself an adulteress, and who had first endeavoured to starve her son, then to transport him, and afterwards to hang him, was not able to bear the representation of her own conduct; but fled from reproach, though she felt no pain from guilt, and left Bath with the utmost haste, to shelter herself among the crowds of London.

Thus Savage had the satisfaction of finding, that, though he could not reform his mother, he could punish her, and that he did not always suffer alone.

The pleasure which he received from this increase of his poetical reputation, was sufficient for some time to overbalance the miseries of want, which this performance did not much alleviate; for it was sold for a very trivial sum to a bookseller, who, though the success was so uncommon that five impressions were sold, of which many were undoubtedly very numerous, had not generosity sufficient to admit the unhappy writer to any part of the profit.

The sale of this poem was always mentioned by Savage with the utmost elevation of heart, and referred to by him as an incontestible proof of a general acknowledgment of his

abilities. It was indeed the only production of which he could justly boast a general reception.

But though he did not lose the opportunity which success gave him of setting a high rate on his abilities, but paid due deference to the suffrages of mankind when they were given in his favour, he did not suffer his esteem of himself to depend upon others, nor found any thing sacred in the voice of the people when they were inclined to censure him; he then readily showed the folly of expecting that the public should judge right, observed how slowly poetical merit had often forced its way into the world; he contented himself with the applause of men of judgment, and was somewhat disposed to exclude all those from the character of men of judgment who did not applaud him.

But he was at other times more favourable to mankind than to think them blind to the beauties of his works, and imputed the slowness of their sale to other causes: either they were published at a time when the town was empty, or when the attention of the public was engrossed by some struggle in the parliament, or some other object of general concern; or they were by the neglect of the publisher not diligently dispersed, or by his avarice not advertised with sufficient frequency. Address, or industry, or liberality, was always wanting; and the blame was laid rather on any person than the author.

By arts like these, arts which every man practises in some degree, and to which too much of the little tranquillity of life is to be ascribed, Savage was always able to live at peace with himself. Had he indeed only made use of these expedients to alleviate the loss, or want, of fortune or reputation, or any other advantages which it is not in man's power to bestow upon himself, they might have been justly mentioned as instances of a philosophical mind, and very properly proposed to the imitation of multitudes, who, for want of diverting their imaginations with the same dexterity, languish under afflictions which might be easily removed.

It were doubtless to be wished, that truth and reason were universally prevalent: that every thing were esteemed according to its real value; and that men would secure themselves from being disappointed in their endeavours after happiness, by placing it only in virtue, which is always to be obtained; but, if adventitious and foreign pleasures must be pursued, it would be perhaps of some benefit, since that pursuit must frequently be fruitless, if the practice of Savage could be taught, that folly might be an antidote to folly, and one fallacy be obviated by another.

But the danger of this pleasing intoxication must not be concealed; nor indeed can any one, after having observed the life of Savage, need to be cautioned against it. By imputing [illegible] of his miseries to himself, he continued to [illegible] upon the same principles, and to follow [illegible] same path; was never made wiser by his sufferings, nor preserved by one misfortune from [illegible] ing into another. He proceeded throughout [illegible] life to tread the same steps on the same circle, always applauding his past conduct, or at least forgetting it, to amuse himself with phantoms of happiness, which were dancing before him, and willingly turned his eyes from the light of reason, when it would have discovered the illusion, and shown him, what he never wished to see, his real state.

He is even accused, after having lulled [illegible] imagination with those ideal opiates, of having tried the same experiment upon his conscience, and, having accustomed himself to impute [illegible] deviations from the right to foreign causes, it is certain that he was upon every occasion too easily reconciled to himself; and that he appeared very little to regret those practices which had impaired his reputation. The reigning error of his life was, that he mistook the love for the practice of virtue; and was indeed not so much a good man, as the friend of goodness.

This at least must be allowed him, that he always preserved a strong sense of the dignity, the beauty, and the necessity of virtue; and that he never contributed deliberately to spread corruption among mankind. His actions, which were generally precipitate, were often blameable; but his writings, being the productions of study, uniformly tended to the exaltation of the mind, and the propagation of morality and piety.

These writings may improve mankind, when his failings shall be forgotten; and therefore he must be considered, upon the whole, as a benefactor to the world; nor can his personal example do any hurt, since whoever hears of his faults will hear of the miseries which they brought upon him, and which would deserve less pity, had not his condition been such as made his faults pardonable. He may be considered as a child exposed to all the temptations of indigence, at an age when resolution was not yet strengthened by conviction, nor virtue confirmed by habit; a circumstance which, as his "Bastard," he laments in a very affecting manner:

—— No Mother's care
Shielded my infant innocence with prayer;
No father's guardian hand my youth maintain'd,
Call'd forth my virtues, or from vice restrain'd.

"The Bastard," however it might prove, or mortify his mother, could not be expected to melt her to compassion, so that he was still under the same want of the necessaries of life, and he therefore exerted all the interest which

wit, or his birth, or his misfortunes, could ocure, to obtain, upon the death of Eusden, e place of poet laureat, and prosecuted his ap- cation with so much diligence, that the King blicly declared it his intention to bestow it on him; but such was the fate of Savage, at even the King, when he intended his ad- ntage, was disappointed in his schemes; for e Lord Chamberlain, who has the disposal of e laurel, as one of the appendages of his office, her did not know the King's design, or did t approve it, or thought the nomination of e laurcat an encroachment upon his rights, d therefore bestowed the laurel upon Colley bber.

Mr. Savage, thus disappointed, took a resolu- n of applying to the Queen, that, having ce given him life, she would enable him to pport it, and therefore published a short poem her birth day to which he gave the odd title "Volunteer Laureat." The event of this say he has himself related in the following tter, which he prefixed to the poem, when he terwards reprinted it in "The Gentleman's lagazine," whence I have copied it entire, as is was one of the few attempts in which Mr. avage succeeded.

"Mr. URBAN,

"In your Magazine for February you pub- shed the last "Volunteer Laureat," written a very melancholy occasion, the death of the oyal patroness of arts and literature in general, nd of the author of that poem in particular; now send you the first that Mr. Savage wrote nder that title.—This gentleman, notwith- tanding a very considerable interest, being, on he death of Mr. Eusden, disappointed of the aureat's place, wrote the following verses; which were no sooner published, but the late Queen sent to a bookseller for them. The au- hor had not at that time a friend either to get him introduced, or his poem presented at court; et, such was the unspeakable goodness of that Princess, that, notwithstanding this act of eremony was wanting, in a few days after ublication, Mr. Savage received a bank-bill of fifty pounds, and a gracious message from her Majesty, by the Lords North and Guil- ford, to this effect: 'That her Majesty was highly pleased with the verses; that she took particularly kind his lines there relating to the King; that he had permission to write annually on the same subject, and that he should yearly receive the like present, till something better (which was her Majesty's intention) could be done for him.' After this he was permitted to present one of his annual poems to her Majesty, had the honour of kissing her hand, and met with the most gracious reception.

"Yours, &c."

Such was the performance,* and such its reception; a reception, which, though by no means unkind, was yet not in the highest degree generous: to chain down the genius of a writer to an annual panegyric, showed in the Queen too much desire of hearing her own praises, and a greater regard to herself than to him on whom her bounty was conferred. It was a kind of avaricious generosity, by which flattery was rather purchased than genius rewarded.

Mrs. Oldfield had formerly given him the same allowance with much more heroic intention: she had no other view than to enable him to prosecute his studies, and to set himself above the want of assistance, and was contented with doing good without stipulating for encomiums.

Mr. Savage, however, was not at liberty to make exceptions, but was ravished with the favours which he had received, and probably yet more with those which he was promised: he considered himself now as a favourite of the Queen, and did not doubt but a few annual poems would establish him in some profitable employment.

He therefore assumed the title of Volunteer Laureat, not without some reprehensions from Cibber, who informed him, that the title of Laureat, was a mark of honour conferred by the King, from whom all honour is derived, and which therefore no man has a right to bestow upon himself; and added, that he might with equal propriety style himself a Volunteer Lord, or Volunteer Baronet. It cannot be denied that the remark was just; but Savage did not think any title, which was conferred upon Mr. Cibber, so honourable as that the usurpation of it could be imputed to him as an instance of very exorbitant vanity, and therefore continued to write under the same title, and received every year the same reward.

He did not appear to consider these encomiums as tests of his abilities, or as any thing more than annual hints to the Queen of her promise; or acts of ceremony, by the performance of which he was entitled to his pension; and therefore did not labour them with great diligence, or print more than fifty each year, except that for some of the last years he regularly inserted them in "The Gentleman's Magazine," by which they were dispersed over the kingdom.

Of some of them he had himself so low an opinion, that he intended to omit them in the Collection of Poems, for which he printed proposals, and solicited subscriptions; nor can it seem strange, that, being confined to the same subject, he should be at some times indolent, and at others unsuccessful; that he should some-

* This poem is inserted in the late Collection.

times delay a disagreeable task till it was too late to perform it well; or that he should sometimes repeat the same sentiment on the same occasion, or at others be misled by an attempt after novelty to forced conceptions and far-fetched images.

He wrote indeed with a double intention, which supplied him with some variety; for his business was, to praise the Queen for the favours which he had received, and to complain to her of the delay of those which she had promised: in some of his pieces, therefore, gratitude is predominant, and in some discontent; in some he represents himself as happy in her patronage; and, in others, as disconsolate to find himself neglected.

Her promise, like other promises made to this unfortunate man, was never performed, though he took sufficient care that it should not be forgotten. The publication of his "Volunteer Laureat" procured him no other reward than a regular remittance of fifty pounds.

He was not so depressed by his disappointments as to neglect any opportunity that was offered of advancing his interest. When the Princess Anne was married, he wrote a poem* upon her departure, "only," as he declared, "because it was expected from him," and he was not willing to bar his own prospects by any appearance of neglect.

He never mentioned any advantage gained by this poem, or any regard that was paid to it; and therefore it is likely that it was considered at court as an act of duty, to which he was obliged by his dependance, and which it was therefore not necessary to reward by any new favour: or perhaps the Queen really intended his advancement, and therefore thought it superfluous to lavish presents upon a man whom she intended to establish for life.

About this time not only his hopes were in danger of being frustrated, but his pension likewise of being obstructed, by an accidental calumny. The writer of "The Daily Courant," a paper then published under the direction of the ministry, charged him with a crime, which, though not very great in itself, would have been remarkably invidious in him, and might very justly have incensed the Queen against him. He was accused by name of influencing elections against the court, by appearing at the head of a tory mob; nor did the accuser fail to aggravate his crime, by representing it as the effect of the most atrocious ingratitude, and a kind of rebellion against the Queen, who had first preserved him from an infamous death, and afterwards distinguished him by her favour, and supported him by her charity. The charge, as it was open and confident, was likewise by good fortune very particular. The place of the transaction was mentioned, and the whole series of the rioter's conduct related. This exactness made Mr. Savage's vindication easy; for he never had in his life seen the place which was declared to be the scene of his wickedness, nor ever had been present in any town when its representatives were chosen. This answer he therefore made haste to publish, with all the circumstances necessary to make it credible; and very reasonably demanded that the accusation should be retracted in the same paper, that he might no longer suffer the imputation of sedition and ingratitude. This demand was likewise pressed by him in a private letter to the author of the paper, who, either trusting to the protection of those whose defence he had undertaken, or having entertained some personal malice against Mr. Savage, or fearing lest, by retracting so confident an assertion, he should impair the credit of his paper, refused to give him that satisfaction.

Mr. Savage therefore thought it necessary to his own vindication, to prosecute him in the King's Bench; but as he did not find any ill effects from the accusation, having sufficiently cleared his innocence, he thought any farther procedure would have the appearance of revenge; and therefore willingly dropped it.

He saw soon afterwards a process commenced in the same court against himself, on an information in which he was accused of writing and publishing an obscene pamphlet.

It was always Mr. Savage's desire to be distinguished; and, when any controversy became popular, he never wanted some reason for engaging in it with great ardour, and appearing at the head of the party which he had chosen. As he was never celebrated for his prudence, he had no sooner taken his side, and informed himself of the chief topics of the dispute, than he took all opportunities of asserting and propagating his principles, without much regard to his own interest, or any other visible design than that of drawing upon himself the attention of mankind.

The dispute between the bishop of London and the Chancellor is well known to have been for some time the chief topic of political conversation; and therefore Mr. Savage, in pursuance of his character, endeavoured to become conspicuous among the controvertists with which every coffee-house was filled on that occasion. He was an indefatigable opposer of all the claims of ecclesiastical power, though he did not know on what they were founded; and was therefore no friend to the Bishop of London. But he had another reason for appearing as a warm advocate for Dr. Rundle; for he was the friend of Mr. Foster and Mr. Thomson, who were the friends of Mr. Savage.

Thus remote was his interest in the question,

* Printed in the late Collection.

which, however, as he imagined, concerned him so nearly, that it was not sufficient to harangue and dispute, but necessary likewise to write upon it.

He therefore engaged with great ardour in a new poem, called by him, "The Progress of a Divine;" in which he conducts a profligate priest, by all the gradations of wickedness, from a poor curacy in the country to the highest preferments of the church; and describes, with that humour which was natural to him, and that knowledge which was extended to all the diversities of human life, his behaviour in every station; and insinuates, that this priest, thus accomplished, found at last a patron in the Bishop of London.

When he was asked by one of his friends, on what pretence he could charge the Bishop with such an action; he had no more to say than that he had only inverted the accusation: and that he thought it reasonable to believe, that he who obstructed the rise of a good man without reason, would for bad reasons promote the exaltation of a villain.

The clergy were universally provoked by this satire; and Savage, who, as was his constant practice, had set his name to his performance, was censured in "The Weekly Miscellany"*

with severity which he did not seem inclined to forget.

But a return of invective was not thought a sufficient punishment. The court of King's Bench was therefore moved against him; and he was obliged to return an answer to a charge of obscenity. It was urged in his defence, that obscenity was criminal when it was intended to promote the practice of vice; but that Mr. Savage had only introduced obscene ideas, with the view of exposing them to detestation, and of amending the age by showing the deformity of wickedness. This plea was admitted; and Sir Philip Yorke, who then presided in that court, dismissed the information with encomiums upon the purity and excellence of Mr. Savage's writings. The prosecution, however, answered in some measure the purpose of those by whom it was set on foot; for Mr. Savage was so far intimidated by it, that when the edition of his poem was sold, he did not venture to reprint it; so that it was in a short time forgotten, or forgotten by all but those whom it offended.

It is said that some endeavours were used to incense the Queen against him: but he found advocates to obviate at least part of their effect; for, though he was never advanced, he still continued to receive his pension.

This poem drew more infamy upon him than any incident of his life; and, as his conduct cannot be vindicated, it is proper to secure his memory from reproach, by informing those whom he made his enemies, that he never intended to repeat the provocation; and that, though whenever he thought he had any reason to complain of the clergy, he used to threaten them with a new edition of "The Progress of a Divine," it was his calm and settled resolution to suppress it for ever.

He once intended to have made a better reparation for the folly or injustice with which he might be charged, by writing another poem called "The Progress of a Free-thinker," whom he intended to lead through all the stages of vice and folly, to convert him from virtue to wickedness, and from religion to infidelity, by all the modish sophistry used for that purpose; and at last to dismiss him by his own hand into the other world.

That he did not execute this design is a real loss to mankind; for he was too well acquainted with all the scenes of debauchery to have failed in his representations of them, and too zealous for virtue not to have represented them in such a manner as should expose them either to ridicule or detestation.

But this plan, was, like others, formed and

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* A short satire was likewise published in the same paper, in which were the following lines:

For cruel murder doom'd to hempen death,
Savage by royal grace prolong'd his breath.
Well might you think he spent his future years
In prayer, and fasting, and repentant tears.
"—But, O vain hope!"—the truly Savage cries,
"Priests, and their slavish doctrines I despise.
Shall I——
Who, by free-thinking to free action fired,
In midnight brawls a deathless name acquired,
Now stoop to learn of ecclesiastic men?—
—No, arm'd with rhyme, at priests I'll take my aim,
Though prudence bids me murder but their fame."

Weekly Miscellany.

An answer was published in "The Gentleman's Magazine," written by an unknown hand, from which the following lines are selected:

Transform'd by thoughtless rage, and midnight wine,
From malice free, and push'd without design;
In equal brawl if Savage lung'd a thrust,
And brought the youth a victim to the dust;
So strong the hand of accident appears,
The royal hand from guilt and vengeance clears.
Instead of wasting "all thy future years,
Savage, in prayer and vain repenting tears,"
Exert thy pen to mend a vicious age,
To curb the priest, and sink his high-church rage;
To show what frauds the holy vestments hide,
The nests of avarice, lust, and pedant pride:
Then change the scene, let merit brightly shine,
And round the patriot twist the wreath divine;
The heavenly guide deliver down to fame:
In well-tuned lays transmit a Foster's name;
Touch every passion with harmonious art,
Exalt the genius and correct the heart.
Thus future times shall royal grace extol;
Thus polish'd lines thy present fame enrol.
——But grant——
——Maliciously that Savage plunged the steel,
And made the youth its shining vengeance feel;

My soul abhors the act, the man detests,
But more the bigotry in priestly breasts.

Gentleman's Magazine, May 1735.—Dr. J.

laid aside till the vigour of his imagination was spent, and the effervescence of invention had subsided; but soon gave way to some other design, which pleased by its novelty for awhile, and then was neglected like the former.

He was still in his usual exigencies, having no certain support but the pension allowed him by the Queen, which, though it might have kept an exact economist from want, was very far from being sufficient for Mr. Savage, who had never been accustomed to dismiss any of his appetites without the gratification which they solicited, and whom nothing but want of money withheld from partaking of every pleasure that fell within his view.

His conduct with regard to his pension was very particular. No sooner had he changed the bill, than he vanished from the sight of all his acquaintance, and lay for some time out of the reach of all the inquiries that friendship or curiosity could make after him. At length he appeared again, pennyless as before, but never informed even those whom he seemed to regard most, where he had been; nor was his retreat ever discovered.

This was his constant practice during the whole time that he received the pension of the Queen: he regularly disappeared and returned. He, indeed, affirmed that he retired to study, and that the money supported him in solitude for many months; but his friends declared, that the short time in which it was spent sufficiently confuted his own account of his conduct.

His politeness and his wit still raised him friends, who were desirous of setting him at length free from that indigence by which he had been hitherto oppressed; and therefore solicited Sir Robert Walpole in his favour with so much earnestness that they obtained a promise of the next place that should become vacant, not exceeding two hundred pounds a year. This promise was made with an uncommon declaration, "that it was not the promise of a minister to a petitioner, but of a friend to his friend."

Mr. Savage now concluded himself set at ease for ever, and, as he observes in a poem written on that incident of his life, trusted and was trusted; but soon found that his confidence was ill-grounded, and this friendly promise was not inviolable. He spent a long time in solicitations, and at last despaired and desisted.

He did not indeed deny, that he had given the minister some reason to believe that he should not strengthen his own interest by advancing him; for he had taken care to distinguish himself in coffee-houses as an advocate for the ministry of the last years of Queen Anne, and was always ready to justify the conduct, and exalt the character of Lord Bolingbroke, whom he mentions with great regard in an "Epistle upon Authors," which he wrote about that time, but was too wise to publi and of which only some fragments have peared, inserted by him in the "Magazi after his retirement.

To despair was not, however, the charac of Savage; when one patronage failed, he h recourse to another. The prince was now e tremely popular, and had very liberally rewar ed the merit of some writers whom Mr. Sava did not think superior to himself; and therefo he resolved to address a poem to him.

For this purpose he made choice of a subje which could regard only persons of the highe rank and greatest affluence, and which w therefore proper for a poem intended to procu the patronage of a prince; and having retire for some time to Richmond, that he might pr secute his design in full tranquillity, witho the temptations of pleasure, or the solicitation of creditors by which his meditations were i equal danger of being disconcerted, he produce a poem "On Public Spirit, with regard t Public Works."

The plan of this poem is very extensive, an comprises a multitude of topics, each of whic might furnish matter sufficient for a long per formance, and of which some have already em ployed more eminent writers; but as he wa perhaps not fully acquainted with the whol extent of his own design, and was writing t obtain a supply of wants too pressing to admi of long or accurate inquiries, he passes negli gently over many public works, which, even i his own opinion, deserved to be more elaborate treated.

But, though he may sometimes disappoint hi reader by transient touches upon these subjects which have often been considered, and therefor naturally raise expectations, he must be allowe amply to compensate his omissions, by expatiat ing, in the conclusion of his work, upon a kin of beneficence not yet celebrated by any eminen poet, though it now appears more susceptible o embellishments, more adapted to exalt the ideas and affect the passions, than many of thos which have hitherto been thought most worth of the ornaments of verse. The settlement o colonies in uninhabited countries, the establish ment of those in security whose misfortune have made their own country no longer pleas ing or safe, the acquisition of property withou injury to any, the appropriation of the wast and luxuriant bounties of nature, and the en joyment of those gifts which Heaven has scat tered upon the regions uncultivated and unoc cupied, cannot be considered without giving ris to a great number of pleasing ideas, and be wildering the imagination in delightful pros pects; and, therefore, whatever speculation they may produce in those who have confined themselves to political studies, naturally fixes the attention, and excited the applause of

The politician, when he considers men
n into other countries for shelter, and
ed to retire to forests and deserts, and
their lives, and fix their posterity, in the
test corners of the world, to avoid those
ships which they suffer or fear in their na-
place, may very properly inquire, why the
ature does not provide a remedy for these
ies, rather than encourage an escape from
. He may conclude that the flight of
honest man is a loss to the community;
those who are unhappy without guilt ought
relieved; and the life which is overbur-
l by accidental calamities set at ease by
are of the public; and that those who have
isconduct forfeited their claim to favour,
t rather to be made useful to the society
h they have injured, than be driven from
But the poet is employed in a more pleas-
undertaking than that of proposing laws
h, however just or expedient, will never
ade; or endeavouring to reduce to rational
nes of government societies which were
ed by chance, and are conducted by the
te passions of those who preside in them.
guides the unhappy fugitive, from want
ersecution, to plenty, quiet and security,
eats himself in scenes of peaceful solitude,
undisturbed peace.

vage has not forgotten, amidst the pleasing
ments which this prospect of retirement sug-
d to him, to censure those crimes which have
generally committed by the discoverers of
regions, and to expose the enormous wicked-
of making war upon barbarous nations be-
they cannot resist, and of invading countries
se they are fruitful; of extending naviga-
only to propagate vice, and of visiting dis-
lands only to lay them waste. He has
ted the natural equality of mankind, and
voured to suppress that pride which in-
s men to imagine, that right is the conse-
ce of power.

is description of the various miseries which
men to seek for refuge in distant countries,
ds another instance of his proficiency in
mportant and extensive study of human
and the tenderness with which he recounts
, another proof of his humanity and bene-
ce.

is observable that the close of this poem
vers a change which experience had made
r. Savage's opinions. In a poem written
im in his youth, and published in his Mis-
nies, he declares his contempt of the con-
ed views and narrow prospects of the mid-
tate of life, and declares his resolution ei-
to tower like the cedar, or be trampled like
hrub; but in this poem, though addressed
prince, he mentions this state of life, as
prising those who ought most to attract re-
, those who merit most the confidence of
power and the familiarity of greatness; and, accidentally mentioning this passage to one of his friends, declared, that in his opinion all the virtue of mankind was comprehended in that state.

In describing villas and gardens he did not omit to condemn that absurd custom which prevails among the English, of permitting servants to receive money from strangers for the entertainment that they receive, and therefore inserted in his poem these lines:

But what the flowering pride of gardens rare,
However royal, or however fair,
If gates, which to access should still give way,
Ope but, like Peter's paradise, for pay;
If perquisited varlets frequent stand,
And each new walk must a new tax demand;
What foreign eye but with contempt surveys?
What muse shall from oblivion snatch their praise?

But before the publication of his performance he recollected that the Queen allowed her garden and cave at Richmond to be shown for money; and that she so openly countenanced the practice, that she had bestowed the privilege of showing them as a place of profit on a man, whose merit she valued herself upon rewarding, though she gave him only the liberty of disgracing his country.

He therefore thought, with more prudence than was often exerted by him, that the publication of these lines might be officiously represented as an insult upon the Queen, to whom he owed his life and his subsistence; and that the propriety of his observation would be no security against the censures which the unseasonableness of it might draw upon him: he therefore suppressed the passage in the first edition, but after the Queen's death thought the same caution no longer necessary, and restored it to the proper place.

The poem was, therefore, published without any political faults, and inscribed to the Prince; but Mr. Savage, having no friend upon whom he could prevail to present it to him, had no other method of attracting his observation than the publication of frequent advertisements, and therefore received no reward from his patron, however generous on other occasions.

This disappointment he never mentioned without indignation, being by some means or other confident that the Prince was not ignorant of his address to him; and insinuated, that if any advances in popularity could have been made by distinguishing him, he had not written without notice, or without reward.

He was once inclined to have presented his poem in person, and sent to the printer for a copy with that design; but either his opinion changed, or his resolution deserted him, and he continued to resent neglect without attempting to force himself into regard.

Nor was the public much more favourable than his patron; for only seventy-two were sold, though the performance was much commended by some whose judgment in that kind of writing is generally allowed. But Savage easily reconciled himself to mankind, without imputing any defect to his work, by observing that his poem was unluckily published two days after the prorogation of the parliament, and by consequence at a time when all those who could be expected to regard it were in the hurry of preparing for their departure, or engaged in taking leave of others upon their dismission from public affairs.

It must be however allowed, in justification of the public, that this performance is not the most excellent of Mr. Savage's works; and that, though it cannot be denied to contain many striking sentiments, majestic lines, and just observations, it is in general not sufficiently polished in the language, or enlivened in the imagery, or digested in the plan.

Thus his poem contributed nothing to the alleviation of his poverty, which was such as very few could have supported with equal patience; but to which it must likewise be confessed, that few would have been exposed who received punctually fifty pounds a year; a salary which, though by no means equal to the demands of vanity and luxury, is yet found sufficient to support families above want, and was undoubtedly more than the necessities of life require.

But no sooner had he received his pension, than he withdrew to his darling privacy, from which he returned in a short time to his former distress, and for some part of the year generally lived by chance, eating only when he was invited to the tables of his acquaintances, from which the meanness of his dress often excluded him, when the politeness and variety of his conversation would have been thought a sufficient recompence for his entertainment.

He lodged as much by accident as he dined, and passed the night sometimes in mean houses, which are set open at night to any casual wanderers, sometimes in cellars among the riot and filth of the meanest and most profligate of the rabble: and sometimes, when he had not money to support even the expenses of these receptacles, walked about the streets till he was weary, and lay down in the summer upon a bulk, or in the winter, with his associates in poverty, among the ashes of a glass-house.

In this manner were passed those days and those nights which nature had enabled him to have employed in elevated speculations, useful studies, or pleasing conversation. On a bulk, in a cellar, or in a glass-house, among thieves and beggars, was to be found the Author of "The Wanderer," the man of exalted sentiments, extensive views, and curious observations: the man whose remarks on life might have assisted the statesman, whose ideas of tue might have enlightened the moralist, w eloquence might have influenced senates, whose delicacy might have polished courts.

It cannot but be imagined that such nec ties might sometimes force him upon disre able practices; and it is probable that t lines in "The Wanderer" were occasione his reflections on his conduct:

Though misery leads to happiness, and truth,
Unequal to the load this languid youth,
(O, let none censure, if, untried by grief,
If, amidst wo, untempted by relief)
He stoop'd reluctant to low arts of shame,
Which then, even then, he scorn'd, and blush'
name.

Whoever was acquainted with him was tain to be solicited for small sums, which frequency of the request made in time consi able: and he was therefore quickly shunne those who were become familiar enough to trusted with his necessities; but his rambl manner of life, and constant appearance houses of public resort, always procured hi new succession of friends, whose kindness not been exhausted by repeated requests; that he was seldom absolutely without sources, but had in his utmost exigences t comfort, that he always imagined himself s of speedy relief.

It was observed, that he always asked favo of this kind without the least submission apparent consciousness of dependance, and t he did not seem to look upon a compliance w his request as an obligation that deserved a extraordinary acknowledgments; but a refu was resented by him as an affront, or co plained of as an injury; nor did he readily concile himself to those who either denied lend, or gave him afterwards any intimati that they expected to be repaid.

He was sometimes so far compassioned those who knew both his merit and distress that they received him into their families, b they soon discovered him to be a very incomm dious inmate; for, being always accustomed an irregular manner of life, he could not co fine himself to any stated hours, or pay any r gard to the rules of a family, but would prolo his conversation till midnight, without conside ing that business might require his friend's a plication in the morning; and, when he h persuaded himself to retire to bed, was n without equal difficulty called up to dinner: was therefore impossible to pay him any di tinction without the entire subversion of economy; a kind of establishment whic wherever he went, he always appeared ambi tious to overthrow.

It must, therefore, be acknowledged, in just fication of mankind, that it was not always

negligence or coldness of his friends that vage was distressed, but because it was in ility very difficult to preserve him long in a te of ease. To supply him with money was hopeless attempt; for no sooner did he see nself master of a sum sufficient to set him e from care for a day, than he became profuse d luxurious. When once he had entered a vern, or engaged in a scheme of pleasure, he ver retired till want of money obliged him to me new expedient. If he was entertained in amily, nothing was any longer to be regarded ere but amusements and jollity; wherever vage entered, he immediately expected that der and business should fly before him, that should thenceforward be left to hazard, and at no dull principle of domestic management ould be opposed to his inclination, or intrude on his gayety.

His distresses, however afflictive, never de- ted him; in his lowest state he wanted not irit to assert the natural dignity of wit, and as always ready to repress that insolence which e superiority of fortune incited, and to tram- e on that reputation which rose upon any her basis than that of merit; he never ad- itted any gross familiarities, or submitted to treated otherwise than as an equal. Once, hen he was without lodging, meat, or clothes, ne of his friends, a man indeed not remarkable r moderation in his prosperity, left a message, at he desired to see him about nine in the orning. Savage knew that his intention was assist him; but was very much disgusted at he should presume to prescribe the hour of is attendance, and, I believe, refused to visit im, and rejected his kindness.

The same invincible temper, whether firmness obstinacy, appeared in his conduct to the ord Tyrconnel, from whom he very frequently emanded, that the allowance which was once aid him should be restored, but with whom e never appeared to entertain for a moment he thought of soliciting a reconciliation, and hom he treated at once with all the haughti- ess of superiority, and all the bitterness of re- ntment. He wrote to him, not in a style of upplication or respect, but of reproach, menace, nd contempt; and appeared determined, if he ver regained his allowance, to hold it only by he right of conquest.

As many more can discover that a man is icher than that he is wiser than themselves, su- eriority of understanding is not so readily ac- knowledged as that of fortune; nor is that aughtiness which the consciousness of great bilities incites borne with the same submission s the tyranny of affluence; and therefore Sa- vage, by asserting his claim to deference and re- gard, and by treating those with contempt whom better fortune animated to rebel against him, did not fail to raise a great number of ene- mies in the different classes of mankind. Those who thought themselves raised above him by the advantages of riches, hated him because they found no protection from the petulance of his wit. Those who were esteemed for their writ- ings feared him as a critic, and maligned him as a rival; and almost all the smaller wits were his professed enemies.

Among these Mr. Miller so far indulged his resentment as to introduce him in a farce, and direct him to be personated on the stage, in a dress like that which he then wore; a mean in- sult, which only insinuated that Savage had but one coat, and which was therefore despised by him rather than resented; for, though he wrote a lampoon against Miller, he never printed it· and as no other person ought to prosecute that revenge from which the person who was injured desisted, I shall not preserve what Mr. Savage suppressed; of which the publication would indeed have been a punishment too severe for so impotent an assault.

The great hardships of poverty were to Sa- vage not the want of lodging or of food, but the neglect and contempt which it drew upon him He complained that, as his affairs grew desper- ate, he found his reputation for capacity visibly decline; that his opinion in questions of criti- cism was no longer regarded, when his coat was out of fashion; and that those who, in the in- terval of his prosperity, were always encourag- ing him to great undertakings by encomiums on his genius and assurances of success, now re- ceived any mention of his design with coldness, thought that the subjects on which he proposed to write were very difficult, and were ready to inform him, that the event of a poem was un- certain, that an author ought to employ much time in the consideration of his plan, and not presume to sit down to write in confidence of a few cursory ideas, and a superficial know- ledge; difficulties were started on all sides, and he was no longer qualified for any performance but "The Volunteer Laureat."

Yet even this kind of contempt never de- pressed him; for he always preserved a steady confidence in his own capacity, and believed nothing above his reach which he should at any time earnestly endeavour to attain. He formed schemes of the same kind with regard to know- ledge and to fortune, and flattering himself with advances to be made in science, as with riches, to be enjoyed in some distant period of his life. For the acquisition of knowledge he was indeed far better qualified than for that of riches; for he was naturally inquisitive, and desirous of the conversation of those from whom any in- formation was to be obtained, but by no means solicitous to improve those opportunities that were sometimes offered of raising his fortune; and he was remarkably retentive of his ideas, which, when once he was in possession of

them, rarely forsook him—a quality which could never be communicated to his money.

While he was thus wearing out his life in expectation that the Queen would some time recollect her promise, he had recourse to the usual practice of writers, and published proposals for printing his works by subscription, to which he was encouraged by the success of many who had not a better right to the favour of the public; but, whatever was the reason, he did not find the world equally inclined to favour him; and he observed, with some discontent, that, though he offered his works at half-a-guinea, he was able to procure but a small number in comparison with those who subscribed twice as much to Duck.

Nor was it without indignation that he saw his proposals neglected by the Queen, who patronized Mr. Duck's with uncommon ardour, and incited a competition among those who attended the court, who should most promote his interest, and who should first offer a subscription. This was a distinction to which Mr. Savage made no scruple of asserting, that his birth, his misfortunes, and his genius, gave a fairer title than could be pleaded by him on whom it was conferred.

Savage's applications were, however, not universally unsuccessful; for some of the nobility countenanced his design, encouraged his proposals, and subscribed with great liberality. He related of the Duke of Chandos particularly, that, upon receiving his proposals, he sent him ten guineas.

But the money which his subscriptions afforded him was not less volatile than that which he received from his other schemes: whenever a subscription was paid him, he went to a tavern; and, as money so collected is necessarily received in small sums, he was never able to send his poems to the press, but for many years continued his solicitation, and squandered whatever he obtained.

This project of printing his works was frequently revived; and as his proposals grew obsolete, new ones were printed with fresher dates. To form schemes for the publication, was one of his favourite amusements; nor was he ever more at ease than when, with any friend who readily fell in with his schemes, he was adjusting the print, forming the advertisements, and regulating the dispersion of his new edition, which he really intended some time to publish, and which, as long as experience had shown him the impossibility of printing the volume together, he at last determined to divide into weekly or monthly numbers, that the profits of the first might supply the expenses of the next.

Thus he spent his time in mean expedients and tormenting suspense, living for the greatest part in the fear of prosecutions from his cre tors, and consequently skulking in obscure pa of the town, of which he was no stranger the remotest corners. But wherever he ca his address secured him friends, whom his n cessities soon alienated: so that he had, perha a more numerous acquaintance than any m ever before attained, there being scarcely a person eminent on any account to whom was not known, or whose character he was n in some degree able to delineate.

To the acquisition of this extensive acquai tance every circumstance of his life contribute He excelled in the arts of conversation, an therefore willingly practised them. He ha seldom any home, or even a lodging in whic he could be private; and therefore was drive into public-houses for the common convenience of life and supports of nature. He was alway ready to comply with every invitation, having n employment to withhold him, and often no mone to provide for himself; and by dining with on company, he never failed of obtaining an intro duction into another.

Thus dissipated was his life, and thus casua his subsistence; yet did not the distraction o his views hinder him from reflection, nor th uncertainty of his condition depress his gayety. When he had wandered about without any fortunate adventure by which he was led into a tavern, he sometimes retired into the fields, and was able to employ his mind in study, or amuse it with pleasing imaginations; and seldom appeared to be melancholy, but when some sudden misfortune had fallen upon him; and even then in a few moments he would disentangle himself from his perplexity, adopt the subject of conversation, and apply his mind wholly to the objects that others presented to it. This life, unhappy as it may be already imagined, was yet embittered, in 1738, with new calamities. The death of the Queen deprived him of all the prospects of preferment with which he so long entertained his imagination; and, as Sir Robert Walpole had before given him reason to believe that he never intended the performance of his promise, he was now abandoned again to fortune.

He was, however, at that time, supported by a friend; and as it was not his custom to look out for distant calamities, or to feel any other pain than that which forced itself upon his senses, he was not much afflicted at his loss, and perhaps comforted himself that his pension would be now continued without the annual tribute of a panegyric.

Another expectation contributed likewise to support him: he had taken the resolution to write a second tragedy upon the story of Sir Thomas Overbury, in which he preserved a few lines of his former play, but made a total

teration of the plan, added new incidents, and introduced new characters; so that it was a new tragedy, not a revival of the former.

Many of his friends blamed him for not making choice of another subject; but, in vindication of himself, he asserted, that it was not easy to find a better; and that he thought it his interest to extinguish the memory of the first tragedy, which he could only do by writing one less defective upon the same story; by which he should entirely defeat the artifice of the booksellers, who, after the death of any author of reputation, are always industrious to swell his works, by uniting his worst productions with his best.

In the execution of this scheme, however, he proceeded but slowly, and probably only employed himself upon it when he could find no other amusement; but he pleased himself with counting the profits, and perhaps imagined that the theatrical reputation which he was about to acquire, would be equivalent to all that he had lost by the death of his patroness.

He did not, in confidence of his approaching riches, neglect the measures proper to secure the continuance of his pension, though some of his favourers thought him culpable for omitting to write on her death; but on her birth-day next year, he gave a proof of the solidity of his judgment, and the power of his genius. He knew that the track of elegy had been so long beaten, that it was impossible to travel in it without treading in the footsteps of those who had gone before him; and that therefore it was necessary, that he might distinguish himself from the herd of encomiasts, to find out some new walk of funeral panegyric.

This difficult task he performed in such a manner, that his poem may be justly ranked among the best pieces that the death of princes has produced. By transferring the mention of her death to her birth-day, he has formed a happy combination of topics, which any other man would have thought it very difficult to connect in one view, but which he has united in such a manner, that the relation between them appears natural; and it may be justly said, that what no other man would have thought on, it now appears scarcely possible for any man to miss.

The beauty of this peculiar combination of images is so masterly, that it is sufficient to set this poem above censure; and therefore it is not necessary to mention many other delicate touches which may be found in it, and which would deservedly be admired in any other performance.

To these proofs of his genius may be added, from the same poem, an instance of his prudence, an excellence for which he was not so often distinguished; he does not forget to remind the king, in the most delicate and artful manner of continuing his pension.

With regard to the success of this address, he was for some time in suspense, but was in no great degree solicitous about it; and continued his labour upon his new tragedy with great tranquillity, till the friend who had for a considerable time supported him, removing his family to another place, took occasion to dismiss him. It then became necessary to inquire more diligently what was determined in his affair, having reason to suspect that no great favour was intended him, because he had not received his pension at the usual time.

It is said, that he did not take those methods of retrieving his interest, which were most likely to succeed; and some of those who were employed in the Exchequer, cautioned him against too much violence in his proceedings; but Mr. Savage, who seldom regulated his conduct by the advice of others, gave way to his passion, and demanded of Sir Robert Walpole, at his levee, the reason of the distinction that was made between him and the other pensioners of the Queen, with a degree of roughness, which perhaps determined him to withdraw what had been only delayed.

Whatever was the crime of which he was accused or suspected, and whatever influence was employed against him, he received soon after an account that took from him all hopes of regaining his pension; and he had now no prospect of subsistence but from his play, and he knew no way of living for the time required to finish it.

So peculiar were the misfortunes of this man, deprived of an estate and title by a particular law, exposed and abandoned by a mother, defrauded by a mother of a fortune which his father had allotted him, he entered the world without a friend; and though his abilities forced themselves into esteem and reputation, he was never able to obtain any real advantage; and whatever prospects arose, were always intercepted as he began to approach them. The King's intentions in his favour were frustrated; his dedication to the Prince, whose generosity on every other occasion was eminent, procured him no reward; Sir Robert Walpole, who valued himself upon keeping his promise to others, broke it to him without regret; and the bounty of the Queen was, after her death, withdrawn from him, and from him only.

Such were his misfortunes, which yet he bore, not only with decency, but with cheerfulness; nor was his gayety clouded even by his last disappointments, though he was in a short time reduced to the lowest degree of distress, and often wanted both lodging and food. At this time he gave another instance of the insurmountable obstinacy of his spirit: his clothes

were worn out, and he received notice, that at a coffee house some clothes and linen were left for him: the person who sent them did not, I believe, inform him to whom he was to be obliged, that he might spare the perplexity of acknowledging the benefit; but though the offer was so far generous, it was made with some neglect of ceremonies, which Mr. Savage so much resented, that he refused the present, and declined to enter the house till the clothes that had been designed for him were taken away.

His distress was now publicly known, and his friends, therefore, thought it proper to concert some measures for his relief; and one of them wrote a letter to him, in which he expressed his concern "for the miserable withdrawing of his pension;" and gave him hopes, that in a short time he should find himself supplied with a competence, without any dependance "on those little creatures which we are pleased to call the great."

The scheme proposed for this happy and independent subsistence was, that he should retire into Wales, and receive an allowance of fifty pounds a year, to be raised by a subscription, on which he was to live privately in a cheap place, without aspiring any more to affluence, or having any farther care of reputation.

This offer Mr. Savage gladly accepted, though with intentions very different from those of his friends; for they proposed that he should continue an exile from London for ever, and spend all the remaining part of his life at Swansea; but he designed only to take the opportunity, which their scheme offered him, of retreating for a short time that he might prepare his play for the stage, and his other works for the press, and then return to London to exhibit his tragedy, and live upon the profits of his own labour.

With regard to his works, he proposed very great improvements, which would have required much time or great application; and, when he had finished them, he designed to do justice to his subscribers, by publishing them according to his proposals.

As he was ready to entertain himself with future pleasures, he had planned out a scheme of life for the country, of which he had no knowledge but from pastorals and songs. He imagined that he should be transported to scenes of flowery felicity, like those which one poet has reflected to another; and had projected a perpetual round of innocent pleasures, of which he suspected no interruption from pride, or ignorance, or brutality.

With these expectations he was so enchanted, that when he was once gently reproached by a friend for submitting to live upon a subscription, and advised rather by a resolute exertion of his abilities to support himself, he could not bear to debar himself from the happiness which was to be found in the calm of a cottage, or lo the opportunity of listening, without intermi sion, to the melody of the nightingale, whi he believed was to be heard from every brambl and which he did not fail to mention as very important part of the happiness of a cou try life.

While this scheme was ripening, his frien directed him to take a lodging in the liberties the Fleet, that he might be secure from his cr ditors; and sent him every Monday a guine which he commonly spent before the nex morning, and trusted after his usual manne the remaining part of the week to the bount of fortune.

He now began very sensibly to feel the mise ries of dependance. Those by whom he was t be supported began to prescribe to him with a air of authority, which he knew not how de cently to resent, nor patiently to bear; and h soon discovered, from the conduct of most o his subscribers, that he was yet in the hands o "little creatures."

Of the insolence that he was obliged to suffe he gave many instances, of which none appeare to raise his indignation to a greater height, than the method which was taken of furnishing hin with clothes. Instead of consulting him, and allowing him to send a tailor his orders fo what they thought proper to allow him, they proposed to send for a tailor to take his mea sure, and then to consult how they should equip him.

This treatment was not very delicate, nor was it such as Savage's humanity would have sug gested to him on a like occasion; but it had scarcely deserved mention, had it not, by affect ing him in an uncommon degree, shown the peculiarity of his character. Upon hearing the design that was formed, he came to the lodging of a friend with the most violent agonies o rage; and, being asked what it could be that gave him such disturbance, he replied with the utmost vehemence of indignation, "That they had sent for a tailor to measure him."

How the affair ended was never inquired, for fear of renewing his uneasiness. It is probable that, upon recollection, he submitted with a good grace to what he could not avoid, and that he discovered no resentment where he had no power.

He was, however, not humbled to implicit and universal compliance; for when the gentleman, who had first informed him of the design to support him by a subscription, attempted to procure a reconciliation with the Lord Tyrconnel, he could by no means be prevailed upon to comply with the measures that were proposed.

A letter was written for him* to Sir William

* By Mr. Pope.—Dr. J.

Lemon, to prevail upon him to interpose his good offices with Lord Tyrconnel, in which he solicited Sir William's assistance "for a man who really needed it as much as any man could well do;" and informed him, that he was retiring "for ever, to a place where he should no more trouble his relations, friends, or enemies;" he confessed that his passion had betrayed him to some conduct, with regard to Lord Tyrconnel, for which he could not but heartily ask his pardon; and as he imagined Lord Tyrconnel's passion might yet be so high that he would not "receive a letter from him," begged that Sir William would endeavour to soften him; and expressed his hopes that he would comply with his request, and that "so small a relation would not harden his heart against him."

That any man should presume to dictate a letter to him, was not very agreeable to Mr. Savage; and therefore he was, before he had opened it, not much inclined to approve it. But when he read it, he found it contained sentiments entirely opposite to his own, and, as he asserted, to the truth, and therefore, instead of copying it, wrote his friend a letter full of masculine resentment and warm expostulations. He very justly observed, that the style was too supplicatory, and the representation too abject, and that he ought at least to have made him complain with "the dignity of a gentleman in distress." He declared that he would not write the paragraph in which he was to ask Lord Tyrconnel's pardon; for, "he despised his pardon, and therefore could not heartily, and would not hypocritically, ask it." He remarked that his friend made a very unreasonable distinction between himself and him; "for," says he, "when you mention men of high rank in your own character, they are 'those little creatures whom we are pleased to call the great;' but when you address them in mine, no servility is sufficiently humble." He then with great propriety explained the ill consequences which might be expected from such a letter, which his relations would print in their own defence, and which would for ever be produced as a full answer to all that he should allege against them; for he always intended to publish a minute account of the treatment which he had received. It is to be remembered, to the honour of the gentleman by whom this letter was drawn up, that he yielded to Mr. Savage's reasons, and agreed that it ought to be suppressed.

After many alterations and delays, a subscription was at length raised, which did not amount to fifty pounds a year, though twenty were paid by one gentleman;* such was the generosity of mankind, that what had been done by a player without solicitation, could not now be effected by application and interest; and Savage had a great number to court and to obey for a pension less than that which Mrs. Oldfield paid him without exacting any servilities.

Mr. Savage, however, was satisfied. and willing to retire, and was convinced that the allowance, though scanty, would be more than sufficient for him, being now determined to commence a rigid economist, and live according to the exactest rules of frugality; for nothing was in his opinion more contemptible than a man, who, when he knew his income, exceeded it; and yet he confessed that instances of such folly were too common, and lamented that some men were not to be trusted with their own money.

Full of these salutary resolutions, he left London in July 1739, having taken leave with great tenderness of his friends, and parted from the Author of this narrative with tears in his eyes. He was furnished with fifteen guineas, and informed that they would be sufficient, not only for the expense of his journey, but for his support in Wales for some time; and that there remained but little more of the first collection. He promised a strict adherence to his maxims of parsimony, and went away in the stage-coach; nor did his friends expect to hear from him till he informed them of his arrival at Swansea.

But, when they least expected, arrived a letter dated the fourteenth day after his departure, in which he sent them word, that he was yet upon the road, and without money; and that he therefore could not proceed without a remittance. They then sent him the money that was in their hands, with which he was enabled to reach Bristol, from whence he was to go to Swansea by water.

At Bristol he found an embargo laid upon the shipping, so that he could not immediately obtain a passage; and being therefore obliged to stay there for some time, he with his usual felicity ingratiated himself with many of the principal inhabitants, was invited to their houses, distinguished at their public feasts, and treated with a regard that gratified his vanity, and therefore easily engaged his affection.

He began very early after his retirement to complain of the conduct of his friends in London, and irritated many of them so much by his letters, that they withdrew, however honourably, their contributions; and it is believed that little more was paid him than the twenty pounds a year, which were allowed him by the gentleman who proposed the subscription.

After some stay at Bristol he retired to Swansea, the place originally proposed for his residence, where he lived about a year, very much dissatisfied with the diminution of his salary; but contracted, as in other places, acquaintance with those who were most distinguished in that

* Mr. Pope.—R.

country, among whom he has celebrated Mr. Powel and Mrs. Jones, by some verses which he inserted in "The Gentleman's Magazine."*

Here he completed his tragedy, of which two acts were wanting when he left London; and was desirous of coming to town, to bring it upon the stage. This design was very warmly opposed; and he was advised by his chief benefactor, to put it into the hands of Mr. Thomson and Mr. Mallet, that it might be fitted for the stage, and allow his friends to receive the profits, out of which an annual pension should be paid him.

This proposal he rejected with the utmost contempt. He was by no means convinced that the judgment of those, to whom he was required to submit, was superior to his own. He was now determined, as he expressed it, to be "no longer kept in leading strings," and had no elevated idea of "his bounty, who proposed to pension him out of the profits of his own labours."

He attempted in Wales to promote a subscription for his works, and had once hopes of success; but in a short time afterwards formed a resolution of leaving that part of the country, to which he thought it not reasonable to be confined, for the gratification of those who having promised him a liberal income, had no sooner banished him to a remote corner, than they reduced his allowance to a salary scarcely equal to the necessities of life.

His resentment of this treatment, which, in his own opinion at least, he had not deserved, was such, that he broke off all correspondence with most of his contributors, and appeared to consider them as persecutors and oppressors; and in the latter part of his life declared, that their conduct towards him since his departure from London "had been perfidiousness improving on perfidiousness, and inhumanity on inhumanity."

It is not to be supposed that the necessities of Mr. Savage did not sometimes incite him to satirical exaggerations of the behaviour of those by whom he thought himself reduced to them. But it must be granted, that the diminution of his allowance was a great hardship, and that those who withdrew their subscriptions from a man, who, upon the faith of their promise, had gone into a kind of banishment, and abandoned all those by whom he had been before relieved in his distresses, will find it no easy task to vindicate their conduct.

It may be alleged, and perhaps justly, that he was petulant and contemptuous; that he more frequently reproached his subscribers for not giving him more, than thanked them for what he received; but it is to be remembered, that his conduct, and this is the worst charge that can be drawn up against him, did them no real injury, and that it therefore ought rather to have been pitied than resented; at least, the resentment it might provoke ought to have been generous and manly; epithets which his conduct will hardly deserve, that starves the man whom he has persuaded to put himself into his power.

It might have been reasonably demanded by Savage, that they should, before they had taken away what they promised, have replaced him in his former state, that they should have taken no advantages from the situation to which the appearance of their kindness had reduced him, and that he should have been recalled to London before he was abandoned. He might justly represent, that he ought to have been considered as a lion in the toils, and demand to be released before the dogs should be loosed upon him.

He endeavoured, indeed, to release himself, and, with an intent to return to London, went to Bristol, where a repetition of the kindness which he had formerly found invited him to stay. He was not only caressed and treated, but had a collection made for him of about thirty pounds, with which it had been happy if he had immediately departed for London; but his negligence did not suffer him to consider, that such proofs of kindness were not often to be expected, and that this ardour of benevolence was in a great degree the effect of novelty, and might, probably, be every day less; and therefore he took no care to improve the happy time, but was encouraged by one favour to hope for another, till at length generosity was exhausted, and officiousness wearied.

Another part of his misconduct was the practice of prolonging his visits to unseasonable hours, and disconcerting all the families into which he was admitted. This was an error in a place of commerce, which all the charms of his conversation could not compensate; for what trader would purchase such airy satisfaction by the loss of solid gain, which must be the consequence of midnight merriment, as those hours which were gained at night were generally lost in the morning?

Thus Mr. Savage, after the curiosity of the inhabitants was gratified, found the number of his friends daily decreasing, perhaps without suspecting for what reason their conduct was altered; for he still continued to harass, with his nocturnal intrusions, those that yet countenanced him, and admitted him to their houses.

But he did not spend all the time of his residence at Bristol in visits or at taverns; for he sometimes returned to his studies, and began several considerable designs. When he felt an inclination to write, he always retired from the knowledge of his friends, and lay hid in an

* Reprinted in the late Collection.

obscure part of the suburbs, till he found himself again desirous of company, to which it is likely that intervals of absence made him more welcome.

He was always full of his design of returning to London, to bring his tragedy upon the stage; but, having neglected to depart with the money that was raised for him, he could not afterwards procure a sum sufficient to defray the expenses of his journey; nor perhaps would a fresh supply have had any other effect, than, by putting immediate pleasures into his power, to have driven the thoughts of his journey out of his mind.

While he was thus spending the day in contriving a scheme for the morrow, distress stole upon him by imperceptible degrees. His conduct had already wearied some of those who were at first enamoured of his conversation; but he might, perhaps, still have devolved to others, whom he might have entertained with equal success, had not the decay of his clothes made it no longer consistent with their vanity to admit him to their tables, or to associate with him in public places. He now began to find every man from home at whose house he called; and was therefore no longer able to procure the necessaries of life, but wandered about the town, slighted and neglected, in quest of a dinner which he did not always obtain.

To complete his misery, he was pursued by the officers for small debts which he had contracted; and was therefore obliged to withdraw from the small number of friends from whom he had still reason to hope for favours. His custom was, to lie in bed the greatest part of the day, and to go out in the dark with the utmost privacy, and, after having paid his visit, return again before morning to his lodging, which was the garret of an obscure inn.

Being thus excluded on one hand, and confined on the other, he suffered the utmost extremities of poverty, and often fasted so long that he was seized with faintness, and had lost his appetite, not being able to bear the smell of meat, till the action of his stomach was restored by a cordial.

In this distress he received a remittance of five pounds from London, with which he provided himself a decent coat, and determined to go to London, but unhappily spent his money at a favourite tavern. Thus was he again confined to Bristol, where he was every day hunted by bailiffs. In this exigence he once more found a friend, who sheltered him in his house, though at the usual inconveniences with which his company was attended; for he could neither be persuaded to go to bed in the night, nor to rise in the day.

It is observable, that in these various scenes of misery he was always disengaged and cheerful: he at some times pursued his studies, and at others continued or enlarged his epistolary correspondence; nor was he ever so far dejected as to endeavour to procure an increase of his allowance by any other methods than accusations and reproaches.

He had now no longer any hopes of assistance from his friends at Bristol, who as merchants, and by consequence sufficiently studious of profit, cannot be supposed to have looked with much compassion upon negligence and extravagance, or to think any excellence equivalent to a fault of such consequence as neglect of economy. It is natural to imagine, that many of those who would have relieved his real wants, were discouraged from the exertion of their benevolence by observation of the use which was made of their favours, and conviction that relief would only be momentary, and, that the same necessity would quickly return.

At last he quitted the house of his friend, and returned to his lodging at the inn, still intending to set out in a few days to London; but on the 10th of January, 1742-3, having been at supper with two of his friends, he was at his return to his lodgings arrested for a debt of about eight pounds, which he owed at a coffee-house, and conducted to the house of a sheriff's officer. The account which he gives of this misfortune, in a letter to one of the gentlemen with whom he had supped, is too remarkable to be omitted.

"It was not a little unfortunate for me, that I spent yesterday's evening with you; because the hour hindered me from entering on my new lodging; however, I have now got one, but such a one as I believe nobody would choose.

"I was arrested at the suit of Mrs. Read, just as I was going up stairs to bed, at Mr. Bowyer's; but taken in so private a manner, that I believe nobody at the White Lion is apprised of it: though I let the officers know the strength, or rather the weakness, of my pocket, yet they treated me with the utmost civility; and even when they conducted me to confinement, it was in such a manner, that I verily believe I could have escaped, which I would rather be ruined than have done, notwithstanding the whole amount of my finances was but threepence halfpenny.

"In the first place, I must insist, that you will industriously conceal this from Mrs. S———s, because I would not have her good-nature suffer that pain, which I know she would be apt to feel on this occasion.

"Next, I conjure you, dear Sir, by all the ties of friendship, by no means to have one uneasy thought on my account; but to have the same pleasantry of countenance and unruffled serenity of mind, which (God be praised!) I have in this, and have had in a much severer calamity. Furthermore, I charge you, if you value my friendship as truly as I do yours, not

to utter, or even harbour, the least resentment against Mrs. Read. I believe she has ruined me, but I freely forgive her; and, though I will never more have any intimacy with her, I would, at a due distance, rather do her an act of good than ill-will. Lastly, (pardon the expression) I absolutely command you not to offer me any pecuniary assistance, nor to attempt getting me any from any one of your friends. At another time, or on any other occasion, you may, dear friend, be well assured, I would rather write to you in the submissive style of a request, than that of a peremptory command.

"However, that my truly valuable friend may not think I am too proud to ask a favour, let me intreat you to let me have your boy to attend me this day, not only for the sake of saving me the expense of porters, but for the delivery of some letters to people whose names I would not have known to strangers.

"The civil treatment I have thus far met from those whose prisoner I am, makes me thankful to the Almighty, that though he has thought fit to visit me, on my birth-night, with affliction, yet (such is his great goodness!) my affliction is not without alleviating circumstances. I murmur not; but am all resignation to the divine will. As to the world, I hope that I shall be endued by Heaven with that presence of mind, that serene dignity in misfortune, that constitutes the character of a true nobleman; a dignity far beyond that of coronets; a nobility arising from the just principles of philosophy, refined and exalted by those of christianity."

He continued five days at the officer's, in hopes that he should be able to procure bail, and avoid the necessity of going to prison. The state in which he passed his time, and the treatment which he received, are very justly expressed by him in a letter which he wrote to a friend: "The whole day," says he, "has been employed in various people's filling my head with their foolish chimerical systems, which has obliged me coolly (as far as nature will admit) to digest and accommodate myself to every different person's way of thinking; hurried from one wild system to another, till it has quite made a chaos of my imagination, and nothing done—promised—disappointed—ordered to send, every hour, from one part of the town to the other."

When his friends, who had hitherto caressed and applauded him, found that to give bail and pay the debt was the same, they all refused to preserve him from a prison at the expense of eight pounds; and therefore, after having been for some time at the officer's house, "at an immense expense," as he observes in his letter, he was at length removed to Newgate.

This expense he was enabled to support by the generosity of Mr. Nash at Bath, who, upon receiving from him an account of his condition, immediately sent him five guineas, and promised to promote his subscription at Bath with all his interest.

By his removal to Newgate, he obtained at least a freedom from suspense, and rest from the disturbing vicissitudes of hope and disappointment: he now found that his friends were only companions, who were willing to share his gayety, but not to partake of his misfortunes; and therefore he no longer expected any assistance from them.

It must, however, be observed of one gentleman, that he offered to release him by paying the debt; but that Mr. Savage would not consent; I suppose, because he thought he had before been too burdensome to him.

He was offered by some of his friends that a collection should be made for his enlargement: but he "treated the proposal," and declared* "he should again treat it with disdain. As to writing any mendicant letters, he had too high a spirit, and determined only to write to some ministers of state to try to regain his pension."

He continued to complain† of those that had sent him into the country, and objected to them, that he had "lost the profits of his play, which had been finished three years;" and in another letter declares his resolution to publish a pamphlet, that the world might know how "he had been used."

This pamphlet was never written; for he in a very short time recovered his usual tranquillity, and cheerfully applied himself to more inoffensive studies. He indeed steadily declared, that he was promised a yearly allowance of fifty pounds, and never received half the sum; but he seemed to resign himself to that as well as to other misfortunes, and lose the remembrance of it in his amusements and employments.

The cheerfulness with which he bore his confinement appears from the following letter, which he wrote January the 30th, to one of his friends in London.

"I now write to you from my confinement in Newgate, where I have been ever since Monday last was se'nnight, and where I enjoy myself with much more tranquillity than I have known for upwards of a twelvemonth past having a room entirely to myself, and pursuing the amusement of my poetical studies, uninterrupted, and agreeably to my mind. I thank the Almighty, I am now all collected in myself, and, though my person is in confinement, my mind can expatiate on ample and useful subjects with all the freedom imaginable. I am now more conversant with the Nine than ever

* In a letter after his confinement.—Dr. J.

† Letter, Jan. 15.

and if, instead of a Newgate-bird, I may be allowed to be a bird of the Muses, I assure you, Sir, I sing very freely in my cage; sometimes, indeed, in the plaintive notes of the nightingale; but at others in cheerful strains of the lark."

In another letter he observes, that he ranges from one subject to another, without confining himself to any particular task: and that he was employed one week upon one attempt, and the next upon another.

Surely the fortitude of this man deserves, at least, to be mentioned with applause; and, whatever faults may be imputed to him, the virtue of suffering well cannot be denied him. The two powers which, in the opinion of Epictetus, constituted a wise man, are those of bearing and forbearing; which it cannot indeed be affirmed to have been equally possessed by Savage; and indeed the want of one obliged him very frequently to practise the other.

He was treated by Mr. Dagge, the keeper of the prison, with great humanity; was supported by him at his own table, without any certainty of recompense; had a room to himself, to which he could at any time retire from all disturbance; was allowed to stand at the door of the prison, and sometimes taken out into the fields;* so that he suffered fewer hardships in prison than he had been accustomed to undergo in the greatest part of his life.

The keeper did not confine his benevolence to a gentle execution of his office, but made some overtures to the creditor for his release, though without effect; and continued, during the whole time of his imprisonment, to treat him with the utmost tenderness and civility.

Virtue is undoubtedly most laudable in that state which makes it most difficult; and therefore the humanity of a gaoler certainly deserves this public attestation; and the man, whose heart has not been hardened by such an employment, may be justly proposed as a pattern of benevolence. If an inscription was once engraved "to the honest toll-gatherer," less honours ought not to be paid "to the tender gaoler."

Mr. Savage very frequently received visits, and sometimes presents, from his acquaintances; but they did not amount to a subsistence, for the greater part of which he was indebted to the generosity of this keeper; but these favours, however they might endear to him the particular persons from whom he received them, were very far from impressing upon his mind any advantageous ideas of the people of Bristol, and therefore he thought he could not more properly employ himself in prison, than in writing a poem called "London and Bristol delineated."*

When he had brought this poem to its present state, which, without considering the chasm, is not perfect, he wrote to London an account of his design, and informed his friend,† that he was determined to print it with his name; but enjoined him not to communicate his intention to his Bristol acquaintance. The gentleman, surprised at his resolution, endeavoured to dissuade him from publishing it, at least from prefixing his name; and declared, that he could not reconcile the injunction of secrecy with his resolution to own it at its first appearance. To this Mr. Savage returned an answer, agreeable to his character, in the following terms:

"I received yours this morning; and not without a little surprise at the contents. To answer a question with a question, you ask me concerning London and Bristol, why will I add *delineated?* Why did Mr. Woolaston add the same word to his 'Religion of Nature?' I suppose that it was his will and pleasure to add it in his case; and it is mine to do so in my own. You are pleased to tell me, that you understand not why secrecy is enjoined, and yet I intend to set my name to it. My answer is—I have my private reasons, which I am not obliged to explain to any one. You doubt my friend Mr. S——‡ would not approve of it—And what is it to me whether he does or not? Do you imagine that Mr. S—— is to dictate to me? If any man who calls himself my friend should assume such an air, I would spurn at his friendship with contempt. You say, I seem to think so by not letting him know it—And suppose I do, what then? Perhaps I can give reasons for that disapprobation, very foreign from what you would imagine. You go on in saying, Suppose I should not put my name to it—My answer is, that I will not suppose any such thing, being determined to the contrary: neither, Sir, would I have you suppose that I applied to you for want of another press: nor would I have you imagine, that I owe Mr. S—— obligations which I do not."

Such was his imprudence, and such his obstinate adherence to his own resolutions, however absurd! A prisoner! supported by charity! and, whatever insults he might have received during the latter part of his stay at Bristol, once caressed, esteemed, and presented with a liberal collection, he could forget on a sudden his danger and his obligations, to gratify the petulance of his wit, or the eagerness of his re-

* See this confirmed, Gent. Mag. vol. lvii. 1140.—N.

* The Author preferred this title to that of "London and Bristol compared;" which, when he began the piece, he intended to prefix to it.—Dr. J.

† This friend was Mr. Cave, the printer.—N.

‡ Mr. Strong, of the Post-office.—N.

sentment, and publish a satire, by which he might reasonably expect that he should alienate those who then supported him, and provoke those whom he could neither resist nor escape.

This resolution, from the execution of which it is probable that only his death could have hindered him, is sufficient to show, how much he disregarded all considerations that opposed his present passions, and how readily he hazarded all future advantages for any immediate gratifications. Whatever was his predominant inclination, neither hope nor fear hindered him from complying with it; nor had opposition any other effect than to heighten his ardour, and irritate his vehemence.

This performance was however laid aside, while he was employed in soliciting assistance from several great persons; and one interruption succeeding another, hindered him from supplying the chasm, and perhaps from retouching the other parts, which he can hardly be imagined to have finished in his own opinion; for it is very unequal, and some of the lines are rather inserted to rhyme to others, than to support or improve the sense; but the first and last parts are worked up with great spirit and elegance.

His time was spent in the prison for the most part in study, or in receiving visits; but sometimes he descended to lower amusements, and diverted himself in the kitchen with the conversation of the criminals; for it was not pleasing to him to be much without company; and, though he was very capable of a judicious choice, he was often contented with the first that offered; for this he was sometimes reproved by his friends, who found him surrounded with felons: but the reproof was on that, as on other occasions, thrown away; he continued to gratify himself, and to set very little value on the opinion of others.

But here, as in every other scene of his life, he made use of such opportunities as occurred of benefiting those who were more miserable than himself, and was always ready to perform any office of humanity to his fellow-prisoners.

He had now ceased from corresponding with any of his subscribers except one, who yet continued to remit him the twenty pounds a year which he had promised him, and by whom it was expected that he would have been in a very short time enlarged, because he had directed the keeper to inquire after the state of his debts.

However, he took care to enter his name according to the forms of the court,* that the creditor might be obliged to make some allowance, if he was continued a prisoner, and, when on that occasion he appeared in the hall, was treated with very unusual respect.

* See Gent. Mag. vol. lviii. 1040.—N.

But the resentment of the city was afterwards raised by some accounts that had been spread of the satire; and he was informed that some of the merchants intended to pay the allowance which the law required, and to detain him a prisoner at their own expense. This he treated as an empty menace; and perhaps might have hastened the publication, only to show, how much he was superior to their insults, had not all his schemes been suddenly destroyed.

When he had been six months in prison, he received from one of his friends,* in whose kindness he had the greatest confidence, and on whose assistance he chiefly depended, a letter, that contained a charge of a very atrocious ingratitude, drawn up in such terms as sudden resentment dictated. Henley, in one of his advertisements, had mentioned, "Pope's treatment of Savage." This was supposed by Pope to be the consequence of a complaint made by Savage to Henley, and was therefore mentioned by him with much resentment. Mr. Savage returned a very solemn protestation of his innocence, but however appeared much disturbed at the accusation. Some days afterwards he was seized with a pain in his back and side, which, as it was not violent, was not suspected to be dangerous; but, growing daily more languid and dejected, on the 25th of July he confined himself to his room, and a fever seized his spirits. The symptoms grew every day more formidable, but his condition did not enable him to procure any assistance. The last time that the keeper saw him was on July the 31st, 1743; when Savage, seeing him at his bedside, said, with an uncommon earnestness, "I have something to say to you, Sir;" but, after a pause, moved his hand in a melancholy manner; and, finding himself unable to recollect what he was going to communicate, said, "'Tis gone!" The keeper soon after left him; and the next morning he died. He was buried in the church-yard of St. Peter, at the expense of the keeper.

Such was the life and death of Richard Savage, a man equally distinguished by his virtues and vices; and at once remarkable for his weaknesses and abilities.

He was of a middle stature, of a thin habit of body, a long visage, coarse features, and melancholy aspect; of a grave and manly deportment, a solemn dignity of mien, but which, upon a nearer acquaintance, softened into an engaging easiness of manner. His walk was slow, and his voice tremulous and mournful. He was easily excited to smiles, but very seldom provoked to laughter.

* Mr. Pope. See some extracts of letters from that gentleman to and concerning Mr. Savage, in Ruffhead's Life of Pope, p. 302.—R.

His mind was in an uncommon degree vigorous and active. His judgment was accurate, his apprehension quick, and his memory so tenacious, that he was frequently observed to know what he had learned from others, in a short time, better than those by whom he was informed; and could frequently recollect incidents, with all their combination of circumstances, which few would have regarded at the present time, but which the quickness of his apprehension impressed upon him. He had the peculiar felicity that his attention never deserted him; he was present to every object, and regardful of the most trifling occurrences. He had the art of escaping from his own reflections, and accommodating himself to every new scene.

To this quality is to be imputed the extent of his knowledge, compared with the small time which he spent in visible endeavours to acquire it. He mingled in cursory conversation with the same steadiness of attention as others apply to a lecture: and, amidst the appearance of thoughtless gayety, lost no new idea that was started, nor any hint that could be improved. He had therefore made in coffee-houses the same proficiency as others in their closets: and it is remarkable, that the writings of a man of little education and little reading have an air of learning scarcely to be found in any other performances, but which perhaps as often obscures as embellishes them.

His judgment was eminently exact both with regard to writings and to men. The knowledge of life was indeed his chief attainment; and it is not without some satisfaction, that I can produce the suffrage of Savage in favour of human nature, of which he never appeared to entertain such odious ideas as some, who perhaps had neither his judgment nor experience, have published, either in ostentation of their sagacity, vindication of their crimes, or gratification of their malice.

His method of life particularly qualified him for conversation, of which he knew how to practise all the graces. He was never vehement or loud, but at once modest and easy, open and respectful; his language was vivacious and elegant, and equally happy upon grave or humorous subjects. He was generally censured for not knowing when to retire; but that was not the defect of his judgment, but of his fortune: when he left his company, he was frequently to spend the remaining part of the night in the street, or at least was abandoned to gloomy reflections, which is not strange that he delayed as long as he could; and sometimes forgot that he gave others pain to avoid it himself.

It cannot be said, that he made use of his abilities for the direction of his own conduct; an irregular and dissipated manner of life had made him the slave of every passion that happened to be excited by the presence of its object, and that slavery to his passions reciprocally produced a life irregular and dissipated. He was not master of his own motions, nor could promise any thing for the next day.

With regard to his economy, nothing can be added to the relation of his life. He appeared to think himself born to be supported by others, and dispensed from all necessity of providing for himself; he therefore never prosecuted any scheme of advantage, nor endeavoured even to secure the profits which his writings might have afforded him. His temper was, in consequence of the dominion of his passions, uncertain and capricious; he was easily engaged, and easily disgusted; but he is accused of retaining his hatred more tenaciously than his benevolence.

He was compassionate both by nature and principle, and always ready to perform offices of humanity; but when he was provoked (and very small offences were sufficient to provoke him) he would prosecute his revenge with the utmost acrimony till his passion had subsided.

His friendship was therefore of little value; for, though he was zealous in the support or vindication of those whom he loved, yet it was always dangerous to trust him, because he considered himself as discharged by the first quarrel from all ties of honour or gratitude; and would betray those secrets which in the warmth of confidence had been imparted to him. This practice drew upon him a universal accusation of ingratitude; nor can it be denied that he was very ready to set himself free from the load of an obligation; for he could not bear to conceive himself in a state of dependence, his pride being equally powerful with his other passions, and appearing in the form of insolence at one time, and of vanity at another. Vanity, the most innocent species of pride, was most frequently predominant: he could not easily leave off, when he had once begun to mention himself or his works; nor ever read his verses without stealing his eyes from the page, to discover in the faces of his audience, how they were affected with any favourite passage.

A kinder name than that of vanity ought to be given to the delicacy with which he was always careful to separate his own merit from every other man's, and to reject that praise to which he had no claim. He did not forget, in mentioning his performances, to mark every line that had been suggested or amended; and was so accurate, as to relate that he owed *three words* in "The Wanderer" to the advice of his friends.

His veracity was questioned, but with little reason; his accounts, though not indeed always the same, were generally consistent. When he

loved any man, he suppressed all his faults; and, when he had been offended by him, concealed all his virtues: but his characters were generally true, so far as he proceeded; though it cannot be denied, that his partiality might have sometimes the effect of falsehood.

In cases indifferent, he was zealous for virtue, truth, and justice: he knew very well the necessity of goodness to the present and future happiness of mankind; nor is there perhaps any writer, who has less endeavoured to please by flattering the appetites, or perverting the judgment.

As an author, therefore, and he now ceases to influence mankind in any other character, if one piece which he had resolved to suppress, be excepted, he has very little to fear from the strictest moral or religious censure. And though he may not be altogether secure against the objections of the critic, it must however be acknowledged, that his works are the productions of a genius truly poetical; and, what many writers who have been more lavishly applauded cannot boast, that they have an original air, which has no resemblance of any foregoing writer, that the versification and sentiments have a cast peculiar to themselves, which no man can imitate with success, because what was nature in Savage would in another be affectation. It must be confessed, that his descriptions are striking, his images animated, his fictions justly imagined, and all his allegories artfully pursued; that his diction is elevated, though sometimes forced, and his numbers sonorous and majestic, though frequently sluggish and encumbered. Of his style, the general fault is harshness, and its general excellence is dignity; of his sentiments, the prevailing beauty is simplicity, and uniformity the prevailing defect.

For his life, or for his writings, none, who candidly consider his fortune, will think an apology either necessary or difficult. If he was not always sufficiently instructed on his subject, his knowledge was at least greater than could have been attained by others in the same state. If his works were sometimes unfinished, accuracy cannot reasonably be exacted from a man oppressed with want, which he has no hope of relieving but by a speedy publication. The insolence and resentment of which he is accused were not easily to be avoided by a great mind, irritated by perpetual hardships, and constrained hourly to return the spurns of contempt, and repress the insolence of prosperity; and vanity may surely be readily pardoned in him, to whom life afforded no other comforts than barren praises, and the consciousness of deserving them.

Those are no proper judges of his conduct, who have slumbered away their time on the down of plenty; nor will any wise man presume to say, "Had I been in Savage's condition, I should have lived or written better than Savage."

This relation will not be wholly without its use, if those, who languish under any part of his sufferings, shall be enabled to fortify their patience, by reflecting that they feel only those afflictions from which the abilities of Savage did not exempt him; or those, who, in confidence of superior capacities or attainments, disregarded the common maxims of life, shall be reminded, that nothing will supply the want of prudence; and that negligence and irregularity, long continued, will make knowledge useless, wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible.

SWIFT.

An account of Dr. Swift has been already collected, with great diligence and acuteness, by Dr. Hawkesworth, according to a scheme which I laid before him in the intimacy of our friendship. I cannot therefore be expected to say much of a life, concerning which I had long since communicated my thoughts to a man capable of dignifying his narrations with so much elegance of language and force of sentiment.

Jonathan Swift was, according to an account said to be written by himself,* the son of Jonathan Swift, an attorney, and was born at Dublin on St. Andrew's day, in 1667: according to his own report, as delivered by Pope to Spence, he was born at Leicester, the son of a clergyman, who was minister of a parish i

* Mr. Sheridan, in his Life of Swift, observes that this account was really written by the Dean and now exists in his own hand-writing in the library of Dublin College.—R.

Herefordshire.* During his life the place of his birth was undetermined. He was contented to be called an Irishman by the Irish; but would occasionally call himself an Englishman. The question may, without much regret, be left in the obscurity in which he delighted to involve it.

Whatever was his birth, his education was Irish. He was sent at the age of six to the school at Kilkenny, and in his fifteenth year (1682) was admitted into the University of Dublin.

In his academical studies he was either not diligent or not happy. It must disappoint every reader's expectation, that when at the usual time he claimed the bachelorship of arts, he was found by the examiners too conspicuously deficient for regular admission, and obtained his degree at last by *special favour*; a term used in that University to denote want of merit.

Of this disgrace it may be easily supposed that he was much ashamed, and shame had its proper effect in producing reformation. He resolved from that time to study eight hours a day, and continued his industry for seven years, with what improvement is sufficiently known. This part of his story well deserves to be remembered; it may afford useful admonition and powerful encouragement to many men, whose abilities have been made for a time useless by their passions or pleasures, and who, having lost one part of life in idleness, are tempted to throw away the remainder in despair.

In this course of daily application he continued three years longer at Dublin; and in this time, if the observation and memory of an old companion may be trusted, he drew the first sketch of his "Tale of a Tub."

When he was about one-and-twenty (1688), being by the death of Godwin Swift, his uncle, who had supported him, left without subsistence, he went to consult his mother, who then lived at Leicester, about the future course of his life: and, by her direction, solicited the advice and patronage of Sir William Temple, who had married one of Mrs. Swift's relations, and whose father, Sir John Temple, master of the rolls in Ireland, had lived in great familiarity of friendship with Godwin Swift, by whom Jonathan had been to that time maintained.

Temple received with sufficient kindness the nephew of his father's friend, with whom he was, when they conversed together, so much pleased, that he detained him two years in his house. Here he became known to King William, who sometimes visited Temple when he was disabled by the gout, and, being attended by Swift in the garden, showed him how to cut asparagus in the Dutch way.

King William's notions were all military; and he expressed his kindness to Swift by offering to make him a captain of horse.

When Temple removed to Moor-park, he took Swift with him; and when he was consulted by the Earl of Portland about the expedience of complying with a bill then depending for making parliaments triennial, against which King William was strongly prejudiced, after having in vain tried to show the Earl that the proposal involved nothing dangerous to royal power, he sent Swift for the same purpose to the King. Swift, who probably was proud of his employment, and went with all the confidence of a young man, found his arguments, and his art of displaying them, made totally ineffectual by the predetermination of the King; and used to mention this disappointment as his first antidote against vanity.

Before he left Ireland he contracted a disorder, as he thought, by eating too much fruit. The original of diseases is commonly obscure. Almost every boy eats as much fruit as he can get, without any great inconvenience. The disease of Swift was giddiness with deafness, which attacked him from time to time, began very early, pursued him through life, and at last sent him to the grave, deprived of reason.

Being much oppressed at Moor-park by this grievous malady, he was advised to try his native air, and went to Ireland; but, finding no benefit, returned to Sir William, at whose house he continued his studies, and is known to have read, among other books, "Cyprian" and "Irenæus." He thought exercise of great necessity, and used to run half a mile up and down a hill every two hours.

It is easy to imagine that the mode in which his first degree was conferred, left him no great fondness for the University of Dublin, and therefore he resolved to become a master of arts at Oxford. In the testimonial which he produced, the words of disgrace were omitted; and he took his master's degree (July 5, 1692) with such reception and regard as fully contented him.

While he lived with Temple, he used to pay his mother at Leicester a yearly visit. He travelled on foot, unless some violence of weather drove him into a waggon; and at night he would go to a penny lodging, where he purchased clean sheets for sixpence. This practice Lord Orrery imputes to his innate love of grossness and vulgarity: some may ascribe it to his desire of surveying human life through all its varieties: and others, perhaps with equal probability, to a passion which seems to have been deeply fixed in his heart, the love of a shilling.

In time he began to think that his attendance at Moor-park deserved some other recompence than pleasure, however mingled with improve-

* Spence's Anecdotes, vol. ii. p. 273.

ment, of Temple's conversation; and grew so impatient, that (1694) he went away in discontent.

Temple, conscious of having given reason for complaint, is said to have made him deputy master of the rolls in Ireland: which, according to his kinsman's account, was an office which he knew him not able to discharge. Swift therefore resolved to enter into the church, in which he had at first no higher hopes than of the chaplainship to the Factory at Lisbon; but, being recommended to Lord Capel, he obtained the prebend of Kilroot, in Connor, of about a hundred pounds a year.

But the infirmities of Temple made a companion like Swift so necessary, that he invited him back, with a promise to procure him an English preferment in exchange for the prebend, which he desired him to resign. With this request Swift quickly complied, having perhaps equally repented their separation, and they lived on together with mutual satisfaction; and, in the four years that passed between his return and Temple's death, it is probable that he wrote the "Tale of a Tub" and the "Battle of the Books."

Swift began early to think, or to hope, that he was a poet, and wrote Pindaric odes to Temple, to the King, and to the Athenian Society, a knot of obscure men,* who published a periodical pamphlet of answers to questions, sent, or supposed to be sent, by letters. I have been told that Dryden, having perused these verses, said, "Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet;" and that this denunciation was the motive of Swift's perpetual malevolence to Dryden.

In 1699 Temple died, and left a legacy with his manuscripts to Swift, for whom he had obtained, from King William, a promise of the first prebend that should be vacant at Westminster or Canterbury.

That this promise might not be forgotten, Swift dedicated to the King the posthumous works with which he was intrusted: but neither the dedication, nor tenderness for the man whom he once had treated with confidence and fondness, revived in King William the remembrance of his promise. Swift awhile attended the court; but soon found his solicitations hopeless.

He was then invited by the Earl of Berkeley to accompany him into Ireland, as a private secretary; but, after having done the business till their arrival at Dublin, he then found that one Bush had persuaded the Earl that a Clergyman was not a proper secretary, and had obtained the office for himself. In a man like Swift, such circumvention and inconstancy must have excited violent indignation.

* The publisher of this Collection was John Dunton.—R.

But he had yet more to suffer. Lord Berkeley had the disposal of the deanery of Derry, and Swift expected to obtain it; but, by the secretary's influence, supposed to have been secured by a bribe, it was bestowed on somebody else; and Swift was dismissed with the livings of Laracor and Rathbeggin in the diocese of Meath, which together did not equal half the value of the deanery.

At Laracor he increased the parochial duty by reading prayers on Wednesdays and Fridays, and performed all the offices of his profession with great decency and exactness.

Soon after his settlement at Laracor, he invited to Ireland the unfortunate Stella, a young woman whose name was Johnson, the daughter of the steward of Sir William Temple, who, in consideration of her father's virtues, left her a thousand pounds. With her came Mrs. Dingley, whose whole fortune was twenty-seven pounds a year for her life. With these ladies he passed his hours of relaxation, and to them he opened his bosom: but they never resided in the same house, nor did he ever see either without a witness. They lived at the parsonage, when Swift was away; and, when he returned, removed to a lodging, or to the house of a neighbouring clergyman.

Swift was not one of those minds which amaze the world with early pregnancy: his first work, except his few poetical essays, was the "Dissentions in Athens and Rome," published (1701) in his thirty-fourth year. After its appearance, paying a visit to some bishop, he heard mention made of the new pamphlet that Burnet had written, replete with political knowledge. When he seemed to doubt Burnet's right to the work, he was told by the bishop that he was "a young man;" and, still persisting to doubt, that he was a "very positive young man."

Three years afterwards (1704) was published "The Tale of a Tub:" of this book charity may be persuaded to think that it might be written by a man of a peculiar character without ill intention; but it is certainly of dangerous example. That Swift was its author, though it be universally believed, was never owned by himself, nor very well proved by any evidence; but no other claimant can be produced, and he did not deny it when Archbishop Sharpe and the Dutchess of Somerset, by showing it to the Queen debarred him from a bishopric.

When this wild work first raised the attention of the public, Sacheverell, meeting Smalridge, tried to flatter him, by seeming to think him the author; but Smalridge answered with indignation, "Not all that you and I have in the world, nor all that ever we shall have, should hire me to write the Tale of a Tub."

The digressions relating to Wotton and Bent

ey must be confessed to discover want of knowedge or want of integrity; he did not understand the two controversies, or he willingly misrepresented them. But wit can stand its round against truth only a little while. The onours due to learning have been justly distriuted by the decision of posterity.

"The Battle of the Books" is so like the Combat des Livres," which the same question oncerning the ancients and moderns had produced in France, that the improbability of such coincidence of thoughts without communicaion is not, in my opinion, balanced by the anoymous protestation prefixed, in which all nowledge of the French book is peremptorily isowned.*

For some time after, Swift was probably emloyed in solitary study, gaining the qualificaions requisite for future eminence. How often e visited England, and with what diligence he ttended his parishes, I know not. It was not ill about four years afterwards that he became professed author; and then, one year (1708) roduced "The Sentiments of a Church-of-England Man;" the ridicule of Astrology nder the name of "Bickerstaff;" the "Arument against abolishing Christianity;" and he Defence of the "Sacramental Test."

"The Sentiments of a Church-of-England Man" is written with great coolness, moderaion, ease, and perspicuity. The "Argument gainst abolishing Christianity" is a very happy nd judicious irony. One passage in it deerves to be selected:

"If Christianity were once abolished, how ould the free-thinkers, the strong reasoners, nd the men of profound learning, be able to ind another subject so calculated, in all points, hereon to display their abilities? What wonerful productions of wit should we be deprived f from those, whose genius, by continual prace, hath been wholly turned upon raillery and nvectives against religion, and would therefore ever be able to shine, or distinguish themselves, upon any other subject? We are daily omplaining of the great decline of wit among s, and would take away the greatest, perhaps he only, topic we have left. Who would ever ave suspected Asgill for a wit, or Toland for philosopher, if the inexhaustible stock of Christianity had not been at hand to provide hem with materials? What other subject, hrough all art or nature, could have produced Tindal for a profound author, or furnished him vith readers? It is the wise choice of the ubject that alone adorns and distinguishes the vriter. For had a hundred such pens as these een employed on the side of religion, they would have immediately sunk into silence and oblivion."

The reasonableness of a Test is not hard to be proved; but, perhaps it must be allowed, that the proper test has not been chosen.

The attention paid to the papers published under the name of "Bickerstaff," induced Steele, when he projected "The Tatler," to assume an appellation which had already gained possession of the reader's notice.

In the year following he wrote a "Project for the Advancement of Religion," addressed to Lady Berkeley; by whose kindness it is not unlikely that he was advanced to his benefices To this project, which is formed with great purity of intention, and displayed with sprightliness and elegance, it can only be objected, that, like many projects, it is, if not generally impracticable, yet evidently hopeless, as it supposes more zeal, concord, and perseverance, than a view of mankind gives reason for expecting.

He wrote likewise this year "A Vindication of Bickerstaff;" and an explanation of "An Ancient Prophecy," part written after the facts, and the rest never completed, but well planned to excite amazement.

Soon after began the busy and important part of Swift's Life. He was employed (1710) by the Primate of Ireland to solicit the Queen for a remission of the first-fruits and twentieth parts to the Irish Clergy. With this purpose he had recourse to Mr. Harley, to whom he was mentioned as a man neglected and oppressed by the last ministry, because he had refused to co-operate with some of their schemes. What he had refused has never been told; what he had suffered was, I suppose, the exclusion from a bishopric by the remonstrances of Sharpe, whom he describes as "the harmless tool of others' hate," and whom he represents as afterwards "suing for pardon."

Harley's designs and situation were such as made him glad of an auxiliary so well qualified for his service; he therefore soon admitted him to familiarity, whether ever to confidence some have made a doubt; but it would have been difficult to excite his zeal without persuading him that he was trusted, and not very easy to delude him by false persuasions.

He was certainly admitted to those meetings in which the first hints and original plan of action are supposed to have been formed; and was one of the sixteen ministers, or agents of the ministry, who met weekly at each other's houses, and were united by the name of "Brothers."

Being not immediately considered as an obdurate tory, he conversed indiscriminately with all the wits, and yet was the friend of Steele; who, in the "Tatler," which began in April, 1709, confesses the advantage of his conversation, and mentions something contributed

* See Sheridan's Life, edit. 1784, p. 525; where are some remarks on this passage.—R.

by him to his paper. But he was now immerging into political controversy; for the year 1710 produced "The Examiner," of which Swift wrote thirty-three papers. In argument he may be allowed to have the advantage; for where a wide system of conduct, and the whole of a public character, is laid open to inquiry, the accuser having the choice of facts, must be very unskilful if he does not prevail; but, with regard to wit, I am afraid none of Swift's papers will be found equal to those by which Addison opposed him.*

He wrote in the year 1711, a "Letter to the October Club," a number of tory gentlemen sent from the country to parliament, who formed themselves into a club, to the number of about a hundred, and met to animate the zeal, and raise the expectations, of each other. They thought, with great reason, that the ministers were losing opportunities; that sufficient use was not made of the ardour of the nation; they called loudly for more changes and stronger efforts; and demanded the punishment of part, and the dismission of the rest, of those whom they considered as public robbers.

Their eagerness was not gratified by the Queen, or by Harley. The Queen was probably slow because she was afraid; and Harley was slow, because he was doubtful: he was a tory only by necessity, or for convenience; and when he had power in his hands, had no settled purpose for which he should employ it; forced to gratify to a certain degree the tories who supported him, but unwilling to make his reconcilement to the whigs utterly desperate, he corresponded at once with the two expectants of the crown, and kept, as has been observed, the succession undetermined. Not knowing what to do, he did nothing; and, with the fate of a double dealer, at last he lost his power, but kept his enemies.

Swift seems to have concurred in opinion with the "October Club;" but it was not in his power to quicken the tardiness of Harley, whom he stimulated as much as he could, but with little effect. He that knows not whither to go, is in no haste to move. Harley, who was perhaps not quick by nature, became yet more slow by irresolution; and was content to hear that dilatoriness lamented as natural, which he applauded in himself as politic.

Without the tories, however, nothing could be done: and, as they were not to be gratified, they must be appeased; and the conduct of the Minister, if it could not be vindicated, was to be plausibly excused.

Early in the next year he published a "Proposal for correcting, improving, and ascertaining the English Tongue," in a letter to the Earl of Oxford; written without much knowledge of the general nature of languages, and without any accurate inquiry into the history of other tongues. The certainty and stability which, contrary to all experience, he thinks attainable, he proposes to secure by instituting an academy; the decrees of which, every man would have been willing, and many would have been proud, to disobey; and which, being renewed by successive elections, would in a short time have differed from itself.

Swift now attained the zenith of his political importance: he published (1712) the "Conduct of the Allies," ten days before the parliament assembled. The purpose was to persuade the nation to a peace; and never had any writer more success. The people, who had been amused with bonfires and triumphal processions, and looked with idolatry on the General and his friends, who, as they thought, had made England the arbitress of nations, were confounded between shame and rage, when they found that "mines had been exhausted, and millions destroyed," to secure the Dutch or aggrandize the Emperor, without any advantage to ourselves; that we had been bribing our neighbours to fight their own quarrel; and that amongst our enemies we might number our allies.

That is now no longer doubted, of which the nation was then first informed, that the war was unnecessarily protracted to fill the pockets of Marlborough: and that it would have been continued without end, if he could have continued his annual plunder. But Swift, I suppose, did not yet know what he has since written, that a commission was drawn, which would have appointed him General for life, had it not become ineffectual by the resolution of Lord Cowper, who refused the seal.

"Whatever is received," say the schools, "is received in proportion to the recipient." The power of a political treatise depends much upon the disposition of the people; the nation was then combustible, and a spark set it on fire. It is boasted, that between November and January, eleven thousand were sold; a great number at that time, when we were yet not a nation of readers. To its propagation certainly no agency of power or influence was wanting. It furnished arguments for conversation, speeches for debate, and materials for parliamentary resolutions.

Yet, surely, whoever surveys this wonder-working pamphlet with cool perusal, will confess that its efficacy was supplied by the passions of its readers; that it operates by the mere weight of facts, with very little assistance from the hand that produced them.

This year (1712) he published his "Reflec-

* Mr. Sheridan, however, says, that Addison's last Whig Examiner was published Oct. 12, 1711; and Swift's first Examiner, on the 10th of the following November.—R.

tions on the Barrier Treaty," which carries on the design of his "Conduct of the Allies," and shows how little regard in that negotiation had been shown to the interest of England, and how much of the conquered country had been demanded by the Dutch.

This was followed by "Remarks on the Bishop of Sarum's Introduction to the third Volume of the History of the Reformation;" a pamphlet which Burnet published as an alarm, to warn the nation of the approach of popery. Swift, who seems to have disliked the bishop with something more than political aversion, treats him like one whom he is glad of an opportunity to insult.

Swift, being now the declared favourite and supposed confidant of the tory ministry, was treated by all that depended on the Court with the respect which dependants know how to pay. He soon began to feel part of the misery of greatness: he that could say that he knew him, considered himself as having fortune in his power. Commissions, solicitations, remonstrances, crowded about him; he was expected to do every man's business, to procure employment for one, and to retain it for another. In assisting those who addressed him, he represents himself as sufficiently diligent; and desires to have others believe, what he probably believed himself, that by his interposition many whigs of merit, and among them Addison and Congreve, were continued in their places. But every man of known influence has so many petitions which he cannot grant, that he must necessarily offend more than he gratifies, as the preference given to one affords all the rest reason for complaint. "When I give away a place," said Lewis XIV. "I make a hundred discontented, and one ungrateful."

Much has been said of the equality and independence which he preserved in his conversation with the ministers, of the frankness of his remonstrances, and the familiarity of his friendship. In accounts of this kind a few single incidents are set against the general tenour of behaviour. No man, however, can pay a more servile tribute to the great, than by suffering his liberty in their presence to aggrandize him in his own esteem. Between different ranks of the community there is necessarily some distance; he who is called by his superior to pass the interval, may properly accept the invitation; but petulance and obtrusion are rarely produced by magnanimity; nor have often any nobler cause than the pride of importance, and the malice of inferiority. He who knows himself necessary may set, while that necessity lasts, a high value upon himself; as, in a lower condition, a servant eminently skilful may be saucy; but he is saucy only because he is servile. Swift appears to have preserved the kindness of the great when they wanted him no longer; and therefore it must be allowed, that the childish freedom, to which he seems enough inclined, was overpowered by his better qualities.

His disinterestedness has been likewise mentioned; a strain of heroism, which would have been in his condition romantic and superfluous. Ecclesiastical benefices, when they become vacant, must be given away; and the friends of power may, if there be no inherent disqualification, reasonably expect them. Swift accepted (1713) the deanery of St. Patrick, the best preferment that his friends could venture* to give him. That ministry was in a great degree supported by the clergy, who were not yet reconciled to the author of the "Tale of a Tub,' and would not without much discontent and indignation have borne to see him installed in an English cathedral.

He refused, indeed, fifty pounds from Lord Oxford; but he accepted afterwards a draught of a thousand upon the Exchequer, which was intercepted by the Queen's death, and which he resigned, as he says himself, "*multa gemens*, with many a groan."

In the midst of his power and his politics, he kept a journal of his visits, his walks, his interviews with ministers, and quarrels with his servant, and transmitted it to Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Dingley, to whom he knew that whatever befell him was interesting, and no accounts could be too minute. Whether these diurnal trifles were properly exposed to eyes which had never received any pleasure from the presence of the Dean, may be reasonably doubted: they have, however, some odd attraction; the reader, finding frequent mention of names which he has been used to consider as important, goes on in hope of information; and, as there is nothing to fatigue attention, if he is disappointed he can hardly complain. It is easy to perceive, from every page, that though ambition pressed Swift into a life of bustle, the wish for a life of ease was always returning.

He went to take possession of his deanery as soon as he had obtained it; but he was not suffered to stay in Ireland more than a fortnight before he was recalled to England, that he might reconcile Lord Oxford and Lord Bolingbroke, who began to look on one another with malevolence, which every day increased, and which Bolingbroke appeared to retain in his last years.

Swift contrived an interview, from which they both departed discontented; he procured a second, which only convinced him that the feud

* This emphatic word has not escaped the watchful eye of Dr. Warton, who has placed a *nota bene* at it.—C.

was irreconcileable: he told them his opinion, that all was lost. This denunciation was contradicted by Oxford; but Bolingbroke whispered that he was right.

Before this violent dissention had shattered the ministry, Swift had published, the beginning of the year (1714), "The public Spirit of the Whigs," in answer to "The Crisis," a pamphlet for which Steele was expelled from the House of Commons. Swift was now so far alienated from Steele, as to think him no longer entitled to decency, and therefore treats him sometimes with contempt, and sometimes with abhorrence.

In this pamphlet the Scotch were mentioned in terms so provoking to that irritable nation, that, resolving "not to be offended with impunity," the Scotch Lords, in a body, demanded an audience of the Queen, and solicited reparation. A proclamation was issued, in which three hundred pounds were offered for the discovery of the author. From this storm he was, as he relates, "secured by a sleight;" of what kind, or by whose prudence, is not known; and such was the increase of his reputation, that the Scottish "nation applied again that he would be their friend."

He was become so formidable to the whigs, that his familiarity with the ministers was clamoured at in parliament, particularly by two men, afterwards of great note, Aislabie and Walpole.

But, by the disunion of his great friends, his importance and designs were now at an end: and seeing his services at last useless, he retired about June (1714) into Berkshire, where, in the house of a friend, he wrote, what was then suppressed, but has since appeared under the title of "Free Thoughts on the present State of Affairs."

While he was waiting in this retirement for events which time or chance might bring to pass, the death of the Queen broke down at once the whole system of tory politics; and nothing remained but to withdraw from the implacability of triumphant whiggism, and shelter himself in unenvied obscurity.

The accounts of his reception in Ireland, given by Lord Orrery and Dr. Delany, are so different, that the credit of the writers, both undoubtedly veracious, cannot be saved, but by supposing, what I think is true, that they speak of different times. When Delany says, that he was received with respect, he means for the first fortnight, when he came to take legal possession; and when Lord Orrery tells that he was pelted by the populace, he is to be understood of the time when, after the Queen's death, he became a settled resident.

The Archbishop of Dublin gave him at first some disturbance in the exercise of his jurisdiction; but it was soon discovered, that between prudence and integrity he was seldom in the wrong: and that, when he was right, his spirit did not easily yield to opposition.

Having so lately quitted the tumults of a party, and the intrigues of a court, they still kept his thoughts in agitation, as the sea fluctuates awhile when the storm has ceased. He therefore filled his hours with some historical attempts, relating to the "Change of the Ministers," and "the conduct of the Ministry." He likewise is said to have written a "History of the Four last years of Queen Anne," which he began in her life-time, and afterwards laboured with great attention, but never published. It was after his death in the hands of Lord Orrery and Dr. King. A book under that title was published, with Swift's name, by Dr. Lucas; of which I can only say, that it seemed by no means to correspond with the notions that I had formed of it, from a conversation which I once heard between the Earl of Orrery and old Mr. Lewis.

Swift now, much against his will, commenced Irishman for life, and was to contrive how he might be best accommodated in a country where he considered himself as in a state of exile. It seems that his first recourse was to piety. The thoughts of death rushed upon him at this time with such incessant importunity, that they took possession of his mind, when he first waked for many years together.

He opened his house by a public table two days a week, and found his entertainments gradually frequented by more and more visitants of learning among the men, and of elegance among the women. Mrs. Johnson had left the country, and lived in lodgings not far from the deanery. On his public days she regulated the table, but appeared at it as a mere guest like other ladies.

On other days he often dined, at a stated price, with Mr. Worral, a clergyman of his cathedral, whose house was recommended by the peculiar neatness and pleasantry of his wife. To this frugal mode of living, he was first disposed by care to pay some debts which he had contracted, and he continued it for the pleasure of accumulating money. His avarice, however, was not suffered to obstruct the claims of his dignity; he was served in plate, and used to say that he was the poorest gentleman in Ireland that ate upon plate, and the richest that lived without a coach.

How he spent the rest of his time, and how he employed his hours of study, has been inquired with hopeless curiosity. For who can give an account of another's studies? Swift was not likely to admit any to his privacies, or to impart a minute account of his business or his leisure.

Soon after (1716), in his forty-ninth year, he was privately married to Mrs. Johnson, by Dr

Ashe, bishop of Clogher, as Dr. Madden told me, in the garden. The marriage made no change in their mode of life; they lived in different houses, as before; nor did she ever lodge in the deanery but when Swift was seized with a fit of giddiness. "It would be difficult," says Lord Orrery, "to prove that they were ever afterwards together without a third person."

The Dean of St. Patrick's lived in a private manner, known and regarded only by his friends; till, about the year 1720, he, by a pamphlet, recommended to the Irish the use, and consequently the improvement, of their manufacture. For a man to use the productions of his own labour is surely a natural right, and to like best what he makes himself is a natural passion. But to excite this passion, and enforce this right, appeared so criminal to those who had an interest in the English trade, that the printer was imprisoned; and, as Hawkesworth justly observes, the attention of the public being by this outrageous resentment turned upon the proposal, the author was by consequence made popular.

In 1723 died Mrs. Van Homrigh, a woman made unhappy by her admiration of wit, and ignominiously distinguished by the name of Vanessa, whose conduct has been already sufficiently discussed, and whose history is too well known to be minutely repeated. She was a young woman fond of literature, whom Decanus the dean, called Cadenus by transposition of the letters, took pleasure in directing and instructing; till, from being proud of his praise, she grew fond of his person. Swift was then about forty-seven, at an age when vanity is strongly excited by the amorous attention of a young woman. If it be said that Swift should have checked a passion which he never meant to gratify, recourse must be had to that extenuation which he so much despised, "men are but men;" perhaps, however he did not at first know his own mind, and, as he represents himself, was undetermined. For his admission of her courtship, and his indulgence of her hopes after his marriage to Stella, no other honest plea can be found than that he delayed a disagreeable discovery from time to time, dreading the immediate bursts of distress, and watching for a favourable moment. She thought herself neglected, and died of disappointment; having ordered by her will the poem to be published, in which Cadenus had proclaimed her excellence, and confessed his love. The effect of the publication upon the Dean and Stella is thus related by Delany:

"I have good reason to believe that they both were greatly shocked and distressed (though it may be differently) upon this occasion. The Dean made a tour to the south of Ireland, for about two months, at this time, to dissipate his thoughts, and give place to obloquy. And Stella retired (upon the earnest invitation of the owner) to the house of a cheerful, generous, good-natured friend of the Dean's, whom she always much loved and honoured. There my informer often saw her; and I have reason to believe, used his utmost endeavours to relieve, support, and amuse her, in this sad situation.

"One little incident he told me on that occasion, I think, I shall never forget. As her friend was an hospitable, open-hearted man, well-beloved and largely acquainted, it happened one day that some gentlemen dropped into dinner, who were strangers to Stella's situation; and as the poem of "Cadenus and Vanessa" was then the general topic of conversation, one of them said, 'Surely that Vanessa must be an extraordinary woman, that could inspire the Dean to write so finely upon her.' Mrs. Johnson smiled, and answered, 'that she thought that point not quite so clear; for it was well known the Dean could write finely upon a broomstick.'"

The great acquisition of esteem and influence was made by the "Drapier's Letters" in 1724. One Wood, of Wolverhampton, in Staffordshire, a man enterprising and rapacious, had, as is said, by a present to the Dutchess of Munster, obtained a patent, empowering him to coin one hundred and eighty thousand pounds of halfpence and farthings for the kingdom of Ireland, in which there was a very inconvenient and embarrassing scarcity of copper coin; so that it was possible to run in debt upon the credit of a piece of money; for the cook or keeper of an ale-house could not refuse to supply a man that had silver in his hand, and the buyer would not leave his money without change.

The project was therefore plausible. The scarcity, which was already great, Wood took care to make greater, by agents who gathered up the old halfpence; and was about to turn his brass into gold, by pouring the treasures of his new mint upon Ireland; when Swift, finding that the metal was debased to an enormous degree, wrote letters, under the name of M. B. Drapier, to show the folly of receiving, and the mischief that must ensue by giving, gold and silver for coin worth perhaps not a third part of its nominal value.

The nation was alarmed; the new coin was universally refused; but the governors of Ireland considered resistance to the King's patent as highly criminal; and one Whitshed, then Chief Justice, who had tried the printer of the former pamphlet, and sent out the jury nine times, till by clamour and menaces they were frighted into a special verdict, now presented the Drapier, but could not prevail on the grand jury to find the bill.

Lord Carteret and the privy-council published a proclamation, offering three hundred pounds

for discovering the author of the Fourth Letter. Swift had concealed himself from his printers, and trusted only his butler, who transcribed the paper. The man, immediately after the appearance of the proclamation, strolled from the house, and stayed out all night, and part of the next day. There was reason enough to fear that he had betrayed his master for the reward; but he came home, and the Dean ordered him to put off his livery, and leave the house; "for," said he, "I know that my life is in your power, and I will not bear, out of fear, either your insolence or negligence." The man excused his fault with great submission, and begged that he might be confined in the house while it was in his power to endanger his master: but the Dean resolutely turned him out, without taking farther notice of him, till the term of the information had expired, and then received him again. Soon afterwards he ordered him and the rest of his servants into his presence, without telling his intention, and bade them take notice that their fellow-servant was no longer Robert the butler; but that his integrity had made him Mr. Blakeney, verger of St. Patrick's; an officer whose income was between thirty and forty pounds a year: yet he still continued for some years to serve his old master as his butler.*

Swift was known from this time by the appellation of "The Dean." He was honoured by the populace as the champion, patron, and instructor, of Ireland; and gained such power as, considered both in its extent and duration, scarcely any man has ever enjoyed without greater wealth or higher station.

He was from this important year the oracle of the traders, and the idol of the rabble, and by consequence was feared and courted by all to whom the kindness of the traders or the populace was necessary. The Drapier was a sign; the Drapier was a health; and which way soever the eye or the ear was turned, some tokens were found of the nation's gratitude to the Drapier.

The benefit was indeed great; he had rescued Ireland from a very oppressive and predatory invasion; and the popularity which he had gained he was diligent to keep, by appearing forward and zealous on every occasion where the public interest was supposed to be involved. Nor did he much scruple to boast his influence; for when, upon some attempts to regulate the coin, Archbishop Boulter, then one of the justices, accused him of exasperating the people, he exculpated himself by saying, "If I had lifted up my finger, they would have torn you to pieces."

* An account somewhat different from this is given by Mr. Sheridan in his Life of Swift, p. 211. R.

But the pleasure of popularity was soon interrupted by domestic misery. Mrs. Johnson, whose conversation was to him the great softener of the ills of life, began in the year of the Drapier's triumph to decline; and two years afterwards was so wasted with sickness, that her recovery was considered as hopeless.

Swift was then in England, and had been invited by Lord Bolingbroke to pass the winter with him in France, but this call of calamity hastened him to Ireland, where perhaps his presence contributed to restore her to imperfect and tottering health.

He was now so much at ease, that (1727) he returned to England; where he collected three volumes of Miscellanies in conjunction with Pope, who prefixed a querulous and apologetical Preface.

This important year sent likewise into the world "Gulliver's Travels;" a production so new and strange, that it filled the reader with a mingled emotion of merriment and amazement. It was received with such avidity, that the price of the first edition was raised before the second could be made; it was read by the high and the low, the learned and illiterate. Criticism was for a while lost in wonder; no rules of judgment were applied to a book written in open defiance of truth and regularity. But when distinctions came to be made, the part which gave the least pleasure was that which describes the Flying Island, and that which gave most disgust must be the history of the Houyhnhnms.

While Swift was enjoying the reputation of his new work, the news of the King's death arrived; and he kissed the hands of the new King and Queen three days after their accession.

By the Queen, when she was princess, he had been treated with some distinction, and was well received by her in her exaltation; but whether she gave hopes which she never took care to satisfy, or he formed expectations which she never meant to raise, the event was, that he always afterwards thought on her with malevolence, and particularly charged her with breaking her promise of some medals which she engaged to send him.

I know not whether she had not, in her turn, some reason for complaint. A letter was sent her, not so much entreating, as requiring, her patronage of Mrs. Barber, an ingenious Irishwoman, who was then begging subscriptions for her poems. To this letter was subscribed the name of Swift, and it has all the appearances of his diction and sentiments: but it was not written in his hand, and had some little improprieties. When he was charged with this letter, he laid hold of the inaccuracies, and urged the improbability of the accusation, but never denied it; he shuffles between cowardice

and veracity, and talks big when he says nothing.*

He seems desirous enough of recommencing courtier, and endeavoured to gain the kindness of Mrs. Howard, remembering what Mrs. Masham had performed in former times: but his flatteries were, like those of other wits, unsuccessful; the lady either wanted power, or had no ambition of poetical immortality.

He was seized, not long afterwards, by a fit of giddiness, and again heard of the sickness and danger of Mrs. Johnson. He then left the house of Pope, as it seems, with very little ceremony, finding "that two sick friends cannot live together;" and did not write to him till he found himself at Chester.

He returned to a home of sorrow: poor Stella was sinking into the grave, and, after a languishing decay of about two months, died in her forty-fourth year, on January 28, 1728. How much he wished her life, his papers show; nor can it be doubted that he dreaded the death of her whom he loved most, aggravated by the consciousness that himself had hastened it.

Beauty and the power of pleasing, the greatest external advantages that woman can desire or possess, were fatal to the unfortunate Stella. The man whom she had the misfortune to love was, as Delany observes, fond of singularity, and desirous to make a mode of happiness for himself, different from the general course of things and order of Providence. From the time of her arrival in Ireland he seems resolved to keep her in his power, and therefore hindered a match sufficiently advantageous, by accumulating unreasonable demands, and prescribing conditions that could not be performed. While she was at her own disposal he did not consider his possession as secure; resentment, ambition, or caprice, might separate them; he was therefore resolved to make "assurance double sure," and to appropriate her by a private marriage, to which he had annexed the expectation of all the pleasures of perfect friendship without the uneasiness of conjugal restraint. But with this state poor Stella was not satisfied; she never was treated as a wife, and to the world she had the appearance of a mistress. She lived sullenly on, in hope that in time he would own and receive her; but the time did not come till the change of his manners and deprivation of his mind made her tell him, when he offered to acknowledge her, that "it was too late." She then gave up herself to sorrowful resentment, and died under the tyranny of him, by whom she was in the highest degree loved and honoured.

What were her claims to this eccentric tenderness, by which the laws of nature were violated to retain her, curiosity will inquire; but how shall it be gratified? Swift was a lover; his testimony may be suspected. Delany and the Irish saw with Swift's eyes, and therefore add little confirmation. That she was virtuous, beautiful, and elegant, in a very high degree, such admiration from such a lover makes it very probable; but she had not much literature, for she could not spell her own language; and of her wit so loudly vanted, the smart sayings which Swift himself has collected, afford no splendid specimen.

The reader of Swift's "Letter to a Lady on her Marriage," may be allowed to doubt whether his opinion of female excellence ought implicitly to be admitted; for, if his general thoughts on women were such as he exhibits, a very little sense in a lady would enrapture, and a very little virtue would astonish him. Stella's supremacy, therefore, was perhaps only local; she was great, because her associates were little.

In some Remarks lately published on the Life of Swift, his marriage is mentioned as fabulous, or doubtful; but, alas! poor Stella, as Dr. Madden told me, related her melancholy story to Dr. Sheridan, when he attended her as a clergyman to prepare her for death; and Delany mentions it not with doubt, but only with regret. Swift never mentioned her without a sigh. The rest of his life was spent in Ireland, in a country to which not even power almost despotic, nor flattery almost idolatrous, could reconcile him. He sometimes wished to visit England, but always found some reason of delay. He tells Pope, in the decline of life, that he hopes once more to see him; "but if not," says he, "we must part, as all human beings have parted."

After the death of Stella, his benevolence was contracted, and his severity exasperated; he drove his acquaintance from his table, and wondered why he was deserted. But he continued his attention to the public, and wrote, from time to time, such directions, admonitions, or censures, as the exigency of affairs, in his opinion, made proper; and nothing fell from his pen in vain.

In a short poem on the Presbyterians, whom he always regarded with detestation, he bestowed one stricture upon Bettesworth, a lawyer eminent for his insolence to the clergy, which, from very considerable reputation, brought him into immediate and universal contempt. Bettesworth, enraged at his disgrace and loss, went to Swift and demanded whether he was the author of that poem? "Mr. Bettesworth," answered he, "I was in my youth acquainted with great lawyers, who, knowing my disposition to satire, advised me, that if any

* It is but justice to the Dean's memory, to refer to Mr. Sheridan's defence of him from this charge. See the "Life of Swift," p. 458.—R.

scoundrel or blockhead whom I had lampooned should ask, 'Are you the author of this paper?' I should tell him that I was not the author; and therefore I tell you, Mr. Bettesworth, that I am not the author of these lines."

Bettesworth was so little satisfied with this account, that he publicly professed his resolution of a violent and corporal revenge; but the inhabitants of St. Patrick's district embodied themselves in the Dean's defence. Bettesworth declared in parliament, that Swift had deprived him of twelve hundred pounds a year.

Swift was popular awhile by another mode of beneficence. He set aside some hundreds to be lent in small sums to the poor, from five shillings, I think, to five pounds. He took no interest, and only required that, at repayment, a small fee should be given to the accomptant: but he required that the day of promised payment should be exactly kept. A severe and punctilious temper is ill qualified for transactions with the poor; the day was often broken, and the loan was not repaid. This might have been easily foreseen; but for this Swift had made no provision of patience or pity. He ordered his debtors to be sued. A severe creditor has no popular character; what then was likely to be said of him who employs the catchpoll under the appearance of charity? The clamour against him was loud, and the resentment of the populace outrageous; he was therefore forced to drop his scheme, and own the folly of expecting punctuality from the poor.*

His asperity continually increasing, condemned him to solitude; and his resentment of solitude sharpened his asperity. He was not, however, totally deserted; some men of learning, and some women of elegance, often visited him; and he wrote from time to time either verse or prose: of his verses he willingly gave copies, and is supposed to have felt no discontent when he saw them printed. His favourite maxim was, "Vive la Bagatelle:" he thought trifles a necessary part of life, and perhaps found them necessary to himself. It seems impossible to him to be idle, and his disorders made it difficult or dangerous to be long seriously studious or laboriously diligent. The love of ease is always gaining upon age, and he had one temptation to petty amusements peculiar to himself; whatever he did he was sure to hear applauded; and such was his predominance over all that approached, that all their applauses were probably sincere. He that is much flattered soon learns to flatter himself; we are commonly taught our duty by fear or shame, and how can they act upon the man who hears nothing but his own praises?

As his years increased, his fits of giddiness and deafness grew more frequent, and his deafness made conversation difficult: they grew likewise more severe, till in 1736, as he was writing a poem called "The Legion Club," he was seized with a fit so painful and so long continued, that he never after thought it proper to attempt any work of thought or labour.

He was always careful of his money, and was therefore no liberal entertainer; but was less frugal of his wine than of his meat. When his friends of either sex came to him in expectation of a dinner, his custom was to give every one a shilling, that they might please themselves with their provision. At last his avarice grew too powerful for his kindness; he would refuse a bottle of wine, and in Ireland no man visits where he cannot drink.

Having thus excluded conversation and desisted from study, he had neither business nor amusement; for having by some ridiculous resolution or mad vow determined never to wear spectacles, he could make little use of books in his later years; his ideas, therefore, being neither renovated by discourse nor increased by reading, wore gradually away, and left his mind vacant to the vexations of the hour, till at last his anger was heightened into madness.

He however permitted one book to be published, which had been the production of former years; "Polite Conversation," which appeared in 1738. The "Directions for Servants" was printed soon after his death. These two performances show a mind incessantly attentive, and, when it was not employed upon great things, busy with minute occurrences. It is apparent that he must have had the habit of noting whatever he observed; for such a number of particulars could never have been assembled by the power of recollection.

He grew more violent, and his mental powers declined till (1741) it was found necessary that legal guardians should be appointed of his person and fortune. He now lost distinction. His madness was compounded of rage and fatuity. The last face that he knew was that of Mrs. Whiteway; and her he ceased to know in a little time. His meat was brought him cut into mouthfuls; but he would never touch it while the servant stayed, and at last, after it had stood perhaps an hour, would eat it walking; for he continued his old habit, and was on his feet ten hours a day.

Next year (1742) he had an inflammation in his left eye, which swelled it to the size of an egg, with biles in other parts: he was kept long waking with the pain, and was not easily restrained by five attendants from tearing out his eye.

The tumour at last subsided: and a short in-

* This account is contradicted by Mr. Sheridan, who with great warmth asserts, from his own knowledge, that there was not one syllable of truth in this whole account from the beginning to the end. See "Life of Swift." edit. 1784. p. 532.—R.

terval of reason ensuing, in which he knew his physician and his family, gave hopes of his recovery; but in a few days he sunk into a lethargic stupidity, motionless, heedless, and speechless. But it is said, that, after a year of total silence, when his housekeeper on the 30th of November, told him that the usual bonfires and illuminations were preparing to celebrate his birth-day, he answered, "It is all folly; they had better let it alone."

It is remembered, that he afterwards spoke now and then, or gave some intimation of a meaning; but at last sunk into perfect silence, which continued till about the end of October, 1744, when, in his seventy-eighth year, he expired without a struggle.

When Swift is considered as an author, it is just to estimate his powers by their effects. In the reign of Queen Anne he turned the stream of popularity against the whigs, and must be confessed to have dictated for a time the political opinions of the English nation. In the succeeding reign he delivered Ireland from plunder and oppression; and showed that wit, confederated with truth, had such force as authority was unable to resist. He said truly of himself, that Ireland "was his debtor." It was from the time when he first began to patronize the Irish that they may date their riches and prosperity. He taught them first to know their own interest, their weight, and their strength, and gave them spirit to assert that equality with their fellow-subjects, to which they have ever since been making vigorous advances, and to claim those rights which they have at last established. Nor can they be charged with ingratitude to their benefactor; for they reverenced him as a guardian, and obeyed him as a dictator.

In his works he has given very different specimens both of sentiments and expression. His "Tale of a Tub" has little resemblance to his other pieces. It exhibits a vehemence and rapidity of mind, a copiousness of images, and vivacity of diction, such as he afterwards never possessed or never exerted. It is of a mode so distinct and peculiar that it must be considered by itself; what is true of that, is not true of any thing else which he has written.

In his other works is found an equable tenour of easy language, which rather trickles than flows. His delight was in simplicity. That he has in his works no metaphor, as has been said, is not true; but his few metaphors seem to be received rather by necessity than choice. He studied purity; and though perhaps all his strictures are not exact, yet it is not often that solecisms can be found; and whoever depends on his authority may generally conclude himself safe. His sentences are never too much dilated or contracted; and it will not be easy to find any embarrassment in the complication of his clauses, any inconsequence in his connections, or abruptness in his transitions.

His style was well suited to his thoughts, which are never subtilised by nice disquisitions, decorated by sparkling conceits, elevated by ambitious sentences, or variegated by far-sought learning. He pays no court to the passions; he excites neither surprise nor admiration; he always understands himself, and his reader always understands him; the peruser of Swift wants little previous knowledge; it will be sufficient that he is acquainted with common words and common things; he is neither required to mount elevations, nor to explore profundities; his passage is always on a level, along solid ground, without asperities, without obstruction.

This easy and safe conveyance of meaning it was Swift's desire to attain, and for having attained he deserves praise. For purposes merely didactic, when something is to be told that was not known before, it is the best mode; but against that inattention by which known truths are suffered to lie neglected it makes no provision; it instructs, but does not persuade.

By his political education he was associated with the whigs; but he deserted them when they deserted their principles, yet without running into the contrary extreme: he continued throughout his life to retain the disposition which he assigns to the "Church-of-England Man," of thinking commonly with the whigs of the state and with the tories of the church.

He was a churchman rationally zealous; he desired the prosperity, and maintained the honour, of the clergy; of the dissenters he did not wish to infringe the toleration, but he opposed their encroachments.

To his duty as dean he was very attentive. He managed the revenues of his church with exact economy; and it is said by Delany, that more money was, under his direction, laid out in repairs, than had ever been in the same time since its first erection. Of his choir he was eminently careful; and, though he neither loved nor understood music, took care that all the singers were well qualified, admitting none without the testimony of skilful judges.

In his church he restored the practice of weekly communion, and distributed the sacramental elements in the most solemn and devout manner with his own hand. He came to church every morning, preached commonly in his turn, and attended the evening anthem, that it might not be negligently performed.

He read the service "rather with a strong, nervous voice, than in a graceful manner; his voice was sharp and high-toned, rather than harmonious."

He entered upon the clerical state with hope to excel in preaching; but complained, that from the time of his political controversies, "he

could only preach pamphlets." This censure of himself, if judgment be made from those sermons which have been printed, was unreasonably severe.

The suspicions of his irreligion proceeded in a great measure from his dread of hypocrisy; instead of wishing to seem better, he delighted in seeming worse than he was. He went in London to early prayers, lest he should be seen at church: he read prayers to his servants every morning with such dexterous secrecy, that Dr. Delany was six months in his house before he knew it. He was not only careful to hide the good which he did, but willingly incurred the suspicion of evil which he did not. He forgot what himself had formerly asserted, that hypocrisy is less mischievous than open impiety. Dr. Delany, with all his zeal for his honour, has justly condemned this part of his character.

The person of Swift had not many recommendations. He had a kind of muddy complexion, which, though he washed himself with oriental scrupulosity, did not look clear. He had a countenance sour and severe, which he seldom softened by any appearance of gayety. He stubbornly resisted any tendency to laughter.

To his domestics he was naturally rough; and a man of rigorous temper, with that vigilance of minute attention which his works discover, must have been a master that few could bear. That he was disposed to do his servants good on important occasions, is no great mitigation; benefaction can be but rare, and tyrannic peevishness is perpetual. He did not spare the servants of others. Once when he dined alone with the Earl of Orrery, he said of one that waited in the room, "That man has, since we sat at table, committed fifteen faults." What the faults were, Lord Orrery, from whom I heard the story, had not been attentive enough to discover. My number may perhaps not be exact.

In his economy he practised a peculiar and offensive parsimony, without disguise or apology. The practice of saving being once necessary, became habitual, and grew first ridiculous, and at last detestable. But his avarice, though it might exclude pleasure, was never suffered to encroach upon his virtue. He was frugal by inclination, but liberal by principle; and if the purpose to which he destined his little accumulations be remembered, with his distribution of occasional charity, it will perhaps appear, that he only liked one mode of expense better than another, and saved merely that he might have something to give. He did not grow rich by injuring his successors, but left both Laracor and the deanery more valuable than he found them.—With all this talk of his covetousness and generosity, it should be remembered that he was never rich. The revenue of his deanery was not much more than seven hundred a year.

His beneficence was not graced with tenderness or civility; he relieved without pity, and assisted without kindness; so that those who were fed by him could hardly love him.

He made a rule to himself to give but one piece at a time, and therefore always stored his pocket with coins of different value.

Whatever he did, he seemed willing to do in a manner peculiar to himself, without sufficiently considering that singularity, as it implies a contempt of the general practice, is a kind of defiance which justly provokes the hostility of ridicule; he, therefore, who indulges peculiar habits is worse than others, if he be not better.

Of his humour, a story told by Pope* may afford a specimen.

"Dr. Swift has an odd blunt way, that is mistaken by strangers for ill-nature.—'Tis so odd, that there is no describing it but by facts. I'll tell you one that first comes into my head. One evening, Gay and I went to see him: you know how intimately we were all acquainted. On our coming in, 'Heydey, gentlemen, (says the Doctor) what's the meaning of this visit? How came you to leave the great lords that you are so fond of, to come hither to see a poor Dean?'—'Because we would rather see you than any of them.'—'Ay, any one that did not know so well as I do might believe you. But since you are come, I must get some supper for you, I suppose.'—'No, Doctor, we have supped already.'—'Supped already! that's impossible why 'tis not eight o'clock yet.—That's very strange; but if you had not supped, I must have got something for you.—Let me see what should I have had? A couple of lobsters ay, that would have done very well; two shilling—tarts, a shilling; but you will drink a glass of wine with me, though you supped so much before your usual time only to spare my pocket?'—'No, we had rather talk with you than drink with you.'—'But if you had supped with me, as in all reason you ought to have done, you must then have drank with me.—A bottle of wine, two shillings—two and two is four, and one is five; just two and sixpence a-piece. There, Pope, there's half-a-crown for you, and there's another for you, Sir; for I won't save any thing by you I am determined.—This was all said and done with his usual seriousness on such occasions; and in spite of every thing we could say to the contrary, he actually obliged us to take the money."

In the intercourse of familiar life, he indulged his disposition to petulance and sarcasm, and thought himself injured if the licentiousness of

* Spence.

his raillery, the freedom of his censures, or the petulance of his frolics, was resented or repressed. He predominated over his companions with very high ascendancy, and probably would bear none over whom he could not predominate. To give him advice, was, in the style of his friend Delany, "to venture to speak to him." This customary superiority soon grew too delicate for truth; and Swift, with all his penetration, allowed himself to be delighted with low flattery.

On all common occasions, he habitually affects a style of arrogance, and dictates rather than persuades. This authoritative and magisterial language he expected to be received as his peculiar mode of jocularity; but he apparently flattered his own arrogance by an assumed imperiousness, in which he was ironical only to the resentful, and to the submissive sufficiently serious.

He told stories with great felicity, and delighted in doing what he knew himself to do well; he was therefore captivated by the respectful silence of a steady listener, and told the same tales too often.

He did not, however, claim the right of talking alone; for it was his rule, when he had spoken a minute, to give room by a pause for any other speaker. Of time, on all occasions, he was an exact computer, and knew the minutes required to every common operation.

It may be justly supposed that there was in his conversation what appears so frequently in his letters, an affectation of familiarity with the great, and ambition of momentary equality sought and enjoyed by the neglect of those ceremonies which custom has established as the barriers between one order of society and another. This transgression of regularity was by himself and his admirers termed greatness of soul. But a great mind disdains to hold any thing by courtesy, and therefore never usurps what a lawful claimant may take away. He that encroaches on another's dignity puts himself in his power; he is either repelled with helpless indignity or endured by clemency and condescension.

Of Swift's general habits of thinking, if his letters can be supposed to afford any evidence, he was not a man to be either loved or envied. He seems to have wasted life in discontent, by the rage of neglected pride and the languishment of unsatisfied desire. He is querulous and fastidious, arrogant and malignant; he scarcely speaks of himself but with indignant lamentations, or of others but with insolent superiority when he is gay, and with angry contempt when he is gloomy. From the letters that passed between him and Pope it might be inferred, that they, with Arbuthnot and Gay, had engrossed all the understanding and virtue of mankind; that their merits filled the world, or that there was no hope of more. They show the age involved in darkness, and shade the picture with sullen emulation.

When the Queen's death drove him into Ireland, he might be allowed to regret for a time the interception of his views, the extinction of his hopes, and his ejection from gay scenes, important employment, and splendid friendships; but when time had enabled reason to prevail over vexation, the complaints which at first were natural became ridiculous because they were useless. But querulousness was now grown habitual, and he cried out when he probably had ceased to feel. His reiterated wailings persuaded Bolingbroke that he was really willing to quit his deanery for an English parish; and Bolingbroke procured an exchange, which was rejected; and Swift still retained the pleasure of complaining.

The greatest difficulty that occurs, in analysing his character, is to discover by what depravity of intellect he took delight in revolving ideas from which almost every other mind shrinks with disgust. The ideas of pleasure, even when criminal, may solicit the imagination; but what has disease, deformity, and filth, upon which the thoughts can be allured to dwell? Delany is willing to think that Swift's mind was not much tainted with this gross corruption before his long visit to Pope. He does not consider how he degrades his hero, by making him at fifty-nine the pupil of turpitude, and liable to the malignant influence of an ascendant mind. But the truth is, that Gulliver had described his Yahoos before the visit; and he that had formed those images had nothing filthy to learn.

I have here given the character of Swift as he exhibits himself to my perception; but now let another be heard who knew him better. Dr. Delany, after long acquaintance, describes him to Lord Orrery in these terms:

"My Lord, when you consider Swift's singular, peculiar, and most variegated vein of wit, always intended rightly, although not always so rightly directed; delightful in many instances, and salutary even where it is most offensive; when you consider his strict truth, his fortitude in resisting oppression and arbitrary power; his fidelity in friendship; his sincere love and zeal for religion; his uprightness in making right resolutions, and his steadiness in adhering to them: his care of his church, its choir, its economy, and its income; his attention to all those that preached in his cathedral, in order to their amendment in pronunciation and style; as also his remarkable attention to the interest of his successors, preferably to his own present emoluments; his invincible patriotism, even to a country which he did not love; his very various, well-devised, well-judged, and extensive charities, throughout his life; and his whole fortune (to say nothing of his wife's)

conveyed to the same Christian purposes at his death; charities, from which he could enjoy no honour, advantage, or satisfaction, of any kind in this world: when you consider his ironical and humorous as well as his serious schemes for the promotion of true religion and virtue; his success in soliciting for the first-fruits and twentieths, to the unspeakable benefit of the established church of Ireland; and his felicity (to rate it no higher) in giving occasion to the building of fifty new churches in London—

"All this considered, the character of his life will appear like that of his writings: they will both bear to be re-considered and re-examined with the utmost attention, and always discover new beauties and excellences upon every examination.

"They will bear to be considered as the sun, in which the brightness will hide the blemishes; and whenever petulant ignorance, pride, malice, malignity, or envy, interposes to cloud or sully his fame, I take upon me to pronounce, that the eclipse will not last long.

"To conclude—No man ever deserved better of any country than Swift did of his; a steady, persevering, inflexible friend; a wise, a watchful, and a faithful counsellor; under many severe trials and bitter persecutions, to the manifest hazard both of his liberty and fortune.

"He lived a blessing, he died a benefactor, and his name will ever live an honour, to Ireland."

In the poetical works of Dr. Swift there is not much upon which the critic can exercise his powers. They are often humorous, almost always light, and have the qualities which recommend such compositions, easiness and gayety. They are, for the most part, what their author intended. The diction is correct, the numbers are smooth, and the rhymes exact. There seldom occurs a hard-laboured expression or a redundant epithet; all his verses exemplify his own definition of a good style, they consist of "proper words in proper places."

To divide this collection into classes, and show how some pieces are gross and some are trifling, would be to tell the reader what he knows already, and to find faults of which the author could not be ignorant, who certainly wrote often not to his judgment, but his humour.

It was said, in a preface to one of the Irish editions, that Swift had never been known to take a single thought from any writer, ancient or modern. This is not literally true; but perhaps no writer can easily be found that has borrowed so little, or that in all his excellences and all his defects has so well maintained his claim to be considered as original.

BROOME.

William Broome was born in Cheshire, as is said, of very mean parents. Of the place of his birth or the first part of his life, I have not been able to gain any intelligence. He was educated upon the foundation at Eton, and was captain of the school a whole year, without any vacancy by which he might have obtained a scholarship at King's College: being by this delay, such as is said to have happened very rarely, superannuated, he was sent to St. John's College by the contributions of his friends, where he obtained a small exhibition.

At this college he lived for some time in the same chamber with the well-known Ford, by whom I have formerly heard him described as a contracted scholar and a mere versifier, unacquainted with life and unskilful in conversation. His addiction to metre was then such, that his companions familiarly called him Poet. When he had opportunities of mingling with mankind, he cleared himself, as Ford likewise owned, from the great part of his scholastic rust.

He appeared early in the world as a translator of the "Iliads" into prose, in conjunction with Ozell and Oldisworth. How the several parts were distributed is not known. This is the translation of which Ozell boasted as superior, in Toland's opinion, to that of Pope: it has long since vanished, and is now in no danger from the critics.

He was introduced to Mr. Pope, who was then visiting Sir John Cotton at Madingley near Cambridge, and gained so much of his esteem, that he was employed, I believe, to make extracts from Eustathius for the notes to the translation of the "Iliad;" and in the volume of poetry published by Lintot, commonly called "Pope's Miscellanies," many of his early pieces were inserted.

Pope and Broome were to be yet more closely connected. When the success of the "Iliad" gave encouragement to a version of the "Odyssey," Pope, weary of the toil, called Fenton and Broome to his assistance; and, taking only half the work upon himself, divided the other half between his partners, giving four books to Fenton and eight to Broome. Fenton's books I have enumerated in his life: to the lot of Broome fell the second, sixth, eighth, eleventh, twelfth, sixteenth, eighteenth, and twenty-third, together with the burden of writing all the notes.

As this translation is a very important event in poetical history, the reader has a right to know upon what grounds I establish my narration. That the version was not wholly Pope's was always known; he had mentioned the assistance of two friends in his proposals, and at the end of the work some account is given by Broome of their different parts, which however mentions only five books as written by the coadjutors; the fourth and twentieth by Fenton; the sixth, the eleventh, and the eighteenth, by himself; though Pope, in an advertisement prefixed afterwards to a new volume of his works, claimed only twelve. A natural curiosity after the real conduct of so great an undertaking incited me once to inquire of Dr. Warburton, who told me, in his warm language, that he thought the relation given in the note "a lie;" but that he was not able to ascertain the several shares. The intelligence which Dr. Warburton could not afford me I obtained from Mr. Langton, to whom Mr. Spence had imparted it.

The price at which Pope purchased this assistance was three hundred pounds paid to Fenton, and five hundred to Broome, with as many copies as he wanted for his friends, which amounted to one hundred more. The payment made to Fenton I know not but by hearsay; Broome's is very distinctly told by Pope, in the notes to the "Dunciad."

It is evident, that, according to Pope's own estimate, Broome was unkindly treated. If four books could merit three hundred pounds, eight and all the notes, equivalent at least to four, had certainly a right to more than six.

Broome probably considered himself as injured, and there was for some time more than coldness between him and his employer. He always spoke of Pope as too much a lover of money; and Pope pursued him with avowed hostility; for he not only named him disrespectfully in the "Dunciad," but quoted him more than once in the "Bathos," as a proficient in the "Art of Sinking;" and in his enumeration of the different kinds of poets distinguished for the profound, he reckons Broome among "the parrots who repeat another's words in such a hoarse odd tone as makes them seem their own." I have been told that they were afterwards reconciled; but I am afraid their peace was without friendship.

He afterwards published a Miscellany of Poems, which is inserted, with corrections, in the late compilation.

He never rose to a very high dignity in the church. He was some time rector of Sturston in Suffolk, where he married a wealthy widow; and afterwards, when the king visited Cambridge (1728) became doctor of laws. He was (in August 1728) presented by the crown to the rectory of Pulham in Norfolk, which he held with Oakley Magna in Suffolk, given him by the Lord Cornwallis, to whom he was chaplain, who added the vicarage of Eye in Suffolk; he then resigned Pulham, and retained the other two.

Towards the close of his life he grew again poetical, and amused himself with translating Odes of Anacreon, which he published in the "Gentleman's Magazine" under the name of Chester.

He died at Bath, November 16, 1745, and was buried in the Abbey Church.

Of Broome, though it cannot be said that he was a great poet, it would be unjust to deny that he was an excellent versifier; his lines are smooth and sonorous, and his diction is select and elegant. His rhymes are sometimes unsuitable; in his "Melancholy," he makes *breath* rhyme to *birth* in one place, and to *earth* in another. Those faults occur but seldom; and he had such power of words and numbers as fitted him for translation; but in his original works, recollection seems to have been his business more than invention. His imitations are so apparent, that it is a part of his reader's employment to recall the verses of some former poet. Sometimes he copies the most popular writers, for he seems scarcely to endeavour at concealment; and sometimes he picks up fragments in obscure corners. His lines to Fenton,

> Serene, the sting of pain thy thoughts beguile,
> And make afflictions objects of a smile,

brought to my mind some lines on the death of Queen Mary, written by Barnes, of whom I should not have expected to find an imitator:

> But thou, O Muse! whose sweet nepenthean tongue
> Can charm the pangs of death with deathless song,
> Can'st *stinging plagues* with easy *thoughts beguile*,
> *Make* pains and tortures *objects of a smile*.

To detect his imitations were tedious and useless. What he takes he seldom makes worse; and he cannot be justly thought a mean man whom Pope chose for an associate, and whose co-operation was considered by Pope's enemies as so important, that he was attacked by Henley with this ludicrous distich:

> Pope came off clean with Homer; but they say
> Broome went before, and kindly swept the way.

POPE.

Alexander Pope was born in London,* May 22, 1688, of parents whose rank or station was never ascertained: we are informed that they were of "gentle blood;" that his father was of a family of which the Earl of Downe was the head; and that his mother was the daughter of William Turner, Esquire, of York, who had likewise three sons, one of whom had the honour of being killed, and the other of dying in the service of Charles the First; the third was made a general officer in Spain, from whom the sister inherited what sequestrations and forfeitures had left in the family.

This, and this only, is told by Pope, who is more willing, as I have heard observed, to show what his father was not, than what he was. It is allowed that he grew rich by trade; but whether in a shop or on the exchange, was never discovered till Mr. Tyers told, on the authority of Mrs. Racket, that he was a linendraper in the Strand. Both parents were papists.

Pope was from his birth of a constitution tender and delicate; but is said to have shown remarkable gentleness and sweetness of disposition. The weakness of his body continued through his life;† but the mildness of his mind perhaps ended with his childhood. His voice, when he was young, was so pleasing, that he was called in fondness "the little Nightingale."

Being not sent early to school, he was taught to read by an aunt; and when he was seven or eight years old became a lover of books. He first learned to write by imitating printed books; a species of penmanship in which he retained great excellence through his whole life, though his ordinary hand was not elegant.

When he was about eight, he was placed in Hampshire, under Taverner, a Romish priest, who, by a method very rarely practised, taught him the Greek and Latin rudiments together. He was now first regularly initiated in poetry by the perusal of "Ogilby's Homer" and "Sandys' Ovid." Ogilby's assistance he never repaid with any praise; but of Sandys, he declared, in his notes to the "Iliad," that English poetry owed much of its beauty to his translation. Sandys very rarely attempted original composition.

From the care of Taverner, under whom his proficiency was considerable, he was removed to a school at Twyford, near Winchester, and again to another school, about Hyde-park Corner; from which he used sometimes to stroll to the playhouse, and was so delighted with theatrical exhibition, that he formed a kind of play from "Ogilby's Iliad," with some verses of his own intermixed, which he persuaded his schoolfellows to act, with the addition of his master's gardener, who personated Ajax.

At the two last schools he used to represent himself as having lost part of what Taverner had taught him; and on his master at Twyford he had already exercised his poetry in a lampoon. Yet under those masters he translated more than a fourth part of the "Metamorphoses." If he kept the same proportion in his other exercises, it cannot be thought that his loss was great.

He tells of himself, in his poems, that "he lisped in numbers;" and used to say that he could not remember the time when he began to make verses. In the style of fiction it might have been said of him as of Pindar, that when he lay in his cradle, "the bees swarmed about his mouth."

About the time of the Revolution, his father, who was undoubtedly disappointed by the sudden blast of popish prosperity, quitted his trade and retired to Binfield in Windsor Forest, with about twenty thousand pounds; for which, being conscientiously determined not to entrust it to the government, he found no better use than that of locking it up in a chest, and taking from it what his expenses required: and his life was long enough to consume a great part of it before his son came to the inheritance.

To Binfield, Pope was called by his father when he was about twelve years old; and there he had, for a few months, the assistance of one Deane, another priest, of whom he learned only to construe a little of "Tully's Offices." How Mr. Deane could spend, with a boy who had translated so much of Ovid, some mon-

* In Lombard-street, according to Dr. Warton.—C.

† This weakness was so great, that he constantly wore stays, as I have been assured by a waterman at Twickenham, who, in lifting him into his boat, had often felt them. His method of taking the air on the water was to have a sedan chair in the boat, in which he sat with the glasses down.—H.

over a small part of "Tully's Offices," it is now vain to inquire.

Of a youth so successfully employed, and so conspicuously improved, a minute account must be naturally desired; but curiosity must be contented with confused, imperfect, and sometimes improbable intelligence. Pope, finding little advantage from external help, resolved thenceforward to direct himself, and at twelve formed a plan of study, which he completed with little other incitement than the desire of excellence.

He primary and principal purpose was to be a poet, with which his father accidentally concurred, by proposing subjects, and obliging him to correct his performances by many revisals; after which, the old gentleman, when he was satisfied, would say, "these are good rhymes."

In his perusal of the English poets he soon distinguished the versification of Dryden, which he considered as the model to be studied, and was impressed with such veneration for his instructor, that he persuaded some friends to take him to the coffee-house which Dryden frequented, and pleased himself with having seen him.

Dryden died May 1, 1701, some days before Pope was twelve; so early must he therefore have felt the power of harmony and the zeal of genius. Who does not wish that Dryden could have known the value of the homage that was paid him, and foreseen the greatness of his young admirer?

The earliest of Pope's productions is his "Ode on Solitude," written before he was twelve, in which there is nothing more than other forward boys have attained, and which is not equal to Cowley's performances at the same age.

His time was now wholly spent in reading and writing. As he read the classics, he amused himself with translating them; and at fourteen made a version of the first book of "The Thebais," which, with some revision, he afterwards published. He must have been at this time, if he had no help, a considerable proficient in the Latin tongue.

By Dryden's Fables, which had then been not long published, and were much in the hands of poetical readers, he was tempted to try his own skill in giving Chaucer a more fashionable appearance, and put "January and May," and the "Prologue of the Wife of Bath," into modern English. He translated likewise the epistle of "Sappho to Phaon," from Ovid, to complete the version which was before imperfect; and wrote some other small pieces, which he afterwards printed.

He sometimes imitated the English poets, and professed to have written at fourteen his poem upon "Silence," after Rochester's "Nothing." He had now formed his versification, and the smoothness of his numbers surpassed his original; but this is a small part of his praise; he discovers such acquaintance both with human life and public affairs, as is not easily conceived to have been attainable by a boy of fourteen in Windsor Forest.

Next year he was desirous of opening to himself new sources of knowledge, by making himself acquainted with modern languages; and removed for a time to London, that he might study French and Italian, which, as he desired nothing more than to read them, were by diligent application soon despatched. Of Italian learning he does not appear to have ever made much use in his subsequent studies.

He then returned to Binfield, and delighted himself with his own poetry. He tried all styles and many subjects. He wrote a comedy, a tragedy, an epic poem, with panegyrics on all the princes of Europe; and, as he confesses, "thought himself the greatest genius that ever was." Self-confidence is the first requisite to great undertakings. He, indeed, who forms his opinion of himself in solitude without knowing the powers of other men, is very liable to error; but it was the felicity of Pope to rate himself at his real value.

Most of his puerile productions were, by his maturer judgment, afterwards destroyed. "Alcander," the epic poem, was burnt by the persuasion of Atterbury. The tragedy was founded on the legend of St. Genevieve. Of the comedy there is no account.

Concerning his studies it is related, that he translated "Tully on Old Age;" and that besides his books of poetry and criticism, he read "Temple's Essays" and "Locke on Human Understanding." His reading, though his favourite authors are not known, appears to have been sufficiently extensive and multifarious; for his early pieces show, with sufficient evidence, his knowledge of books.

He that is pleased with himself easily imagines that he shall please others. Sir William Trumbull, who had been ambassador at Constantinople, and secretary of state, when he retired from business, fixed his residence in the neighbourhood of Binfield. Pope, not yet sixteen, was introduced to the statesman of sixty, and so distinguished himself, that their interviews ended in friendship and correspondence. Pope was, through his whole life, ambitious of splendid acquaintance; and he seems to have wanted neither diligence nor success in attracting the notice of the great; for, from his first entrance into the world, and his entrance was very early, he was admitted to familiarity with those whose rank or station made them most conspicuous.

From the age of sixteen the life of Pope, as an author, may be properly computed. He now wrote his pastorals, which were shown to the poets and critics of that time; as they well

deserved, they were read with admiration, and many praises were bestowed upon them and upon the Preface, which is both elegant and learned in a high degree; they were, however, not published till five years afterwards.

Cowley, Milton, and Pope, are distinguished among the English poets by the early exertion of their powers; but the works of Cowley alone were published in his childhood, and therefore of him only can it be certain that his puerile performances received no improvement from his maturer studies.

At this time began his acquaintance with Wycherley, a man who seems to have had among his contemporaries his full share of reputation, to have been esteemed without virtue, and caressed without good humour. Pope was proud of his notice; Wycherley wrote verses in his praise, which he was charged by Dennis with writing to himself, and they agreed for awhile to flatter one another. It is pleasant to remark how soon Pope learned the cant of an author, and began to treat critics with contempt, though he had yet suffered nothing from them.

But the fondness of Wycherley was too violent to last. His esteem of Pope was such, that he submitted some poems to his revision; and when Pope, perhaps proud of such confidence, was sufficiently bold in his criticisms and liberal in his alterations, the old scribbler was angry to see his pages defaced, and felt more pain from the detection, than content from the amendment of his faults. They parted; but Pope always considered him with kindness, and visited him a little time before he died.

Another of his early correspondents was Mr. Cromwell of whom I have learned nothing particular but that he used to ride a hunting in a tyewig. He was fond, and perhaps vain, of amusing himself with poetry and criticism; and sometimes sent his performances to Pope, who did not forbear such remarks as were now and then unwelcome. Pope, in his turn, put the juvenile version of "Statius" into his hands for correction.

Their correspondence afforded the public its first knowledge of Pope's epistolary powers; for his Letters were given by Cromwell to one Mrs. Thomas; and she many years afterwards sold them to Curll, who inserted them in a volume of his Miscellanies.

Walsh, a name yet preserved among the minor poets, was one of his first encouragers. His regard was gained by the Pastorals, and from him Pope received the counsel by which he seems to have regulated his studies. Walsh advised him to correctness, which, as he told him, the English poets had hitherto neglected, and which therefore was left to him as a basis of fame: and, being delighted with rural poems, recommended to him to write a pastoral comedy, like those which are read so eagerly in Italy; a design which Pope probably did not approve, as he did not follow it.

Pope had now declared himself a poet; and, thinking himself entitled to poetical conversation, began at seventeen to frequent Will's, a coffee-house on the north side of Russell-street in Covent-garden, where the wits of that time used to assemble, and where Dryden had, when he lived, been accustomed to preside.

During this period of his life he was indefatigably diligent and insatiably curious; wanting health for violent and money for expensive pleasures; and having excited in himself very strong desires of intellectual eminence, he spent much of his time over his books; but he read only to store his mind with facts and images, seizing all that his authors presented with undistinguishable voracity, and with an appetite for knowledge too eager to be nice. In a mind like his, however, all the faculties were at once involuntarily improving. Judgment is forced upon us by experience. He that reads many books must compare one opinion or one style with another; and, when he compares, must necessarily distinguish, reject, and prefer. But the account given by himself of his studies was, that from fourteen to twenty he read only for amusement, from twenty to twenty-seven for improvement and instruction; that in the first part of this time he desired only to know, and in the second he endeavoured to judge.

The Pastorals, which had been for some time handed about among poets and critics, were at last printed (1709) in Tonson's "Miscellany," in a volume which began with the Pastorals of Philips and ended with those of Pope.

The same year was written the "Essay on Criticism;" a work which displays such extent of comprehension, such nicety of distinction, such acquaintance with mankind, and such knowledge both of ancient and modern learning, as are not often attained by the maturest age and longest experience. It was published about two years afterwards; and, being praised by Addison in "The Spectator"* with sufficient liberality, met with so much favour as enraged Dennis, "who," he says, "found himself attacked, without any manner of provocation on his side, and attacked in his person, instead of his writings, by one who was wholly a stranger to him, at a time when all the world knew he was persecuted by fortune; and not only saw that this was attempted in a clandestine manner, with the utmost falsehood and calumny, but found that all this was done by a little

* No. 253. But, according to Dr. Warton, Pope was displeased at one passage, in which Addison censures the admission of "some strokes of ill nature."—C.

affected hypocrite, who had nothing in his mouth at the same time but truth, candour, friendship, good-nature, humanity, and magnanimity."

How the attack was clandestine is not easily perceived, nor how his person is depreciated; but he seems to have known something of Pope's character, in whom may be discovered an appetite to talk too frequently of his own virtues.

The pamphlet is such as rage might be expected to dictate. He supposes himself to be asked two questions; whether the Essay will succeed, and who or what is the author.

Its success he admits to be secured by the false opinions then prevalent; the author he concludes to be "young and raw."

"First, because he discovers a sufficiency beyond his little ability, and hath rashly undertaken a task infinitely above his force. Secondly, while this little author struts, and affects the dictatorian air, he plainly shows, that at the same time he is under the rod; and, while he pretends to give laws to others, is a pedantic slave to authority and opinion. Thirdly, he hath, like schoolboys, borrowed both from living and dead. Fourthly, he knows not his own mind, and frequently contradicts himself. Fifthly, he is almost perpetually in the wrong."

All these positions he attempts to prove by quotations and remarks; but his desire to do mischief is greater than his power. He has, however, justly criticised some passages in these lines:

There are whom heaven has bless'd with store of wit,
Yet want as much again to manage it;
For Wit and Judgment ever are at strife—

It is apparent that wit has two meanings, and that what is wanted, though called wit, is truly judgment. So far Dennis is undoubtedly right: but not content with argument, he will have a little mirth, and triumphs over the first couplet in terms too elegant to be forgotten. "By the way, what rare numbers are here! Would not one swear that this youngster had espoused some antiquated muse, who had sued out a divorce on account of impotence from some superannuated sinner; and, having been poxed by her former spouse, has got the gout in her decrepit age, which makes her hobble so damnably?" This was the man who would reform a nation sinking into barbarity.

In another place Pope himself allowed that Dennis had detected one of those blunders which are called "bulls." The first edition had this line:

What is this wit—
Where wanted, scorn'd; and envied where acquired?

"How," says the critic, "can wit be scorned where it is not? Is not this a figure frequently employed in Hibernian land? The person that wants this wit may indeed be scorned, but the scorn shows the honour which the contemner has for wit." Of this remark Pope made the proper use, by correcting the passage.

I have preserved, I think, all that is reasonable in Dennis's criticism; it remains that justice be done to his delicacy. "For his acquaintance (says Dennis) he names Mr. Walsh, who had by no means the qualification which this author reckons absolutely necessary to a critic, it being very certain that he was, like this Essayer, a very indifferent poet; he loved to be well dressed; and I remember a little young gentleman whom Mr. Walsh used to take into his company, as a double foil to his person and capacity. Inquire, between Sunninghill and Oakenham, for a young, short, squab gentleman, the very bow of the god of love, and tell me whether he be a proper author to make personal reflections?—He may extol the ancients, but he has reason to thank the gods that he was born a modern; for had he been born of Grecian parents, and his father consequently had by law had the absolute disposal of him, his life had been no longer than that of one of his poems, the life of half a day.—Let the person of a gentleman of his parts be never so contemptible, his inward man is ten times more ridiculous; it being impossible that his outward form, though it be that of downright monkey, should differ so much from human shape, as his unthinking immaterial part does from human understanding." Thus began the hostility between Pope and Dennis, which, though it was suspended for a short time, never was appeased. Pope seems at first, to have attacked him wantonly; but, though he always professed to despise him, he discovers, by mentioning him very often, that he felt his force or his venom.

Of this essay, Pope declared, that he did not expect the sale to be quick, because "not one gentleman in sixty, even of liberal education, could understand it." The gentlemen and the education of that time seem to have been of a lower character than they are of this. He mentioned a thousand copies as a numerous impression.

Dennis was not his only censurer: the zealous papists thought the monks treated with too much contempt, and Erasmus too studiously praised; but to these objections he had not much regard.

The Essay has been translated into French by Hamilton, author of the "Comte de Grammont," whose version was never printed, by Robotham, secretary to the King for Hanover, and by Resnel; and commented by Dr. Warburton, who has discovered in it such order and

connection as was not perceived by Addison, nor, as is said, intended by the author.

Almost every poem consisting of precepts is so far arbitrary and immethodical, that many of the paragraphs may change places with no apparent inconvenience; for of two or more positions depending upon some remote and general principle there is seldom any cogent reason why one should precede the other. But for the order in which they stand, whatever it be, a little ingenuity may easily give a reason. "It is possible," says Hooker, "that by long circumduction, from any one truth all truth may be inferred." Of all homogeneous truths, at least of all truths respecting the same general end, in whatever series they may be produced, a concatenation by intermediate ideas may be formed, such as, when it is once shown, shall appear natural; but if this order be reversed, another mode of connection equally specious may be found or made. Aristotle is praised for naming Fortitude first of the cardinal virtues, as that without which no other virtue can steadily be practised; but he might, with equal propriety, have placed Prudence and Justice before it, since without Prudence, Fortitude is mad; without Justice it is mischievous.

As the end of method is perspicuity, that series is sufficiently regular that avoids obscurity, and where there is no obscurity, it will not be difficult to discover method.

In "The Spectator" was published the Messiah, which he first submitted to the perusal of Steele, and corrected in compliance with his criticisms.

It is reasonable to infer, from his Letters, that the "Verses on the Unfortunate Lady" were written about the time when his Essay was published. The lady's name and adventures I have sought with fruitless inquiry.*

I can therefore tell no more than I have learned from Mr. Ruffhead, who writes with the confidence of one who could trust his information. She was a woman of eminent rank and large fortune, the ward of an uncle, who, having given her a proper education, expected like other guardians that she should make at least an equal match; and such he proposed to her, but found it rejected in favour of a young gentleman of inferior condition.

Having discovered the correspondence between the two lovers, and finding the young lady determined to abide by her own choice, he supposed that separation might do what can rarely be done by arguments, and sent her into a foreign country, where she was obliged to converse only with those from whom her uncle had nothing to fear.

Her lover took care to repeat his vows; but his letters were intercepted and carried to her guardian, who directed her to be watched with still greater vigilance, till of this restraint she grew so impatient, that she bribed a woman servant to procure her a sword, which she directed to her heart.

From this account, given with evident intention to raise the lady's character, it does not appear that she had any claim to praise, nor much to compassion. She seems to have been impatient, violent, and ungovernable. Her uncle's power could not have lasted long; the hour of liberty and choice would have come in time. But her desires were too hot for delay, and she liked self murder better than suspense.

Nor is it discoversd that the uncle, whoever he was, is with much justice delivered to posterity as "a false Guardian;" he seems to have done only that for which a guardian is appointed; he endeavoured to direct his niece till she should be able to direct herself. Poetry has no often been worse employed than in dignifying the amorous fury of a raving girl.

Not long after, he wrote "The Rape of the Lock," the most airy, the most ingenious, and the most delightful of all his compositions, occasioned by a frolic of gallantry, rather too familiar, in which Lord Petre cut off a lock of Mrs. Arabella Fermor's hair. This, whether stealth or violence, was so much resented, that the commerce of the two families, before very friendly, was interrupted. Mr. Caryl, a gentleman who, being secretary to King James' queen, had followed his mistress into France and who, being the author of "Sir Solomon Single," a comedy, and some translations, was entitled to the notice of a wit, solicited Pope to endeavour a reconciliation by a ludicrous poem which might bring both the parties to a better temper. In compliance with Caryl's request though his name was for a long time marked only by the first and last letters, C—l, a poem of two cantos was written (1711), as is said, in a fortnight, and sent to the offended lady, who liked it well enough to show it; and, with the usual process of literary transactions, the author, dreading a surreptitious edition, was forced to publish it.

The event is said to have been such as was desired, the pacification and diversion of all to whom it related, except Sir George Brown who complained with some bitterness, that, in the character of Sir Plume, he was made to talk nonsense. Whether all this be true I have some doubt; for at Paris, a few years ago, a niece of Mrs. Fermor, who presided in an English convent, mentioned Pope's work with very little gratitude, rather as an insult than an honour; and she may be supposed to have inherited the opinion of her family.

At its first appearance it was termed by Addison *merum sal*. Pope, however, saw that

* See Gent. Mag. vol. li. p. 314.—N.

was capable of improvement; and, having luckily contrived to borrow his machinery from the Rosicrucians, imparted the scheme with which his head was teeming to Addison, who told him that his work as it stood, was "a delicious little thing," and gave him no encouragement to retouch it.

This has been too hastily considered as an instance of Addison's jealousy; for, as he could not guess the conduct of the new design, or the possibilities of pleasure comprised in a fiction of which there had been no examples, he might very reasonably and kindly persuade the author to acquiesce in his own prosperity, and forbear an attempt which he considered as an unnecessary hazard.

Addison's counsel was happily rejected. Pope foresaw the future efflorescence of imagery then budding in his mind, and resolved to spare no art or industry of cultivation. The soft luxuriance of his fancy was already shooting, and all the gay varieties of diction were ready at his hand to colour and embellish it.

His attempt was justified by its success. "The Rape of the Lock" stands forward, in the classes of literature, as the most exquisite example of ludicrous poetry. Berkeley congratulated him upon the display of powers more truly poetical than he had shown before: with elegance of description, and justness of precepts, he had now exhibited boundless fertility of invention.

He always considered the intermixture of the machinery with the action as his most successful exertion of poetical art. He indeed could never afterwards produce any thing of such unexampled excellence. Those performances which strike with wonder are combinations of skilful genius with happy casualty; and it is not likely that any felicity like the discovery of a new race of preternatural agents should happen twice to the same man.

Of this poem the author was, I think, allowed to enjoy the praise for a long time without disturbance. Many years afterwards, Dennis published some remarks upon it, with very little force, and with no effect; for the opinion of the public was already settled, and it was no longer at the mercy of criticism.

About this time he published "The Temple of Fame," which, as he tells Steele in their correspondence, he had written two years before; that is, when he was only twenty-two years old, an early time of life for so much learning and so much observation as that work exhibits.

On this poem Dennis afterwards published some remarks, of which the most reasonable is, that some of the lines represent Motion as exhibited by Sculpture.

Of the epistle from "Eloisa to Abelard," I do not know the date. His first inclination to attempt a composition of that tender kind arose, as Mr. Savage told me, from his perusal of Prior's "Nutbrown Maid." How much he has surpassed Prior's work it is not necessary to mention, when perhaps it may be said with justice, that he has excelled every composition of the same kind. The mixture of religious hope and resignation gives an elevation and dignity to disappointed love which images merely natural cannot bestow. The gloom of a convent strikes the imagination with far greater force than the solitude of a grove.

This piece was, however, not much his favourite in his latter years, though I never heard upon what principle he slighted it.

In the next year (1713) he published "Windsor Forest;" of which part was, as he relates, written at sixteen, about the same time as his Pastorals, and the latter part was added afterwards: where the addition begins, we are not told. The lines relating to the peace confess their own date. It is dedicated to Lord Lansdowne, who was then high in reputation and influence among the tories; and it is said, that the conclusion of the poem gave great pain to Addison, both as a poet and a politician. Reports like this are always spread with boldness very disproportionate to their evidence. Why should Addison receive any particular disturbance from the last lines of "Windsor Forest?" If contrariety of opinion could poison a politician, he would not live a day; and, as a poet, he must have felt Pope's force of genius much more from many other parts of his works.

The pain that Addison might feel it is not likely that he would confess; and it is certain that he so well suppressed his discontent, that Pope now thought himself his favourite; for, having been consulted in the revisal of "Cato," he introduced it by a Prologue; and, when Dennis published his Remarks, undertook, not indeed to vindicate, but to revenge his friend, by a "Narrative of the Frenzy of John Dennis."

There is reason to believe that Addison gave no encouragement to this disingenuous hostility; for, says Pope, in a letter to him, "indeed your opinion, that it is entirely to be neglected, would be my own in my own case; but I felt more warmth here than I did when I first saw his book against myself (though indeed in two minutes it made me heartily merry)." Addison was not a man on whom such cant of sensibility could make much impression. He left the pamphlet to itself, having disowned it to Dennis, and perhaps did not think Pope to have deserved much by his officiousness.

This year was printed in "The Guardian" the ironical comparison between the Pastorals of Philips and Pope; a composition of artifice, criticism, and literature, to which nothing equal will easily be found. The superiority of Pope

is so ingeniously dissembled, and the feeble lines of Philips so skilfully preferred, that Steele, being deceived, was unwilling to print the paper, lest Pope should be offended. Addison immediately saw the writer's design; and, as it seems, had malice enough to conceal his discovery, and to permit a publication which, by making his friend Philips ridiculous, made him for ever an enemy to Pope.

It appears that about this time Pope had a strong inclination to unite the art of painting with that of poetry, and put himself under the tuition of Jervas. He was near-sighted, and therefore not formed by nature for a painter; he tried, however, how far he could advance, and sometimes persuaded his friends to sit. A picture of Betterton, supposed to be drawn by him, was in the possession of Lord Mansfield:* if this was taken from the life, he must have begun to paint earlier; for Betterton was now dead. Pope's ambition of this new art produced some encomiastic verses to Jervas, which certainly show his power as a poet; but I have been told that they betray his ignorance of painting.

He appears to have regarded Betterton with kindness and esteem; and after his death published, under his name, a version into modern English of Chaucer's Prologues, and one of his Tales, which, as was related by Mr. Harte, were believed to have been the performance of Pope himself by Fenton, who made him a gay offer of five pounds, if he would show them in the hand of Betterton.

The next year (1713) produced a bolder attempt, by which profit was sought as well as praise. The poems which he had hitherto written, however they might have diffused his name, had made very little addition to his fortune. The allowance which his father made him, though, proportioned to what he had, it might be liberal, could not be large; his religion hindered him from the occupation of any civil employment; and he complained that he wanted even money to buy books.†

He therefore resolved to try how far the favour of the public extended, by soliciting a subscription to a version of the "Iliad," with large notes.

To print by subscription was, for some time, a practice peculiar to the English. The first considerable work for which this expedient was employed is said to have been Dryden's "Virgil;"‡ and it had been tried again with success when the "Tatlers" were collected into volumes.

There was reason to believe that Pope's attempt would be successful. He was in the full bloom of reputation, and was personally known to almost all whom dignity of employment, or splendour of reputation, had made eminent; he conversed indifferently with both parties, and never disturbed the public with his political opinions; and it might be naturally expected, as each faction then boasted its literary zeal, that the great men, who on other occasions practised all the violence of opposition, would emulate each other in their encouragement of a poet who had delighted all, and by whom none had been offended.

With those hopes he offered an English "Iliad" to subscribers, in six volumes in quarto, for six guineas; a sum, according to the value of money at that time, by no means inconsiderable, and greater than I believe to have been ever asked before. His proposal, however, was very favourably received; and the patrons of literature were busy to recommend his undertaking and promote his interest. Lord Oxford, indeed, lamented that such a genius should be wasted upon a work not original; but proposed no means by which he might live without it. Addison recommended caution and moderation, and advised him not to be content with the praise of half the nation, when he might be universally favoured.

The greatness of the design, the popularity of the author, and the attention of the literary world, naturally raised such expectations of the future sale, that the booksellers made their offers with great eagerness; but the highest bidder was Bernard Lintot, who became proprietor, on condition of supplying at his own expense all the copies which were to be delivered to subscribers or presented to friends, and paying two hundred pounds for every volume.

Of the quartos it was, I believe, stipulated that none should be printed but for the author that the subscription might not be depreciated; but Lintot impressed the small pages upon small folio, and paper perhaps a little thinner and sold exactly at half the price, for half a guinea each volume, books so little inferior to the quartos, that, by a fraud of trade, those folios, being afterwards shortened by cutting away the top and bottom, were sold as copies printed for the subscribers.

Lintot printed two hundred and fifty on royal paper in folio, for two guineas a volume; of the small folio, having printed seventeen hundred and fifty copies of the first volume, he reduced the number in the other volumes to a thousand.

It is unpleasant to relate that the bookseller after all his hopes and all his liberality, was, by a very unjust and illegal action, defrauded of his profit. An edition of the English "Iliad"

* It is still at Caen Wood.—N.

† Spence.

‡ Earlier than this, viz. in 1688, Milton's "Paradise Lost" had been published with great success by subscription, in folio, under the patronage of Mr. (afterwards Lord) Somers.—R.

was printed in Holland, in duodecimo, and imported clandestinely for the gratification of those who were impatient to read what they could not yet afford to buy. This fraud could only be counteracted by an edition equally cheap and more commodious; and Lintot was compelled to contract his folio at once into a duodecimo, and lose the advantage of an intermediate gradation. The notes, which in the Dutch copies were placed at the end of each book, as they had been in the large volumes, were now subjoined to the text in the same page, and are therefore more easily consulted. Of this edition two thousand five hundred were first printed, and five thousand a few weeks afterwards; but indeed great numbers were necessary to produce considerable profit.

Pope, having now emitted his proposals, and engaged not only his own reputation, but in some degree that of his friends who patronized his subscription, began to be frighted at his own undertaking; and finding himself at first embarrassed with difficulties, which retarded and oppressed him, he was for a time timorous and uneasy, had his nights disturbed by dreams of long journeys through unknown ways, and wished, as he said, "that somebody would hang him."*

This misery, however, was not of long continuance; he grew by degrees more acquainted with Homer's images and expressions, and practice increased his facility of versification. In a short time he represents himself as despatching regularly fifty verses a day, which would show him by an easy computation the termination of his labour.

His own diffidence was not his only vexation. He that asks a subscription soon finds that he has enemies. All who do not encourage him defame him. He that wants money will rather be thought angry than poor; and he that wishes to save his money conceals his avarice by his malice. Addison had hinted his suspicion that Pope was too much a tory; and some of the tories suspected his principles because he had contributed to "The Guardian," which was carried on by Steele.

To those who censured his politics were added enemies yet more dangerous, who called in question his knowledge of Greek, and his qualifications for a translator of Homer. To these he made no public opposition; but in one of his letters escapes from them as well as he can. At an age like his, for he was not more than twenty-five, with an irregular education, and a course of life of which much seems to have passed in conversation, it is not very likely that he overflowed with Greek. But when he felt himself deficient he sought assistance; and what man of learning would refuse to help him? Minute inquiries into the force of words are less necessary in translating Homer than other poets, because his positions are general, and his representations natural, with very little dependence on local or temporary customs, on those changeable scenes of artificial life, which, by mingling originally with accidental notions, and crowding the mind with images which time effaces, produces ambiguity in diction and obscurity in books. To this open display of unadulterated nature it must be ascribed, that Homer has fewer passages of doubtful meaning than any other poet either in the learned or in modern languages. I have read of a man, who being, by his ignorance of Greek, compelled to gratify his curiosity with the Latin printed on the opposite page, declared, that from the rude simplicity of the lines literally rendered, he formed nobler ideas of the Homeric majesty, than from the laboured elegance of polished versions.

Those literal translations were always at hand, and from them he could easily obtain his author's sense with sufficient certainty; and among the readers of Homer the number is very small of those who find much in the Greek more than in the Latin, except the music of the numbers.

If more help was wanting, he had the poetical translation of Eobanus Hessus, an unwearied writer of Latin verses; he had the French Homers of La Valterie and Dacier, and the English of Chapman, Hobbes, and Ogilby. With Chapman, whose work, though now totally neglected, seems to have been popular almost to the end of the last century, he had very frequent consultations, and perhaps never translated any passage till he had read his version, which indeed he has been sometimes suspected of using instead of the original.

Notes were likewise to be provided, for the six volumes would have been very little more than six pamphlets without them. What the mere perusal of the text could suggest, Pope wanted no assistance to collect or methodize; but more was necessary; many pages were to be filled, and learning must supply materials to wit and judgment. Something might be gathered from Dacier; but no man loves to be indebted to his contemporaries, and Dacier was accessible to common readers. Eustathius was therefore necessarily consulted. To read Eustathius, of whose work there was then no Latin version, I suspect Pope, if he had been willing, not to have been able; some other was therefore to be found, who had leisure as well as abilities; and he was doubtless most readily employed who would do much work for little money.

The history of the notes has never been traced. Broome, in his preface to his poems, declares

* Spence.

himself the commentator "in part upon the Iliad;" and it appears from Fenton's letter, preserved in the Museum, that Broome was at first engaged in consulting Eustathius, but that after a time, whatever was the reason, he desisted; another man, of Cambridge, was then employed, who soon grew weary of the work; and a third, that was recommended by Thirlby, is now discovered to have been Jortin, a man since well known to the learned world, who complained that Pope, having accepted and approved his performance, never testified any curiosity to see him, and who professed to have forgotten the terms on which he worked. The terms which Fenton uses are very mercantile: "I think at first sight that his performance is very commendable, and have sent word for him to finish the 17th book, and to send it with his demands for his trouble. I have here enclosed the specimen; if the rest come before the return, I will keep them till I receive your order."

Broome then offered his service a second time, which was probably accepted, as they had afterwards a closer correspondence. Parnell contributed the life of Homer, which Pope found so harsh, that he took great pains in correcting it; and by his own diligence, with such help as kindness or money could procure him, in somewhat more than five years he completed his version of the "Iliad," with the notes. He began it in 1712, his twenty-fifth year, and concluded it in 1718, his thirtieth year.

When we find him translating fifty lines a day, it is natural to suppose that he would have brought his work to a more speedy conclusion. The "Iliad," containing less than sixteen thousand verses, might have been despatched in less than three hundred and twenty days, by fifty verses in a day. The notes, compiled with the assistance of his mercenaries, could not be supposed to require more time than the text.

According to this calculation, the progress of Pope may seem to have been slow; but the distance is commonly very great between actual performances and speculative possibility. It is natural to suppose, that as much as has been done to-day may be done to-morrow; but on the morrow, some difficulty emerges, or some external impediment obstructs. Indolence, interruption, business, and pleasure, all take their turns of retardation; and every long work is lengthened by a thousand causes that can, and ten thousand that cannot, be recounted. Perhaps no extensive and multifarious performance was ever effected within the term originally fixed in the undertaker's mind. He that runs against time has an antagonist not subject to casualties.

The encouragement given to this translation, though report seems to have overrated it, was such as the world has not often seen. The subscribers were five hundred and seventy-five. The copies for which subscriptions were given were six hundred and fifty-four; and only six hundred and sixty were printed. For these copies Pope had nothing to pay; he therefore received, including the two hundred pounds a volume, five thousand three hundred and twenty pounds four shillings without deduction, as the books were supplied by Lintot.

By the success of his subscription Pope was relieved from those pecuniary distresses with which, notwithstanding his popularity, he had hitherto struggled. Lord Oxford had often lamented his disqualification for public employment, but never proposed a pension. While the translation of "Homer" was in its progress, Mr. Craggs, then secretary of state, offered to procure him a pension, which, at least during his ministry, might be enjoyed with secrecy. This was not accepted by Pope, who told him, however, that if he should be pressed with want of money, he would send to him for occasional supplies. Craggs was not long in power, and was never solicited for money by Pope, who disdained to beg what he did not want.

With the product of this subscription, which he had too much discretion to squander, he secured his future life from want, by considerable annuities. The estate of the Duke of Buckingham was found to have been charged with five hundred pounds a year, payable to Pope, which doubtless his translation enabled him to purchase.

It cannot be unwelcome to literary curiosity that I deduce thus minutely the history of the English "Iliad." It is certainly the noblest version of poetry which the world has ever seen; and its publication must therefore be considered as one of the great events in the annals of learning.

To those who have skill to estimate the excellence and difficulty of this great work, it must be very desirable to know how it was performed, and by what gradations it advanced to correctness. Of such an intellectual process the knowledge has very rarely been attainable; but happily there remains the original copy of the "Iliad," which being obtained by Bolingbroke as a curiosity, descended from him to Mallet, and is now, by the solicitation of the late Dr. Maty, reposited in the Museum.

Between this manuscript, which is written upon accidental fragments of paper, and the printed edition, there must have been an intermediate copy, that was perhaps destroyed as it returned from the press.

From the first copy I have procured a few transcripts, and shall exhibit first the printed lines, distinguished by inverted commas; then those of the manuscripts, with all their variations. Those words which are given in *italics*

are cancelled in the copy, and the words placed under them adopted in their stead.

The beginning of the first book stands thus:

" The wrath of Peleus' son, the direful spring
Of all the Grecian woes, O Goddess, sing,
That wrath which hurl'd to Pluto's gloomy reign
The souls of mighty chiefs untimely slain."

The stern Pelides' *rage*, O Goddess, sing,
wrath
Of all the woes *of Greece* the fatal spring,
Grecian
That strew'd with *warriors* dead the Phrygian
plain, heroes
And *peopled the dark hell with heroes* slain;
fill'd the shady hell with chiefs untimely

" Whose limbs, unburied on the naked shore,
Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore,
Since great Achilles and Atrides strove:
Such was the sovereign doom, and such the will of
Jove."

Whose limbs, unburied on the hostile shore,
Devouring dogs and greedy vultures tore,
Since first Atrides and Achilles strove:
Such was the sovereign doom, and such the will
of Jove.

" Declare, O Muse, in what ill-fated hour
Sprung the fierce strife, from what offended Power?
Latona's son a dire contagion spread,
And heap'd the camp with mountains of the dead;
The King of men his reverend priest defy'd,
And for the King's offence the people died."

Declare, O Goddess, what offended Power
Inflamed their *rage*, in that *ill-omen'd* hour;
anger fatal, hapless
Phœbus himself the *dire* debate procured,
fierce
To avenge the wrongs his injured priest endured;
For this the God a dire infection spread,
And heap'd the camp with millions of the dead;
The King of men the Sacred Sire defy'd,
And for the King's offence the people died.

" For Chryses sought with costly gifts to gain
His captive daughter from the Victor's chain;
Suppliant the venerable Father stands,
Apollo's awful ensigns grace his hands;
By these he begs, and, lowly bending down,
Extends the sceptre and the laurel crown."

For Chryses sought by *presents to regain*
costly gifts to gain
His captive daughter from the Victor's chain!
Suppliant the venerable Father stands,
Apollo's awful ensigns graced his hands.
By these he begs, and lowly bending down
The golden sceptre and the laurel crown,
Presents the sceptre
For these as ensigns of his God he bare
The God that sends his golden shafts afar
Then, low on earth, the venerable man,
Suppliant, before the brother kings began.

" He sued to all, but chief implored for grace
The brother kings of Atreus' royal race:
Ye kings and warriors, may your vows be crown'd,
And Troy's proud walls lie level with the ground;
May Jove restore you, when your toils are o'er,
Safe to the pleasures of your native shore."

To all he sued, but chief implored for grace
The brother Kings of Atreus' royal race:
Ye *sons of Atreus*, may your vows be crown'd,
kings and warriors
Your labours, by the Gods be all your labours
crown'd,
So may the Gods your arms with conquest bless,
And Troy's proud walls *lie* level with the ground;
Till laid
And crown your labours with deserved success;
May Jove restore you, when your toils are o'er,
Safe to the pleasures of your native shore.

" But, oh! relieve a wretched parent's pain,
And give Chryseis to these arms again;
If mercy fail, yet let my present move,
And dread avenging Phœbus, son of Jove."

But, oh! relieve a hapless parent's pain
And give my daughter to these arms again;
Receive my gifts; if mercy fails, yet let my present move
And fear *the God that deals his darts around.*
avenging Phœbus, son of Jove.

" The Greeks, in shouts, their joint assent declare,
The priest to reverence and release the fair.
Not so Atrides; he, with kingly pride,
Repulsed the sacred Sire, and thus reply'd."

He said, the Greeks their joint assent declare,
The father said, the generous Greeks relent,
To accept the ransom, and release the fair;
Revere the priest, and speak their joint assent;
Not so *the tyrant*, he, with kingly pride,
Atrides
Repulsed the sacred Sire, and thus replied.
[Not so the tyrant. DRYDEN.]

Of these lines, and of the whole first book, I am told that there was yet a former copy, more varied, and more deformed with interlineations.

The beginning of the second book varies very little from the printed page, and is therefore set down without a parallel; the few differences do not require to be elaborately displayed.

" Now pleasing sleep had seal'd each mortal eye;
Stretch'd in their tents the Grecian leaders lie;
The immortals slumber'd on their thrones above,
All but the ever-watchful eye of Jove.
To honour Thetis' son he bends his care,
And plunge the Greeks in all the woes of war.
Then bids an empty phantom rise to sight,
And thus *commands* the vision of the night:
directs
Fly hence delusive dream, and, light as air,
To Agamemnon's royal tent repair;
Bid him in arms draw forth the embattled train,
March all his legions to the dusty plain.
Now tell the King 'tis given him to destroy
Declare even now
The lofty *walls* of wide-extended Troy;
towers

For now no more the Gods with fate contend;
At Juno's suit the heavenly factions end.
Destruction *hovers* o'er yon devoted wall
hangs
And nodding Ilium waits the impending fall."

Invocation to the catalogue of ships.

" Say, Virgins, seated round the throne divine,
All-knowing Goddesses! immortal Nine!
Since Earth's wide regions, Heaven's unmeasured
height,
And Hell's abyss, hide nothing from your sight,
(We, wretched mortals! lost in doubts below,
But guess by rumour, and but boast we know)
Oh! say what heroes, fired by thirst of fame,
Or urged by wrongs, to Troy's destruction came!
To count them all demands a thousand tongues,
A throat of brass and adamantine lungs."

Now, Virgin Goddesses, immortal Nine!
That round Olympus' heavenly summit shine,
Who see through Heaven and Earth, and Hell
profound,
And all things know, and all things can resound!
Relate what armies sought the Trojan land,
What nations follow'd, and what chiefs com-
mand;
(For doubtful fame distracts mankind below,
And nothing can we tell and nothing know)
Without your aid, to count the unnumber'd train,
A thousand mouths, a thousand tongues, were
vain.

Book v. *v.* 1.

" But Pallas now Tydides' soul inspires,
Fills with her force, and warms with all her fires;
Above the Greeks his deathless fame to raise,
And crown her hero with distinguish'd praise.
High on his helm celestial lightnings play,
His beamy shield emits a living ray;
The unwearied blaze incessant streams supplies,
Like the red star that fires the autumnal skies."

But Pallas now Tydides' soul inspires,
Fills with her *rage*, and warms with all her fires;
force
O'er all the Greeks decrees his fame to raise,
Above the Greeks *her warrior's* fame to raise,
his deathless
And crown her hero with *immortal* praise:
distinguish'd
Bright from his beamy *crest* the lightnings play,
High on helm
From his broad buckler flash'd the living ray;
High on his helm celestial lightnings play,
His beamy shield emits a living ray;
The Goddess with her breath the flames supplies,
Bright as the star whose fires in Autumn rise;
Her breath divine thick streaming flames sup-
plies,
Bright as the star that fires the autumnal skies:
The unwearied blaze incessant streams supplies,
Like the red star that fires the autumnal skies:

" When first he rears his radiant orb to sight,
And bath'd in ocean, shoots a keener light.
Such glories Pallas on the chief bestow'd,
Such from his arms the fierce effulgence flow'd;
Onward she drives him, furious to engage,
Where the fight burns, and where the thickest
rage."

When fresh he rears his radiant orb to sight,
And gilds old Ocean with a blaze of light.
Bright as the star that fires the autumnal skies,
Fresh from the deep, and gilds the seas and
skies;
Such glories Pallas on her chief bestow'd,
Such sparkling rays from his bright armour
flow'd:
Such from his arms the fierce effulgence flow'd;
Onward she drives him *headlong* to engage,
furious
Where the *war bleeds*, and where the *fiercest*
rage. fight burns thickest

" The sons of Dares first the combat sought,
A wealthy priest, but rich without a fault;
In Vulcan's fane the father's days were led,
The sons to toils of glorious battle bred;"

There lived a Trojan—Dares was his name,
The priest of Vulcan, rich, yet void of blame;
The sons of Dares first the combat sought,
A wealthy priest, but rich without a fault.

Conclusion of Book viii. *v.* 687.

" As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night,
O'er Heaven's clear azure spreads her sacred light,
When not a breath disturbs the deep serene,
And not a cloud o'ercasts the solemn scene;
Around her throne the vivid planets roll,
And stars unnumber'd gild the glowing pole;
O'er the dark trees a yellower verdure shed,
And tip with silver every mountain's head;
Then shine the vales, the rocks in prospect rise,
A flood of glory bursts from all the skies;
The conscious swains, rejoicing in the sight,
Eye the blue vault, and bless the useful light.
So many flames before proud Ilion blaze,
And lighten glimmering Xanthus with their rays;
The long reflections of the distant fires
Gleam on the walls, and tremble on the spires.
A thousand piles the dusky horrors gild,
And shoot a shady lustre o'er the field.
Full fifty guards each flaming pile attend,
Whose umber'd arms by fits thick flashes send;
Loud neigh the coursers o'er the heaps of corn,
And ardent warriors wait the rising morn."

As when in stillness of the silent night,
As when the moon in all her lustre bright;
As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night,
O'er Heaven's *clear* azure *sheds* her *silver* light;
pure spreads sacred
As still in air the trembling lustre stood,
And o'er its golden border shoots a flood;
When *no loose gale* disturbs the deep serene,
not a breath
And *no dim* cloud o'ercasts the solemn scene;
not a
Around her silver throne the planets glow
And stars unnumber'd trembling beams bestow:
Around her throne the vivid planets roll,
And stars unnumber'd gild the glowing pole;

Clear gleams of light o'er the dark trees are seen,
o'er the dark trees a yellow sheds,
O'er the dark trees a yellower *green* they shed,
gleam
verdure
And tip with silver all the *mountain* heads.
forest
And tip with silver every mountain's head.
The valleys open, and the forests rise,
The vales appear, the rocks in prospect rise,
Then shine the vales, the rocks in prospect rise.
All nature stands reveal'd before our eyes;
A flood of glory bursts from all the skies.
The conscious shepherd, joyful at the sight,
Eyes the blue vault, and numbers every light.
The conscious *swains, rejoicing at the sight,*
shepherds, gazing with delight
Eye the blue vault, and bless the *vivid* light,
glorious
useful
So many flames before *the navy* blaze,
proud Ilion
And lighten glimmering Xanthus with their rays;
Wide o'er the fields to Troy extend the gleams,
And tip the distant spires with fainter beams;
The long reflections of the distant fires
Gild the high walls, and tremble on the spires;
Gleam on the walls, and tremble on the spires;
A thousand fires, at distant stations, bright,
Gild the dark prospect, and dispel the night.

Of these specimens every man who has cultivated poetry, or who delights to trace the mind from the rudeness of its first conceptions to the elegance of its last, will naturally desire a greater number; but most other readers are already tired, and I am not writing only to poets and philosophers.

The "Iliad" was published volume by volume, as the translation proceeded: the four first books appeared in 1715. The expectation of this work was undoubtedly high, and every man who had connected his name with criticism or poetry was desirous of such intelligence as might enable him to talk upon the popular topic. Halifax, who, by having been first a poet and then a patron of poetry, had acquired the right of being a judge, was willing to hear some books while they were yet unpublished. Of this rehearsal Pope afterwards gave the following account:*

"The famous Lord Halifax was rather a pretender to taste than really possessed of it. When I had finished the two or three first books of my translation of the 'Iliad,' that lord desired to have the pleasure of hearing them read at his house—Addison, Congreve, and Garth, were there at the reading. In four or five places, Lord Halifax stopped me very civilly, and with a speech each time of much the same kind, 'I beg your pardon, Mr. Pope: but there is something in that passage that does not quite please me. Be so good as to mark the place, and consider it a little at your leisure. I am sure you can give it a little turn.' I returned from Lord Halifax's with Dr. Garth, in his chariot; and, as we were going along, was saying to the doctor, that my lord had laid me under a great deal of difficulty by such loose and general observations; that I had been thinking over the passages almost ever since, and could not guess at what it was that offended his lordship in either of them. Garth laughed heartily at my embarrassment; said, I had not been long enough acquainted with Lord Halifax to know his way yet; that I need not puzzle myself about looking those places over and over when I got home. 'All you need do (says he) is to leave them just as they are; call on Lord Halifax two or three months hence, thank him for his kind observations on those passages, and then read them to him as altered. I have known him much longer than you have, and will be answerable for the event.' I followed his advice; waited on Lord Halifax some time after; said, I hoped he would find his objections to those passages removed; read them to him exactly as they were at first; and his lordship was extremely pleased with them, and cried out, 'Ay, now they are perfectly right; nothing can be better.'"

It is seldom that the great or the wise suspect that they are despised or cheated. Halifax, thinking this a lucky opportunity of securing immortality, made some advances of favour and some overtures of advantage to Pope, which he seems to have received with sullen coldness. All our knowledge of this transaction is derived from a single letter (Dec. 1, 1714), in which Pope says, "I am obliged to you, both for the favours you have done me, and those you intend me. I distrust neither your will nor your memory, when it is to do good; and if I ever become troublesome or solicitous, it must not be out of expectation, but out of gratitude. Your lordship may cause me to live agreeably in the town, or contentedly in the country, which is really all the difference I set between an easy fortune and a small one. It is indeed a high strain of generosity in you to think of making me easy all my life, only because I have been so happy as to divert you some few hours; but, if I may have leave to add, it is because you think me no enemy to my native country, there will appear a better reason; for I must of consequence be very much (as I sincerely am) yours, &c."

These voluntary offers, and this faint acceptance, ended without effect. The patron was not accustomed to such frigid gratitude; and the poet fed his own pride with the dignity of independence. They probably were suspicious of each other. Pope would not dedicate till he saw at what rate his praise was valued; he would be 'troublesome out of gratitude, not

* Spence.

expectation." Halifax thought himself entitled to confidence; and would give nothing unless he knew what he should receive. Their commerce had its beginning in hope of praise on one side, and of money on the other, and ended because Pope was less eager of money than Halifax of praise. It is not likely that Halifax had any personal benevolence to Pope; it is evident that Pope looked on Halifax with scorn and hatred.

The reputation of this great work failed in gaining him a patron, but it deprived him of a friend. Addison and he were now at the head of poetry and criticism; and both in such a state of elevation, that, like the two rivals in the Roman state, one could no longer bear an equal, nor the other a superior. Of the gradual abatement of kindness between friends, the beginning is often scarcely discernible to themselves, and the process is continued by petty provocations and incivilities, sometimes peevishly returned and sometimes contemptuously neglected, which would escape all attention but that of pride, and drop from any memory but that of resentment. That the quarrel of these two wits should be minutely deduced, is not to be expected from a writer, to whom, as Homer says, "nothing but rumour has reached, and has no personal knowledge."

Pope doubtless approached Addison when the reputation of their wit first brought them together, with the respect due to a man whose abilities were acknowledged, and who, having attained that eminence to which he was himself aspiring, had in his hands the distribution of literary fame. He paid court with sufficient diligence by his prologue to "Cato," by his abuse of Dennis, and with praise yet more direct, by his poem on the "Dialogues on Medals," of which the immediate publication was then intended. In all this there was no hypocrisy; for he confessed that he found in Addison something more pleasing than in any other man

It may be supposed, that as Pope saw himself favoured by the world, and more frequently compared his own powers with those of others, his confidence increased and his submission lessened; and that Addison felt no delight from the advances of a young wit, who might soon contend with him for the highest place. Every great man, of whatever kind be his greatness, has among his friends those who officiously or insiduously quicken his attention to offences, heighten his disgust, and stimulate his resentment. Of such adherents Addison doubtless had many; and Pope was now too high to be without them.

From the emission and reception of the proposals for the "Iliad," the kindness of Addison seems to have abated. Jervas the painter once pleased himself (Aug. 20, 1714) with imagining that he had re-established their friendship; and wrote to Pope that Addison once suspected him of too close a confederacy with Swift, but was now satisfied with his conduct. To this Pope answered, a week after, that his engagements to Swift were such as his services in regard to the subscription demanded, and that the tories never put him under the necessity of asking leave to be grateful. "But," says he, "as Mr. Addison must be the judge in what regards himself, and seems to have no very just one in regard to me, so I must own to you I expect nothing but civility from him." In the same letter he mentions Philips, as having been busy to kindle animosity between them; but in a letter to Addison he expresses some consciousness of behaviour inattentively deficient in respect.

Of Swift's industry in promoting the subscription, there remains the testimony of Kennet, no friend to either him or Pope.

"Nov. 2, 1713, Dr. Swift came into the coffee-house, and had a bow from every body but me, who, I confess, could not but despise him. When I came to the anti-chamber to wait, before prayers, Dr. Swift was the principal man of talk and business, and acted as master of requests.—Then he instructed a young nobleman that the *best poet in England* was Mr. Pope (a papist), who had begun a translation of Homer into English verse, for which *he must have them all subscribe;* for, says he, the author *shall not* begin to print till *I have* a thousand guineas for him."

About this time it is likely that Steele, who was, with all his political fury, good natured and officious, procured an interview between these angry rivals, which ended in aggravated malevolence. On this occasion, if the reports be true, Pope made his complaint with frankness and spirit, as a man undeservedly neglected or opposed; and Addison affected a contemptuous unconcern, and, in a calm even voice, reproached Pope with his vanity, and telling him of the improvements which his early works had received from his own remarks and those of Steele, said, that he, being now engaged in public business, had no longer any care for his poetical reputation, nor had any other desire with regard to Pope, than that he should not, by too much arrogance, alienate the public.

To this Pope is said to have replied with great keenness and severity, upbraiding Addison with perpetual dependence, and with the abuse of those qualifications which he had obtained at the public cost, and charging him with mean endeavours to obstruct the progress of rising merit. The contest rose so high that they parted at last without any interchange of civility.

The first volume of Homer was (1715) in time published: and a rival version of the first

"Iliad," for rivals the time of their appearance inevitably made them, was immediately printed, with the name of Tickell. It was soon perceived that among the followers of Addison, Tickell had the preference, and the critics and poets divided into factions. "I," says Pope, "have the town, that is, the mob, on my side; but it is not uncommon for the smaller party to supply by industry what it wants in numbers.—I appeal to the people as my rightful judges, and, while they are not inclined to condemn me, shall not fear the high-flyers at Button's." This opposition he immediately imputed to Addison, and complained of it in terms sufficiently resentful to Craggs, their common friend.

When Addison's opinion was asked, he declared the versions to be both good, but Tickell's the best that had ever been written; and sometimes said that they were both good, but that Tickell had more of Homer.

Pope was now sufficiently irritated; his reputation and his interest were at hazard. He once intended to print together the four versions of Dryden, Maynwaring, Pope, and Tickell, that they might be readily compared, and fairly estimated. This design seems to have been defeated by the refusal of Tonson, who was the proprietor of the other three versions.

Pope intended, at another time, a rigorous criticism of Tickell's translation, and had marked a copy, which I have seen, in all places that appeared defective. But, while he was thus meditating defence or revenge, his adversary sunk before him without a blow; the voice of the public was not long divided, and the preference was universally given to Pope's performance.

He was convinced, by adding one circumstance to another, that the other translation was the work of Addison himself; but if he knew it in Addison's life-time, it does not appear that he told it. He left his illustrious antagonist to be punished by what has been considered as the most painful of all reflections, the remembrance of a crime perpetrated in vain.

The other circumstances of their quarrel were thus related by Pope,*

"Philips seemed to have been encouraged to abuse me in coffee-houses and conversations; and Gildon wrote a thing about Wycherly, in which he had abused both me and my relations very grossly. Lord Warwick himself told me one day, that it was in vain for me to endeavour to be well with Mr. Addison; that his jealous temper would never admit of a settled friendship between us; and, to convince me of what he had said, assured me that Addison had encouraged Gildon to publish those scandals, and had given him ten guineas after they were published. The next day while I was heated with what I had heard, I wrote a letter to Mr. Addison, to let him know that I was not unacquainted with this behaviour of his; that, if I was to speak severely of him in return for it, it should be not in such a dirty way; that I should rather tell him, himself, fairly of his faults, and allow his good qualities; and that it should be something in the following manner; I then adjoined the first sketch of what has since been called my satire on Addison. Mr. Addison used me very civilly ever after."*

The verses on Addison, when they were sent to Atterbury, were considered by him as the most excellent of Pope's performances; and the writer was advised, since he knew where his strength lay, not to suffer it to remain unemployed.

This year (1715) being, by the subscription, enabled to live more by choice, having persuaded his father to sell their estate at Binfield, he purchased, I think only for his life, that house at Twickenham, to which his residence afterwards procured so much celebration, and removed thither with his father and mother.

Here he planted the vines and the quincunx which his verses mention; and being under the necessity of making a subterraneous passage to a garden on the other side of the road, he adorned it with fossile bodies, and dignified it with the title of a grotto, a place of silence and retreat, from which he endeavoured to persuade his friends and himself that cares and passions could be excluded.

A grotto is not often the wish or pleasure of an Englishman, who has more frequent need to solicit than exclude the sun; but Pope's excavation was requisite as an entrance to his garden, and as some men try to be proud of their defects, he extracted an ornament from an inconvenience, and vanity produced a grotto where necessity enforced a passage. It may be frequently remarked of the studious and speculative, that they are proud of trifles, and that their amusements seem frivolous and childish; whether it be that men conscious of great reputation think themselves above the reach of censure, and safe in the admission of negligent indulgences, or that mankind expect from elevated genius a uniformity of greatness, and watch its degradation with malicious wonder; like him who, having followed with his eye an eagle into the clouds, should lament that she ever descended to a perch.

While the volumes of his Homer were annually published, he collected his former works

* Spence.

* See however the Life of Addison in the "Biographia Britannica," last edition.—R.

(1717) into one quarto volume, to which he prefixed a preface, written with great sprightliness and elegance, which was afterwards reprinted, with some passages subjoined that he at first omitted; other marginal additions of the same kind he made in the later editions of his poems. Waller remarks, that poets lose half their praise, because the reader knows not what they have blotted. Pope's voracity of fame taught him the art of obtaining the accumulated honour, both of what he had published and of what he had suppressed.

In this year his father died suddenly, in his seventy-fifth year, having passed twenty-nine years in privacy. He is not known but by the character which his son has given him. If the money with which he retired was all gotten by himself, he had traded very successfully in times when sudden riches were rarely attainable.

The publication of the "Iliad" was at last completed in 1720. The splendour and success of this work raised Pope many enemies, that endeavoured to depreciate his abilities. Burnet, who was afterwards a judge of no mean reputation, censured him in a piece called "Homerides," before it was published. Ducket likewise endeavoured to make him ridiculous. Dennis was the perpetual persecutor of all his studies. But, whoever his critics were, their writings are lost; and the names which are preserved are preserved in the "Dunciad."

In this disastrous year (1720) of national infatuation, when more riches than Peru can boast were expected from the South Sea, when the contagion of avarice tainted every mind, and even poets panted after wealth, Pope was seized with the universal passion, and ventured some of his money. The stock rose in its price; and for awhile he thought himself the lord of thousands. But this dream of happiness did not last long; and he seems to have waked soon enough to get clear with the loss of what he once thought himself to have won, and perhaps not wholly of that.

Next year he published some select poems of his friend Dr. Parnell, with a very elegant dedication to the Earl of Oxford; who, after all his struggles and dangers, then lived in retirement, still under the frown of a victorious faction, who could take no pleasure in hearing his praise.

He gave the same year (1721) an edition of Shakspeare. His name was now of so much authority, that Tonson thought himself entitled, by annexing it, to demand a subscription of six guineas for Shakspeare's plays in six quarto volumes: nor did his expectation much deceive him; for, of seven hundred and fifty which he printed, he dispersed a great number at the price proposed. The reputation of that edition indeed sunk afterwards so low, that one hundred and forty copies were sold at sixteen shillings each.

On this undertaking, to which Pope was induced by a reward of two hundred and seventeen pounds twelve shillings, he seems never to have reflected afterwards without vexation; for Theobald, a man of heavy diligence, with very slender powers, first, in a book called "Shakspeare Restored," and then in a formal edition, detected his deficiences with all the insolence of victory; and, as he was now high enough to be feared and hated, Theobald had from others all the help that could be supplied by the desire of humbling a haughty character.

From this time Pope became an enemy to editors, collators, commentators, and verbal critics; and hoped to persuade the world, that he miscarried in this undertaking only by having a mind too great for such minute employment.

Pope in his edition undoubtedly did many things wrong, and left many things undone; but let him not be defrauded of his due praise. He was the first that knew, at least the first that told, by what helps the text might be improved. If he inspected the early editions negligently, he taught others to be more accurate. In his preface he expanded with great skill and elegance the character which had been given of Shakspeare by Dryden; and he drew the public attention upon his works, which, though often mentioned, had been little read.

Soon after the appearance of the "Iliad," resolving not to let the general kindness cool, he published proposals for a translation of the "Odyssey," in five volumes, for five guineas. He was willing, however, now to have associates in his labour, being either weary with toiling upon another's thoughts, or having heard, as Ruffhead relates, that Fenton and Broome had already begun the work, and liking better to have them confederates than rivals.

In the patent, instead of saying that he had "translated" the "Odyssey," as he had said of the "Iliad," he says, that he had "undertaken" a translation; and in the proposals the subscription is said to be not solely for his own use, but for that of "two of his friends who have assisted him in this work."

In 1723, while he was engaged in this new version, he appeared before the Lords at the memorable trial of Bishop Atterbury, with whom he had lived in great familiarity and frequent correspondence. Atterbury had honestly recommended to him the study of the popish controversy, in hope of his conversion; to which Pope answered in a manner that cannot much recommend his principles or his judgment. In questions and projects of learning they agreed better. He was called at the trial to give an account of Atterbury's domestic life and private employment, that it might appear

how little time he had left for plots. Pope had but few words to utter, and in those few he made several blunders.

His letters to Atterbury express the utmost esteem, tenderness, and gratitude; "perhaps," says he, "it is not only in this world that I may have cause to remember the Bishop of Rochester." At their last interview in the Tower, Atterbury presented him with a Bible.*

Of the "Odyssey" Pope translated only twelve books; the rest were the work of Broome and Fenton; the notes were written wholly by Broome, who was not over-liberally rewarded. The public was carefully kept ignorant of the several shares; and an account was subjoined at the conclusion which is now known not to be true.

The first copy of Pope's books, with those of Fenton, are to be seen in the Museum. The parts of Pope are less interlined than the "Iliad," and the latter books of the "Iliad" less than the former. He grew dexterous by practice, and every sheet enabled him to write the next with more facility. The books of Fenton have very few alterations by the hand of Pope. Those of Broome have not been found; but Pope complained, as it is reported, that he had much trouble in correcting them.

His contract with Lintot was the same as for the "Iliad," except that only one hundred pounds were to be paid him for each volume. The number of subscribers were five hundred and seventy-four, and of copies eight hundred and nineteen; so that his profit, when he had paid his assistants, was still very considerable. The work was finished in 1725; and from that time he resolved to make no more translations.

The sale did not answer Lintot's expectation; and he then pretended to discover something of fraud in Pope, and commenced or threatened a suit in Chancery.

On the English "Odyssey" a criticism was published by Spence, at that time prelector of poetry at Oxford; a man whose learning was not very great, and whose mind was not very powerful. His criticism, however, was commonly just. What he thought, he thought rightly; and his remarks were recommended by his coolness and candour. In him Pope had the first experience of a critic without malevolence, who thought it as much his duty to display beauties as expose faults; who censured with respect and praised with alacrity.

With this criticism Pope was so little offended, that he sought the acquaintance of the writer, who lived with him from that time in great familiarity, attended him in his last hours, and compiled memorials of his conversation. The regard of Pope recommended him to the great and powerful; and he obtained very valuable preferments in the church.

Not long after, Pope was returning home from a visit in a friend's coach, which, in passing a bridge, was overturned into the water; the windows were closed, and, being unable to force them open, he was in danger of immediate death, when the postilion snatched him out by breaking the glass, of which the fragments cut two of his fingers in such a manner that he lost their use.

Voltaire, who was then in England, sent him a letter of consolation. He had been entertained by Pope at his table, where he talked with so much grossness, that Mrs. Pope was driven from the room. Pope discovered by a trick, that he was a spy for the court, and never considered him as a man worthy of confidence.

He soon afterwards (1727) joined with Swift, who was then in England, to publish three volumes of Miscellanies, in which among other things he inserted the "Memoirs of a Parish Clerk," in ridicule of Burnet's importance in his own History, and a "Debate upon Black and White Horses," written in all the formalities of a legal process, by the assistance, as is said, of Mr. Fortescue, afterwards Master of the Rolls. Before these Miscellanies is a preface signed by Swift and Pope, but apparently written by Pope; in which he makes a ridiculous and romantic complaint of the robberies committed upon authors by the clandestine seizure and sale of their papers. He tells, in tragic strains, how "the cabinets of the sick, and the closets of the dead, have been broken open and ransacked;" as if those violences were often committed for papers of uncertain and accidental value which are rarely provoked by real treasures; as if epigrams and essays were in danger where gold and diamonds are safe. A cat hunted for his musk is, according to Pope's account, but the emblem of a wit winded by booksellers.

His complaint, however, received some attestation; for the same year the Letters written by him to Mr. Cromwell in his youth were sold by Mrs. Thomas, to Curll, who printed them.

In these Miscellanies was first published the "Art of Sinking in Poetry," which, by such a train of consequences as usually passes in literary quarrels, gave in a short time, according to Pope's account, occasion to the "Dunciad."

In the following year (1728) he began to put Atterbury's advice in practice: and showed his satirical powers by publishing the "Dunciad," one of his greatest and most elaborate performances, in which he endeavoured to sink into

* The late Mr. Graves of Claverton informs us that this Bible was afterwards used in the chapel of Prior-park. Dr. Warburton probably presented it to Mr. Allen.—C.

contempt all the writers by whom he had been attacked, and some others whom he thought unable to defend themselves.

At the head of the Dunces he placed poor Theobald, whom he accused of ingratitude: but whose real crime was supposed to be that of having revised "Shakspeare" more happily than himself. This satire had the effect which he intended, by blasting the characters which it touched. Ralph, who, unnecessarily interposing in the quarrel, got a place in a subsequent edition, complained that for a time he was in danger of starving, as the booksellers had no longer any confidence in his capacity.

The prevalence of this poem was gradual and slow; the plan, if not wholly new, was little understood by common readers. Many of the allusions required illustration; the names were often expressed only by the initial and final letters, and, if they had been printed at length, were such as few had known or recollected. The subject itself had nothing generally interesting, for whom did it concern to know that one or another scribbler was a dunce? If, therefore, it had been possible for those who were attacked to conceal their pain and their resentment, the "Dunciad" might have made its way very slowly in the world.

This, however was not to be expected: every man is of importance to himself, and therefore, in his own opinion, to others; and, supposing the world already acquainted with all his pleasures and his pains, is perhaps the first to publish injuries or misfortunes, which had never been known unless related by himself, and at which those that hear them will only laugh; for no man sympathizes with the sorrows of vanity.

The history of the "Dunciad" is very minutely related by Pope himself in a dedication which he wrote to Lord Middlesex, in the name of Savage.

"I will relate the war of the 'Dunces' (for so it has been commonly called) which began in the year 1727, and ended in 1730.

"When Dr. Swift and Mr. Pope thought it proper, for reasons specified in the preface to their Miscellanies, to publish such little pieces of theirs as had casually got abroad, there was added to them the 'Treatise of the Bathos,' or the 'Art of Sinking in Poetry.' It happened that, in one chapter of this piece, the several species of bad poets were ranged in classes, to which were prefixed almost all the letters of the alphabet (the greatest part of them at random); but such was the number of poets eminent in that art, that some one or other took every letter to himself; all fell into so violent a fury that, for half a year or more, the common newspapers (in most of which they had some property, as being hired writers) were filled with the most abusive falsehoods and scurrilities they could possibly devise; a liberty no ways to be wondered at in those people, and in those papers, that, for many years during the uncontrolled license of the press, had asperse almost all the great characters of the age; and this with impunity, their own persons and names being utterly secret and obscure.

"This gave Mr. Pope the thought, that he had now some opportunity of doing good, by detecting and dragging into light these common enemies of mankind; since, to invalidate this universal slander, it sufficed to show what contemptible men were the authors of it. He was not without hopes, that by manifesting the dulness of those who had only malice to recommend them, either the booksellers would no find their account in employing them, or the men themselves, when discovered, want courage to proceed in so unlawful an occupation. This it was that gave birth to the 'Dunciad;' and he thought it a happiness, that, by the late flood of slander on himself, he had acquired such a peculiar right over their names as was necessary to this design.

"On the 12th of March, 1729, at St. James's that poem was presented to the King and Queen (who had before been pleased to read it) by the right honourable Sir Robert Walpole: and some days after, the whole impression was taken and dispersed by several noblemen and persons of the first distinction.

"It is certainly a true observation, that no people are so impatient of censure as those who are the greatest slanderers, which was wonderfully exemplified on the occasion. On the day the book was first vended, a crowd of authors besieged the shop; entreaties, advices, threats of law and battery, nay, cries of treason, were all employed to hinder the coming out of the 'Dunciad;' on the other side the booksellers and hawkers made as great efforts to procure it. What could a few poor authors do against so great a majority as the public? There was no stopping a current with a finger; so out it came.

"Many ludicrous circumstances attended it. The 'Dunces' (for by this name they were called) held weekly clubs, to consult of hostilities against the author: one wrote a letter to a great minister, assuring him Mr. Pope was the greatest enemy the government had; another bought his image in clay, to execute him in effigy; with which sad sort of satisfaction the gentlemen were a little comforted.

"Some false editions of the book having an owl in their frontispiece, the true one to distinguish, fixed in his stead an ass laden with authors. Then another surreptitious one being printed with the same ass, the new edition in octavo returned for distinction to the owl again. Hence arose a great contest of booksellers against booksellers, and advertisements against

advertisements; some recommending the edition of the owl, and others the edition of the ass; by which names they came to be distinguished, to the great honour also of the gentlemen of the 'Dunciad.'"

Pope appears by this narrative to have contemplated his victory over the "Dunces" with great exultation; and such was his delight in the tumult which he had raised, that for awhile his natural sensibility was suspended, and he read reproaches and invectives without emotion, considering them only as the necessary effects of that pain which he rejoiced in having given.

It cannot however be concealed, that by his own confession, he was the aggressor, for nobody believes that the letters in the "Bathos" were placed at random; and it may be discovered that, when he thinks himself concealed, he indulges the common vanity of common men, and triumphs in those distinctions which he had affected to despise. He is proud that his book was presented to the King and Queen by the right honourable Sir Robert Walpole; he is proud that they had read it before; he is proud that the edition was taken off by the nobility and persons of the first distinction.

The edition of which he speaks was, I believe, that which, by telling in the text the names, and in the notes the characters, of those whom he had satirized, was made intelligible and diverting. The critics had now declared their approbation of the plan, and the common reader began to like it without fear; those who were strangers to petty literature, and therefore unable to decipher initials and blanks, had now names and persons brought within their view, and delighted in the visible effect of those shafts of malice which they had hitherto contemplated as shot into the air.

Dennis, upon the fresh provocation now given him, renewed the enmity which had for a time been appeased by mutual civilities; and published remarks which he had till then suppressed, upon "The Rape of the Lock." Many more grumbled in secret, or vented their resentment in the newspapers by epigrams or invectives.

Ducket, indeed, being mentioned as loving Burnet with "pious passion," pretended that his moral character was injured, and for some time declared his resolution to take vengeance with a cudgel. But Pope appeased him, by changing "pious passion" to "cordial friendship;" and by a note, in which he vehemently disclaims the malignity of meaning imputed to the first expression.

Aaron Hill, who was represented as diving for the prize, expostulated with Pope in a manner so much superior to all mean solicitation, that Pope was reduced to sneak and shuffle, sometimes to deny, and sometimes to apologize: he first endeavours to wound, and is then afraid to own that he meant a blow.

The "Dunciad," in the complete edition, is addressed to Dr. Swift: of the notes, part were written by Dr. Arbuthnot; and an apologetical letter was prefixed, signed by Cleland, but supposed to have been written by Pope.

After this general war upon dulness, he seems to have indulged himself awhile in tranquillity; but his subsequent productions prove that he was not idle. He published (1731) a poem on "Taste," in which he very particularly and severely criticises the house, the furniture, the gardens, and the entertainments of Timon, a man of great wealth and little taste. By Timon he was universally supposed, and by the Earl of Burlington, to whom the poem is addressed, was privately said, to mean the Duke of Chandos; a man perhaps too much delighted with pomp and show, but of a temper kind and beneficent, and who had consequently the voice of the public in his favour.

A violent outcry was therefore raised against the ingratitude and treachery of Pope, who was said to have been indebted to the patronage of Chandos for a present of a thousand pounds, and who gained the opportunity of insulting him by the kindness of his invitation.

The receipt of the thousand pounds Pope publicly denied; but, from the reproach which the attack on a character so amiable brought upon him, he tried all means of escaping. The name of Cleland was again employed in an apology, by which no man was satisfied; and he was at last reduced to shelter his temerity behind dissimulation, and endeavour to make that be disbelieved which he never had confidence openly to deny. He wrote an exculpatory letter to the duke, which was answered with great magnanimity, as by a man who accepted his excuse without believing his professions. He said, that to have ridiculed his taste, or his buildings, had been an indifferent action in another man; but that in Pope, after the reciprocal kindness that had been exchanged between them, it had been less easily excused.

Pope, in one of his letters, complaining of the treatment which his poem had found, "owns that such critics can intimidate him, nay almost persuade him to write no more, which is a compliment this age deserves." The man who threatens the world is always ridiculous; for the world can easily go on without him, and in a short time will cease to miss him. I have heard of an idiot, who used to revenge his vexations by lying all night upon the bridge. "There is nothing," says Juvenal, "that a man will not believe in his own favour." Pope had been flattered till he thought himself one of the moving powers in the system of life. When he talked of laying down his pen, those

who sat round him entreated and implored; and self-love did not suffer him to suspect that they went away and laughed.

The following year deprived him of Gay, a man whom he had known early, and whom he seemed to love with more tenderness than any other of his literary friends. Pope was now forty-four years old; an age at which the mind begins less easily to admit new confidence, and the will to grow less flexible; and when, therefore, the departure of an old friend is very accurately felt.

In the next year he lost his mother, not by an unexpected death, for she lasted to the age of ninety-three; but she did not die unlamented. The filial piety of Pope was in the highest degree amiable and exemplary; his parents had the happiness of living till he was at the summit of poetical reputation, till he was at ease in his fortune, and without a rival in his fame, and found no diminution of his respect or tenderness. Whatever was his pride, to them he was obedient; and whatever was his irritability, to them he was gentle. Life has, among its soothing and quiet comforts, few things better to give than such a son.

One of the passages of Pope's life which seems to deserve some inquiry was a publication of letters between him and many of his friends, which falling into the hands of Curll, a rapacious bookseller of no good fame, were by him printed and sold. This volume containing some letters from noblemen, Pope incited a prosecution against him in the House of Lords for breach of privilege, and attended himself to stimulate the resentment of his friends. Curll appeared at the bar, and, knowing himself in no great danger, spoke of Pope with very little reverence: "He has," said Curll, "a knack at versifying, but in prose I think myself a match for him." When the orders of the House were examined, none of them appeared to be infringed; Curll went away triumphant, and Pope was left to seek some other remedy.

Curll's account was, that one evening a man in a clergyman's gown, but with a lawyer's band, brought and offered to sale a number of printed volumes, which he found to be Pope's epistolary correspondence; that he asked no name, and was told none, but gave the price demanded, and thought himself authorized to use his purchase to his own advantage.

That Curll gave a true account of the transaction it is reasonable to believe, because no falsehood was ever detected; and when, some years afterwards, I mentioned it to Lintot, the son of Bernard, he declared his opinion to be, that Pope knew better than any body else how Curll obtained the copies, because another was at the same time sent to himself, for which no price had ever been demanded, as he made known his resolution not to pay a porter, and consequently not to deal with a nameless agent.

Such care had been taken to make them public, that they were sent at once to two booksellers; to Curll, who was likely to seize them as prey; and to Lintot, who might be expected to give Pope information of the seeming injury. Lintot, I believe, did nothing; and Curll did what was expected. That to make them public was the only purpose may be reasonably supposed, because the numbers offered to sale by the private messengers showed that hope of gain could not have been the motive of the impression.

It seems that Pope being desirous of printing his Letters, and not knowing how to do without imputation of vanity, what has in this country been done very rarely, contrived an appearance of compulsion; that, when he could complain that his letters were surreptitiously published, he might decently and defensively publish them himself.

Pope's private correspondence, thus promulgated, filled the nation with praises of his candour, tenderness, and benevolence, the purity of his purposes, and the fidelity of his friendship. There were some letters, which a very good or a very wise man would wish suppressed; but, as they had been already exposed, it was impracticable now to retract them.

From the perusal of those Letters, Mr. Allen first conceived the desire of knowing him; and with so much zeal did he cultivate the friendship which he had newly formed, that when Pope told his purpose of vindicating his own property by a genuine edition, he offered to pay the cost.

This however Pope did not accept; but in time solicited a subscription for a quarto volume, which appeared (1737) I believe, with sufficient profit. In the preface he tells, that his Letters were reposited in a friend's library, said to be the Earl of Oxford's, and that the copy thence stolen was sent to the press. The story was doubtless received with different degrees of credit. It may be suspected that the preface to the Miscellanies was written to prepare the public for such an incident; and to strengthen this opinion, James Worsdale, a painter, who was employed in clandestine negotiations, but whose veracity was very doubtful, declared that he was the messenger who carried, by Pope's direction, the books to Curll.

When they were thus published and avowed as they had relation to recent facts and persons either then living or not yet forgotten, they may be supposed to have found readers; but as the facts were minute, and the characters, being either private or literary, were little known or little regarded, they awakened no popular kindness or resentment: the book never became much the subject of conversation; some read it

as a contemporary history, and some perhaps as a model of epistolary language; but those who read it did not talk of it. Not much therefore was added by it to fame or envy; nor do I remember that it produced either public praise or public censure.

It had however, in some degree, the recommendation of novelty; our language had few letters, except those of statesmen. Howel, indeed, about a century ago, published his Letters, which are commended by Morhoff, and which alone, of his hundred volumes, continue his memory. Loveday's Letters were printed only once; those of Herbert and Suckling are hardly known. Mrs. Phillip's [Orinda's] are equally neglected. And those of Walsh seem written as exercises, and were never sent to any living mistress or friend. Pope's epistolary excellence had an open field; he had no English rival living or dead.

Pope is seen in this collection as connected with the other contemporary wits, and certainly suffers no disgrace in the comparison; but it must be remembered, that he had the power of favouring himself; he might have originally had publication in his mind, and have written with care, or have afterwards selected those which he had most happily conceived or most diligently laboured; and I know not whether there does not appear something more studied and artificial* in his productions than the rest, except one long letter by Bolingbroke, composed with the skill and industry of a professed author. It is indeed not easy to distinguish affectation from habit; he that has once studiously formed a style rarely writes afterwards with complete ease. Pope may be said to write always with his reputation in his head; Swift, perhaps, like a man who remembered he was writing to Pope; but Arbuthnot, like one who lets thoughts drop from his pen as they rise into his mind.

Before these Letters appeared, he published the first part of what he persuaded himself to think a system of ethics, under the title of "An Essay on Man;" which, if his letter to Swift (of Sept. 14. 1725) be rightly explained by the commentator, had been eight years under his consideration, and of which he seems to have desired the success with great solicitude. He had now many open and doubtless many secret enemies. The "Dunces" were yet smarting with the war; and the superiority which he publicly arrogated disposed the world to wish his humilation.

All this he knew, and against all this he provided. His own name, and that of his friend to whom the work is inscribed, were in the first editions carefully suppressed; and the poem, being of a new kind, was ascribed to one or another, as favour determined or conjecture wandered: it was given, says Warburton, to every man, except him only who could write it. Those who like only when they like the author, and who are under the dominion of a name, condemned it; and those admired it who are willing to scatter praise at random, which, while it is unappropriated, excites no envy. Those friends of Pope that were trusted with the secret, went about lavishing honours on the new-born poet, and hinting that Pope was never so much in danger from any former rival.

To those authors whom he had personally offended, and to those whose opinion the world considered as decisive, and whom he suspected of envy or malevolence, he sent his essay as a present before publication, that they might defeat their own enmity by praises which they could not afterwards decently retract.

With these precautions, 1733, was published the first part of the "Essay on Man." There had been for some time a report that Pope was busy on a system of morality; but this design was not discovered in the new poem, which had a form and a title with which its readers were unacquainted. Its reception was not uniform; some thought it a very imperfect piece, though not without good lines. When the author was unknown, some, as will always happen, favoured him as an adventurer, and some censured him as an intruder; but all thought him above neglect; the sale increased and editions were multiplied.

The subsequent editions of the first epistle, exhibited two memorable corrections. At first, the poet and his friend

> Expatiate freely o'er the scene of man,
> A mighty maze *of walks without a plan*;

For which he wrote afterwards,

> A mighty maze, *but not without a plan*:

for, if there were no plan, it were in vain to describe or to trace the maze.

The other alteration was of these lines:

> And spite of pride, *and in thy reason's spite*,
> One truth is clear, whatever is, is right;

but having afterwards discovered, or been shown, that the "truth," which subsisted "in spite of reason" could not be very "clear," he substituted

> And spite of pride, *in erring reason's spite*:

To such oversights will the most vigorous mind be liable when it is employed at once upon argument and poetry.

* These Letters were evidently prepared for the press by Pope himself. Some of the originals, lately discovered, will prove this beyond all dispute.—C.

The second and third epistles were published; and Pope was, I believe, more and more suspected of writing them; at last, in 1734, he avowed the fourth, and claimed the honour of a moral poet.

In the conclusion it is sufficiently acknowledged, that the doctrine of the "Essay on Man" was received from Bolingbroke, who is said to have ridiculed Pope, among those who enjoyed his confidence, as having adopted and advanced principles of which he did not perceive the consequence, and as blindly propagating opinions contrary to his own. That those communications had been consolidated into a scheme regularly drawn, and delivered to Pope, from whom it returned only transformed from prose to verse, has been reported, but can hardly be true. The Essay plainly appears the fabric of a poet; what Bolingbroke supplied could be only the first principles; the order, illustration, and embellishments, must all be Pope's.

These principles it is not my business to clear from obscurity, dogmatism, or falsehood; but they were not immediately examined; philosophy and poetry have not often the same readers; and the Essay abounded in splendid amplifications and sparkling sentences, which were read and admired with no great attention to their ultimate purpose; its flowers caught the eye, which did not see what the gay foliage concealed, and for a time flourished in the sunshine of universal approbation. So little was any evil tendency discovered, that, as innocence is unsuspicious, many read it for a manual of piety.

Its reputation soon invited a translator. It was first turned into French prose, and afterwards by Resnel into verse. Both translations fell into the hands of Crousaz, who first, when he had the version in prose, wrote a general censure, and afterwards reprinted Resnel's version, with particular remarks upon every paragraph.

Crousaz was a professor of Switzerland, eminent for his treatise of Logic and his "Examen de Pyrrhonisme;" and, however little known or regarded here, was no mean antagonist. His mind was one of those in which philosophy and piety are happily united. He was accustomed to argument and disquisition, and perhaps was grown too desirous of detecting faults; but his intentions were always right, his opinions were solid, and his religion pure.

His incessant vigilance for the promotion of piety disposed him to look with distrust upon all metaphysical systems of theology, and all schemes of virtue and happiness purely rational; and therefore it was not long before he was persuaded that the positions of Pope, as they terminated for the most part in natural religion, were intended to draw mankind away from revelation, and to represent the whole course of things as a necessary concatenation of indissoluble fatality; and it is undeniable, that in many passages a religious eye may easily discover expressions not very favourable to moral or to liberty.

About this time Warburton began to make his appearance in the first ranks of learning. He was a man of vigorous faculties, a mind fervid and vehement, supplied by incessant and unlimited inquiry, with wonderful extent and variety of knowledge, which yet had not oppressed his imagination nor clouded his perspicacity. To every work he brought a memory full fraught, together with a fancy fertile of original combinations, and at once exerted the powers of the scholar, the reasoner, and the wit. But his knowledge was too multifarious to be always exact, and his pursuits too eager to be always cautious. His abilities gave him a haughty confidence, which he disdained to conceal or mollify; and his impatience of opposition disposed him to treat his adversaries with such contemptuous superiority as made his readers commonly his enemies, and excited against the advocate the wishes of some who favoured the cause. He seems to have adopted the Roman emperor's determination, *oderint dum metuant*; he used no allurements of gentle language, but wished to compel rather than persuade.

His style is copious without selection, and forcible without neatness; he took the words that presented themselves; his diction is coarse and impure; and his sentences are unmeasured.

He had, in the early part of his life, pleased himself with the notice of inferior wits, and corresponded with the enemies of Pope. A letter* was produced, when he had perhaps himself forgotten it, in which he tells Concanen, "Dryden, I observe, borrows for want of leisure, and Pope for want of genius; Milton out of pride, and Addison out of modesty." And when Theobald published "Shakspeare," in opposition to Pope, the best notes were supplied by Warburton.

But the time was now come when Warburton was to change his opinion; and Pope was to find a defender in him who had contributed so much to the exaltation of his rival.

The arrogance of Warburton excited against him every artifice of offence, and therefore it may be supposed that his union with Pope was censured as hypocritical inconstancy; but surely to think differently, at different times, of poetical merit, may be easily allowed. Such opinions are often admitted, and dismissed without nice examination. Who is there that has not found reason for changing his mind about questions of greater importance?

* This letter is in Mr. Malone's Supplement to Shakspeare, vol. i. p. 223.—C.

Warburton, whatever was his motive, undertook, without solicitation, to rescue Pope from the talons of Crousaz, by freeing him from the imputation of favouring fatality, or rejecting revelation, and from month to month continued a vindication of the "Essay on Man," in the literary journal of that time, called "The Republic of Letters."

Pope, who probably began to doubt the tendency of his own work, was glad that the positions, of which he perceived himself not to know the full meaning, could by any mode of interpretation be made to mean well. How much he was pleased with his gratuitous defender, the following letter evidently shows:

"Sir, April 11, 1732.

"I have just received from Mr. R. two more of your letters. It is in the greatest hurry imaginable that I write this; but I cannot help thanking you in particular for your third letter, which is so extremely clear, short, and full, that I think Mr. Crousaz ought never to have another answer, and deserved not so good a one. I can only say, you do him too much honour, and me too much right, so odd as the expression seems; for you have made my system as clear as I ought to have done, and could not. It is indeed the same system as mine, but illustrated with a ray of your own, as they say our natural body is the same still when it is glorified. I am sure I like it better than I did before, and so will every man else. I know I meant just what you explain; but I did not explain my own meaning so well as you. You understand me as well as I do myself; but you express me better than I could express myself. Pray accept the sincerest acknowledgments. I cannot but wish these letters were put together in one book, and intend (with your leave) to procure a translation of part at least, or of all of them, into French: but I shall not proceed a step without your consent and opinion," &c.

By this fond and eager acceptance of an exculpatory comment, Pope testified that, whatever might be the seeming or real import of the principles which he had received from Bolingbroke, he had not intentionally attacked religion; and Bolingbroke, if he meant to make him, without his own consent, an instrument of mischief, found him now engaged, with his eyes open, on the side of truth.

It is known that Bolingbroke concealed from Pope his real opinions. He once discovered them to Mr. Hooke, who related them again to Pope, and was told by him that he must have mistaken the meaning of what he heard; and Bolingbroke, when Pope's uneasiness incited him to desire an explanation, declared that Hooke had misunderstood him.

Bolingbroke hated Warburton, who had drawn his pupil from him; and a little before Pope's death, they had a dispute, from which they parted with mutual aversion.

From this time Pope lived in the closest intimacy with his commentator, and amply rewarded his kindness and his zeal; for he introduced him to Mr. Murray, by whose interest he became preacher at Lincoln's-Inn; and to Mr. Allen, who gave him his niece and his estate, and by consequence a bishopric. When he died, he left him the property of his works; a legacy which may be reasonably estimated at four thousand pounds.

Pope's fondness for the "Essay on Man" appeared by his desire of its propagation. Dobson, who had gained reputation by his version of Prior's "Solomon," was employed by him to translate it into Latin verse, and was for that purpose some time at Twickenham; but he left his work, whatever was the reason, unfinished, and, by Benson's invitation, undertook the longer task of "Paradise Lost." Pope then desired his friend to find a scholar who should turn his Essay into Latin prose; but no such performance has ever appeared.

Pope lived at this time *among the great*, with that reception and respect to which his works entitled him, and which he had not impaired by any private misconduct or factious partiality. Though Bolingbroke was his friend, Walpole was not his enemy; but treated him with so much consideration, as, at his request, to solicit and obtain from the French minister an abbey for Mr. Southcot, whom he considered himself as obliged to reward, by this exertion of his interest, for the benefit which he had received from his attendance in a long illness.

It was said, that, when the court was at Richmond, Queen Caroline had declared her intention to visit him. This may have been only a careless effusion, thought on no more: the report of such notice, however, was soon in many mouths; and, if I do not forget or misapprehend Savage's account, Pope, pretending to decline what was not yet offered, left his house for a time, not, I suppose, for any other reason than lest he should be thought to stay at home in expectation of an honour which would not be conferred. He was therefore angry at Swift, who represents him as "refusing the visits of a queen," because he knew that what had never been offered had never been refused.

Besides the general system of morality, supposed to be contained in the "Essay on Man," it was his intention to write distinct poems upon the different duties or conditions of life; one of which is the Epistle to Lord Bathurst (1733) "On the Use of Riches," a piece on which he declared great labour to have been bestowed.*

* Spence.

Into this poem some hints are historically thrown, and some known characters are introduced, with others of which it is difficult to say how far they are real or fictitious; but the praise of Kyrl, the Man of Ross, deserves particular examination, who, after a long and pompous enumeration of his public works and private charities, is said to have diffused all those blessings from *five hundred a-year*. Wonders are willingly told and willingly heard. The truth is, that Kyrl was a man of known integrity and active benevolence, by whose solicitation the wealthy were persuaded to pay contributions to his charitable schemes; this influence he obtained by an example of liberality exerted to the utmost extent of his power, and was thus enabled to give more than he had. This account Mr. Victor received from the minister of the place; and I have preserved it, that the praise of a good man, being made more credible, may be more solid. Narrations of romantic and impracticable virtue will be read with wonder, but that which is unattainable is recommended in vain; that good may be endeavoured, it must be shown to be possible.

This is the only piece in which the author has given a hint of his religion, by ridiculing the ceremony of burning the pope; and by mentioning with some indignation the inscription on the Monument.

When this poem was first published, the dialogue having no letters of direction, was perplexed and obscure. Pope seems to have written with no very distinct idea; for he calls that an "Epistle to Bathurst," in which Bathurst is introduced as speaking.

He afterwards (1734) inscribed to Lord Cobham his "Characters of Men," written with close attention to the operations of the mind and modifications of life. In this poem he has endeavoured to establish and exemplify his favourite theory of the *ruling passion*, by which he means an original direction of desire to some particular object; an innate affection, which gives all action a determinate and invariable tendency, and operates upon the whole system of life, either openly, or more secretly by the intervention of some accidental or subordinate propension.

Of any passion, thus innate and irresistible, the existence may reasonably be doubted. Human characters are by no means constant; men change by change of place, of fortune, of acquaintance; he who is at one time a lover of pleasure, is at another a lover of money. Those indeed who attain any excellence commonly spend life in one pursuit; for excellence is not often gained upon easier terms. But to the particular species of excellence men are directed, not by an ascendant planet or predominating humour, but by the first book which they read, some early conversation which they heard, or some accident which excited ardour and emulation.

It must at least be allowed that this *ruling passion*, antecedent to reason and observation, must have an object independent on human contrivance; for there can be no natural desire of artificial good. No man therefore can be born, in the strict acceptation, a lover of money; for he may be born where money does not exist: nor can he be born, in a moral sense, a lover of his country; for society, politically regulated, is a state contradistinguished from a state of nature; and any attention to that coalition of interests which makes the happiness of a country is possible only to those whom inquiry and reflection have enabled to comprehend it.

This doctrine is in itself pernicious as well as false; its tendency is to produce the belief of a kind of moral predestination, or over-ruling principle which cannot be resisted; he that admits it is prepared to comply with every desire that caprice or opportunity shall excite, and to flatter himself that he submits only to the lawful dominion of Nature, in obeying the resistless authority of his *ruling passion*.

Pope has formed his theory with so little skill, that, in the examples by which he illustrates and confirms it, he has confounded passions, appetites, and habits.

To the "Characters of Men," he added soon after, in an epistle supposed to have been addressed to Martha Blount, but which the last edition has taken from her, the "Characters of Women." This poem, which was laboured with great diligence, and in the author's opinion with great success, was neglected at its first publication, as the commentator supposes, because the public was informed, by an advertisement, that it contained *no character drawn from the life*; an assertion which Pope probably did not expect, nor wish to have been believed, and which he soon gave his readers sufficient reason to distrust, by telling them in a note that the work was imperfect, because part of his subject was *vice too high* to be yet exposed.

The time however soon came in which it was safe to display the Dutchess of Marlborough under the name of Alossa; and her character was inserted with no great honour to the writer's gratitude.

He published from time to time (between 1730 and 1740) imitations of different poems of Horace, generally with his name, and once, as was suspected, without it. What he was upon moral principles ashamed to own, he ought to have suppressed. Of these pieces it is useless to settle the dates, as they had seldom much relation to the times, and perhaps had been long in his hands.

This mode of imitation, in which the ancients are familiarized, by adapting their sentiments to modern topics, by making Horace say of

Shakspeare what he originally said of Ennius, and accommodating his satires on Pantolabus and Nomentanus to the flatterers and prodigals of our time, was first practised in the Reign of Charles the second by Oldham and Rochester; at least I remember no instances more ancient. It is a kind of middle composition between translation and original design, which pleases when the thoughts are unexpectedly applicable, and the parallels lucky. It seems to have been Pope's favourite amusement; for he has carried it farther than any former poet.

He published likewise a revival, in smoother numbers, of Dr. Donne's "Satires," which was recommended to him by the Duke of Shrewsbury and the Earl of Oxford. They made no great impression on the public. Pope seems to have known their imbecility, and therefore suppressed them while he was yet contending to rise in reputation, but ventured them when he thought their deficiencies more likely to be imputed to Donne than to himself.

The epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot, which seems to be derived in its first design from "Boileau's Address *à son Esprit*," was published in January, 1735, about a month before the death of him to whom it is inscribed. It is to be regretted, that either honour or pleasure should have been missed by Arbuthnot; a man estimable for his learning, amiable for his life, and venerable for his piety.

Arbuthnot was a man of great comprehension, skilful in his profession, versed in the sciences, acquainted with ancient literature, and able to animate his mass of knowledge by a bright and active imagination; a scholar with great brilliance of wit; a wit, who in the crowd of life, retained and discovered a noble ardour of religious zeal.

In this poem Pope seems to reckon with the public. He vindicates himself from censures; and, with dignity, rather than arrogance, enforces his own claims to kindness and respect.

Into this poem are interwoven several paragraphs which had been before printed as a fragment, and among them the satirical lines upon Addison, of which the last couplet has been twice corrected. It was at first,

Who would not smile if such a man there be?
Who would not laugh if Addison were be?

Then,

Who would not grieve if such a man there be?
Who would not laugh if Addison were he?

At last it is,

Who but must laugh if such a man there be?
Who would not weep if Atticus were he?

He was at this time at open war with Lord Hervey, who had distinguished himself as a steady adherent to the ministry; and, being offended with a contemptuous answer to one of his pamphlets,* had summoned Pulteney to a duel. Whether he or Pope made the first attack, perhaps cannot now be easily known: he had written an invective against Pope, whom he calls, "Hard as thy heart, and as thy birth obscure;" and hints that his father was a *hatter*.† To this Pope wrote a reply in verse and prose; the verses are in this poem; and the prose, though it was never sent, is printed among his letters, but to a cool reader of the present time exhibits nothing but tedious malignity.

His last satires of the general kind were two dialogues, named, from the year in which they were published, "Seventeen Hundred and Thirty-eight." In these poems many are praised and many reproached. Pope was then entangled in the opposition; a follower of the Prince of Wales, who dined at his house, and the friend of many who obstructed and censured the conduct of the ministers. His political partiality was too plainly shown: he forgot the prudence with which he passed, in his earlier years, uninjured and unoffending, through much more violent conflicts of faction.

In the first dialogue, having an opportunity of praising Allen of Bath, he asked his leave to mention him as a man not illustrious by any merit of his ancestors, and called him in his verses, "low-born Allen." Men are seldom satisfied with praise introduced or followed by any mention of defect. Allen seems not to have taken any pleasure in his epithet, which was afterwards softened‡ into "humble Allen."

In the second dialogue he took some liberty with one of the Foxes, among others; which Fox, in a reply to Lyttleton, took an opportunity of repaying, by reproaching him with the friendship of a lampooner, who scattered his ink without fear or decency, and against whom he hoped the resentment of the legislature would quickly be discharged.

About this time Paul Whitehead, a small poet, was summoned before the Lords for a poem called "Manners," together with Dodsley his publisher. Whitehead, who hung loose upon society, sculked and escaped; but Dodsley's shop and family made his appearance necessary. He was, however, soon dismissed;

* Intituled, "Sedition and Defamation displayed." 8vo. 1733.—R.

† Among many MSS. letters, &c. relating to Pope, which I have lately seen, is a lampoon in the Bible-style, of much humour, but irreverent, in which Pope is ridiculed as the son of a *hatter*—C.

‡ On a hint from Warburton. There is however reason to think, from the appearance of the house in which Allen was born at St. Blaise, that he was not of a *low*, but of a *decayed* family.—C.

and the whole process was probably intended rather to intimidate Pope than to punish Whitehead.

Pope never afterwards attempted to join the patriot with the poet, nor drew his pen upon statesmen. That he desisted from his attempts of reformation, is imputed, by his commentator, to his despair of prevailing over the corruption of the time. He was not likely to have been ever of opinion, that the dread of his satire would countervail the love of power or of money; he pleased himself with being important and formidable, and gratified sometimes his pride, and sometimes his resentment; till at last he began to think he should be more safe, if he were less busy.

The "Memoirs of Scriblerus," published about this time, extend only to the first book of a work projected in concert by Pope, Swift, and Arbuthnot, who used to meet in the time of Queen Anne, and denominated themselves the "Scriblerus Club." Their purpose was to censure the abuses of learning by a fictitious life of an infatuated scholar. They were dispersed, the design was never completed; and Warburton laments its miscarriage, as an event very disastrous to polite letters.

If the whole may be estimated by this specimen, which seems to be the production of Arbuthnot, with a few touches perhaps by Pope, the want of more will not be much lamented; for the follies which the writer ridicules are so little practised, that they are not known; nor can the satire be understood but by the learned: he raises phantoms of absurdity, and then drives them away. He cures diseases that were never felt.

For this reason this joint production of three great writers has never obtained any notice from mankind: it has been little read, or when read, has been forgotten, as no man could be wiser, better, or merrier, by remembering it.

The design cannot boast of much originality; for, besides its general resemblance to "Don Quixote," there will be found in it particular imitations of the "History of Mr. Ouffle."

Swift carried so much of it into Ireland as supplied him with hints for his "Travels;" and with those the world might have been contented, though the rest had been suppressed.

Pope had sought for images and sentiments in a region not known to have been explored by many other of the English writers; he had consulted the modern writers of Latin poetry, a class of authors whom Boileau endeavoured to bring into contempt, and who are too generally neglected. Pope, however, was not ashamed of their acquaintance, nor ungrateful for the advantages which he might have derived from it. A small selection from the Italians who wrote in Latin had been published at London, about the latter end of the last century, by a man* who concealed his name, but whom his Preface shows to have been well qualified for his undertaking. This collection Pope amplified by more than half, and (1740) published it in two volumes, but injuriously omitted his predecessor's preface. To these books, which had nothing but the mere text, no regard was paid; the authors were still neglected, and the editor was neither praised nor censured.

He did not sink into idleness; he had planned a work, which he considered as subsequent to his "Essay on Man," of which he has given this account to Dr. Swift:

"March 25, 1736.

"If ever I write any more epistles in verse, one of them shall be addressed to you. I have long concerted it, and begun it; but I would make what bears your name as finished as my last work ought to be, that is to say, more finished than any of the rest. The subject is large, and will divide into four epistles, which naturally follow the 'Essay on Man;' viz. 1. Of the Extent and Limits of Human Reason and Science. 2. A View of the Useful and therefore attainable, and of the unuseful and therefore unattainable, Arts. 3. Of the Nature, Ends, Application, and Use, of different Capacities. 4. Of the Use of Learning, of the Science of the World, and of Wit. It will conclude with a satire against the misapplication of all these, exemplified by pictures, characters, and examples."

This work, in its full extent, being now afflicted with an asthma, and finding the powers of life gradually declining, he had no longer courage to undertake; but from the materials which he had provided, he added, at Warburton's request, another book to the "Dunciad," of which the design is to ridicule such studies as are either hopeless or useless, as either pursue what is unattainable, or what, if it be attained, is of no use.

When this book was printed (1742) the laureat had been for some time upon the head of Cibber; a man whom it cannot be supposed that Pope could regard with much kindness or esteem, though in one of the imitations of Horace he has liberally enough praised the "Careless Husband." In the "Dunciad," among other worthless scribblers, he had mentioned Cibber, who, in his "Apology," complains of the great Poet's unkindness as more injurious, "because," says he, "I never have offended him."

It might have been expected that Pope should

* Since discovered to have been Atterbury, afterwards Bishop of Rochester.—See the Collection of that Prelate's Epistolary Correspondence, vol. iv. p. 6.—N.

have been, in some degree, mollified by this submissive gentleness, but no such consequence appeared. Though he condescended to commend Cibber once, he mentioned him afterwards contemptuously in one of his satires, and again in his epistle to Arbuthnot; and in the fourth book of the "Dunciad" attacked him with acrimony, to which the provocation is not easily discoverable. Perhaps he imagined that, in ridiculing the Laureate, he satirized those by whom the laurel had been given, and gratified that ambitious petulance with which he affected to insult the great.

The severity of this satire left Cibber no longer any patience. He had confidence enough in his own powers to believe that he could disturb the quiet of his adversary, and doubtless did not want instigators, who, without any care about the victory, desired to amuse themselves by looking on the contest. He therefore gave the town a pamphlet, in which he declares his resolution from that time never to bear another blow without returning it, and to tire out his adversary by perseverance, if he cannot conquer him by strength.

The incessant and unappeasable malignity of Pope he imputes to a very distant cause. After the "Three Hours after Marriage" had been driven off the stage, by the offence which the mummy and crocodile gave the audience, while the exploded scene was yet fresh in memory, it happened that Cibber played Bayes in the "Rehearsal;" and, as it had been usual to enliven the part by the mention of any recent theatrical transactions, he said, that he once thought to have introduced his lovers disguised in a mummy and a crocodile. "This," says he, "was received with loud claps, which indicated contempt of the play." Pope, who was behind the scenes, meeting him as he left the stage, "attacked him," as he says, "with all the virulence of a wit out of his senses; to which he replied, "that he would take no other notice of what was said by so particular a man, than to declare, that as often as he played that part, he would repeat the same provocation."

He shows his opinion to be, that Pope was one of the authors of the play which he so zealously defended; and adds an idle story of Pope's behaviour at a tavern.

The pamphlet was written with little power of thought or language, and, if suffered to remain without notice, would have been very soon forgotten. Pope had now been enough acquainted with human life to know, if his passion had not been too powerful for his understanding, that, from a contention like his with Cibber, the world seeks nothing but diversion, which is given at the expense of the higher character. When Cibber lampooned Pope, curiosity was excited; what Pope could say of Cibber nobody inquired, but in hope that Pope's asperity might betray his pain and lessen his dignity.

He should therefore have suffered the pamphlet to flutter and die, without confessing that it stung him. The dishonour of being shown as Cibber's antagonist could never be compensated by the victory. Cibber had nothing to lose; when Pope had exhausted all his malignity upon him, he would rise in the esteem both of his friends and his enemies. Silence only could have made him despicable; the blow which did not appear to be felt would have been struck in vain.

But Pope's irascibility prevailed, and he resolved to tell the whole English world that he was at war with Cibber; and, to show that he thought him no common adversary, he prepared no common vengeance; he published a new edition of the "Dunciad,"* in which he degraded Theobald from his painful pre-eminence, and enthroned Cibber in his stead. Unhappily the two heroes were of opposite characters, and Pope was unwilling to lose what he had already written; he has therefore depraved his poem, by giving to Cibber the old books, the old pedantry, and the sluggish pertinacity of Theobald.

Pope was ignorant enough of his own interest, to make another change, and introduced Osborne contending for the prize among the booksellers. Osborne was a man entirely destitute of shame, without sense of any disgrace but that of poverty. He told me, when he was doing that which raised Pope's resentment, that he should be put into the "Dunciad;" but he had the fate of "Cassandra." I gave no credit to his prediction, till in time I saw it accomplished. The shafts of satire were directed equally in vain against Cibber and Osborne; being repelled by the impenetrable impudence of one, and deadened by the impassive dulness of the other. Pope confessed his own pain by his anger; but he gave no pain to those who had provoked him. He was able to hurt none but himself; by transferring the same ridicule from one to another, he reduced himself to the insignificance of his own magpie, who from his cage calls cuckold at a venture.

Cibber, according to his engagement repaid "The Dunciad" with another pamphlet,† which Pope said, "would be as good as a dose of hartshorn to him;" but his tongue and his heart were at variance. I have heard Mr. Richardson relate, that he attended his father, the painter, on a visit, when one of Cibber's pamphlets came into the hands of Pope, who said, "These things are my diversion." They sat by him while he perused it, and saw his features writh-

* In 1743. † In 1744.

ing with anguish; and young Richardson said to his father, when they returned, that he hoped to be preserved from such diversion as had been that day the lot of Pope.

From this time, finding his diseases more oppressive, and his vital powers gradually declining, he no longer strained his faculties with any original composition, nor proposed any other employment for his remaining life than the revisal and correction of his former works; in which he received advice and assistance from Warburton, whom he appears to have trusted and honoured in the highest degree.

He laid aside his epic poem, perhaps without much loss to mankind; for his hero was Brutus the Trojan, who, according to a ridiculous fiction, established a colony in Britain. The subject therefore was of the fabulous age; the actors were a race upon whom imagination has been exhausted, and attention wearied, and to whom the mind will not easily be recalled, when it is invited in blank verse, which Pope had adopted with great imprudence, and, I think, without due consideration of the nature of our language. The sketch is, at least in part, preserved by Ruffhead; by which it appears, that Pope was thoughtless enough to model the names of his heroes with terminations not consistent with the time or country in which he places them.

He lingered through the next year, but perceived himself, as he expresses it, "going down the hill." He had for at least five years been afflicted with an asthma, and other disorders, which his physicians were unable to relieve. Towards the end of his life he consulted Dr. Thomson, a man who had, by large promises, and free censures of the common practice of physic, forced himself up into sudden reputation. Thomson declared his distemper to be a dropsy, and evacuated part of the water by tincture of jalap; but confessed that his belly did not subside. Thomson had many enemies, and Pope was persuaded to dismiss him.

While he was yet capable of amusement and conversation, as he was one day sitting in the air with Lord Bolingbroke and Lord Marchmont, he saw his favourite Martha Blount at the bottom of the terrace, and asked Lord Bolingbroke to go and hand her up. Bolingbroke, not liking his errand, crossed his legs and sat still; but Lord Marchmont, who was younger and less captious, waited on the lady, who, when he came to her, asked, "What, is he not dead yet?" She is said to have neglected him, with shameful unkindness, in the latter time of his decay; yet, of the little which he had to leave, she had a very great part. Their acquaintance began early; the life of each was pictured on the other's mind; their conversation therefore was endearing, for when they met, there was an immediate coalition of congenial notions. Perhaps he considered her unwillingness to approach the chamber of sickness as female weakness, or human frailty; perhaps he was conscious to himself of peevishness and impatience, or, though he was offended by her inattention, might yet consider her merit as overbalancing her fault; and, if he had suffered his heart to be alienated from her, he could have found nothing that might fill her place; he could only have shrunk within himself; it was too late to transfer his confidence or fondness.

In May, 1744, his death was approaching;* on the 6th, he was all day delirious, which he mentioned four days afterwards as a sufficient humilation of the vanity of man; he afterwards complained of seeing things as through a curtain, and in false colours, and one day, in the presence of Dodsley, asked what arm it was that came out of the wall. He said that his greatest inconvenience was inability to think.

Bolingbroke sometimes wept over him in this state of helpless decay; and being told by Spence, that Pope, at the intermission of his deliriousness, was always saying something kind either of his present or his absent friends, and that his humanity seemed to have survived his understanding, answered, "It has so:" and added, "I never in my life knew a man that had so tender a heart for his particular friends, or more general friendship for mankind." At another time he said, "I have known Pope these thirty years, and value myself more in his friendship than"—His grief then suppressed his voice.

Pope expressed undoubting confidence of a future state. Being asked by his friend, Mr. Hooke, a papist, whether he would not die like his father and mother, and whether a priest should not be called; he answered, "I do not think it is essential, but it will be very right, and I thank you for putting me in mind of it."

In the morning after the priest had given him the last sacraments, he said, "There is nothing that is meritorious but virtue and friendship, and indeed friendship itself is only a part of virtue."

He died in the evening of the 30th day of May, 1744, so placidly, that the attendants did not discern the exact time of his expiration. He was buried at Twickenham, near his father and mother, where a monument has been erected to him by his commentator, the Bishop of Gloucester.

He left the care of his papers to his executors; first to Lord Bolingbroke;† and, if he

* Spence.

† This is somewhat inaccurately expressed. Lord Bolingbroke was not an executor; Pope's papers were left to him specifically, or, in case of his death, to Lord Marchmont.—C.

should not be living, to the Earl of Marchmont; undoubtedly expecting them to be proud of the trust, and eager to extend his fame. But let no man dream of influence beyond his life. After a decent time, Dodsley the bookseller went to solicit preference as the publisher, and was told that the parcel had not been yet inspected: and, whatever was the reason, the world has been disappointed of what was "reserved for the next age."

He lost indeed the favour of Bolingbroke, by a kind of posthumous offence. The political pamphlet, called "The Patriot King," had been put into his hands that he might procure the impression of a very few copies, to be distributed, according to the author's direction, among his friends, and Pope assured him that no more had been printed than were allowed; but, soon after his death, the printer brought and resigned a complete edition of fifteen hundred copies, which Pope had ordered him to print, and retain in secret. He kept, as was observed, his engagement to Pope, better than Pope had kept it to his friend; and nothing was known of the transaction, till, upon the death of his employer, he thought himself obliged to deliver the books to the right owner, who with great indignation, made a fire in his yard, and delivered the whole impression to the flames.

Hitherto nothing had been done which was not naturally dictated by resentment of violated faith; resentment more acrimonious, as the violator had been more loved or more trusted. But here the anger might have stopped; the injury was private; and there was little danger from the example.

Bolingbroke, however, was not yet satisfied; his thirst of vengeance incited him to blast the memory of the man over whom he had wept in his last struggles; and he employed Mallet, another friend of Pope, to tell the tale to the public with all its aggravations. Warburton, whose heart was warm with his legacy, and tender by the recent separation, thought it proper for him to interpose; and undertook, not indeed to vindicate the action, for breach of trust has always something criminal, but to extenuate it by an apology. Having advanced what cannot be denied, that moral obliquity is made more or less excusable by the motives that produce it, he inquires what evil purpose could have induced Pope to break his promise. He could not delight his vanity by usurping the work, which, though not sold in shops, had been shown to a number more than sufficient to preserve the author's claim; he could not gratify his avarice, for he could not sell his plunder till Bolingbroke was dead; and even then, if the copy was left to another, his fraud would be defeated, and, if left to himself, would be useless.

Warburton therefore supposes, with great appearance of reason, that the irregularity of his conduct proceeded wholly from his zeal for Bolingbroke, who might perhaps have destroyed the pamphlet, which Pope thought it his duty to preserve, even without its author's approbation. To this apology an answer was written in "A Letter to the most impudent Man living."

He brought some reproach upon his own memory by the petulant and contemptuous mention made in his will of Mr. Allen, and an affected repayment of his benefactions. Mrs. Blount, as the known friend and favourite of Pope, had been invited to the house of Allen, where she comported herself with such indecent arrogance, that she parted from Mrs. Allen in a state of irreconcileable dislike, and the door was for ever barred against her. This exclusion she resented with so much bitterness as to refuse any legacy from Pope, unless he left the world with a disavowal of obligation to Allen. Having been long under her dominion, now tottering in the decline of life, and unable to resist the violence of her temper, or, perhaps, with the prejudice of a lover, persuaded that she had suffered improper treatment, he complied with her demand, and polluted his will with female resentment. Allen accepted the legacy, which he gave to the hospital at Bath, observing, that Pope was always a bad accountant, and that, if to 150*l.* he had put a cypher more, he had come nearer to the truth.*

* This account of the difference between Pope and Mr. Allen is not so circumstantial as it was in Johnson's power to have made it. The particulars communicated to him concerning it he was too indolent to commit to writing; the business of this note is to supply his omissions.

Upon an invitation, in which Mrs. Blount was included, Mr. Pope made a visit to Mr. Allen, at Prior-park; and having occasion to go to Bristol for a few days, left Mrs. Blount behind him. In his absence Mrs. Blount, who was of the Romish persuasion, signified an inclination to go to the popish chapel at Bath, and desired of Mr. Allen the use of his chariot for the purpose; but he being at that time mayor of the city, suggested the impropriety of having his carriage seen at the door of a place of worship, to which, as a magistrate, he was at least restrained from giving a sanction, and might be required to suppress, and therefore desired to be excused. Mrs. Blount resented this refusal, and told Pope of it at his return, and so infected him with her rage, that they both left the house abruptly.*

An instance of the like negligence may be noted in his relation of Pope's love of painting, which dif-

* This is altogether wrong; Pope kept up his friendship with Mr. Allen to the last, as appears by his letters, and Mrs. Blount remained in Mr. Allen's house some time after the coolness took place between her and Mrs. Allen. Allen's conversation with Pope on this subject, and his letters to Mrs. Blount, all whose quarrels he was obliged to share, will appear in Mr. Bowles's edition of Pope's works.—C.

The person of Pope is well known not to have been formed by the nicest model. He has, in his account of the "Little Club." compared himself to a spider, and by another is described as protuberant behind and before. He is said to have been beautiful in his infancy; but he was of a constitution originally feeble and weak; and, as bodies of a tender frame are easily distorted, his deformity was probably in part the effect of his application. His stature was so low, that, to bring him to a level with common tables, it was necessary to raise his seat. But his face was not displeasing, and his eyes were animated and vivid.

By natural deformity, or accidental distortion, his vital functions were so much disordered, that his life was a "long disease." His most frequent assailment was the headach, which he used to relieve by inhaling the steam of coffee, which he very frequently required.

Most of what can be told concerning his petty peculiarities was communicated by a female domestic of the Earl of Oxford, who knew him perhaps after the middle of life. He was then so weak as to stand in perpetual need of female attendance; extremely sensible of cold, so that he wore a kind of fur doublet, under a shirt of a very coarse warm linen with fine sleeves. When he rose, he was invested in bodice made of stiff canvass, being scarcely able to hold himself erect, till they were laced, and he then put on a flannel waistcoat. One side was contracted. His legs were so slender, that he enlarged their bulk with three pair of stockings, which were drawn on and off by the maid; for he was not able to dress or undress himself, and neither went to bed nor rose without help. His weakness made it very difficult for him to be clean.

His hair had fallen almost all away; and he used to dine sometimes with lord Oxford, privately, in a velvet cap. His dress of ceremony was black, with a tie-wig, and a little sword.

The indulgence and accommodation which his sickness required, had taught him all the unpleasing and unsocial qualities of a valetudinary man. He expected that every thing should give way to his ease or humour; as a child, whose parents will not hear her cry, has an unresisted dominion in the nursery.

C'est que l'enfant toujours est homme,
C'est que l'homme est toujours enfant.

When he wanted to sleep, he "nodded in company;" and once slumbered at his own table while the prince of Wales was talking of poetry.

The reputation which his friendship gave procured him many invitations; but he was a very troublesome inmate. He brought no servant and had so many wants, that a numerous attendance was scarcely able to supply them. Wherever he was, he left no room for another, because he exacted the attention, and employed the activity of the whole family. His errands were so frequent and frivolous, that the footman in time avoided and neglected him; and the Earl of Oxford discharged some of the servants for their resolute refusal of his messages. The maids, when they had neglected their business, alleged that they had been employed by Mr. Pope. One of his constant demands was of coffee in the night, and to the woman that waited on him in his chamber he was very burdensome; but he was careful to recompense her want of sleep; and Lord Oxford's servant declared, that in the house where her business was to answer his call, she would not ask for wages.

He had another fault, easily incident to those who, suffering much pain, think themselves entitled to whatever pleasures they can snatch. He was too indulgent to his appetite; he loved meat highly seasoned and of strong taste; and at the intervals of the table, amused himself with biscuits and dry conserves. If he sat down to a variety of dishes, he would oppress his stomach with repletion; and, though he seemed angry when a dram was offered him, did not forbear to drink it. His friends, who knew the avenues to his heart, pampered him with presents of luxury, which he did not suffer to stand neglected. The death of great men is not always proportioned to the lustre of their lives. Hannibal, says Juvenal, did not perish by the javelin or the sword; the slaughters of Cannæ were revenged by a ring. The death of Pope was imputed by some of his friends, to a silver saucepan, in which it was his delight to heat potted lampreys.

That he loved too well to eat is certain; but that his sensuality shortened his life will not be hastily concluded, when it is remembered that a conformation so irregular lasted six-and-fifty years, notwithstanding such pertinacious diligence of study and meditation.

In all his intercourse with mankind, he had great delight in artifice, and endeavoured to attain all his purposes by indirect and unsuspected methods. "He hardly drank tea without a stratagem." If, at the house of his friends, he wanted any accommodation, he was not willing to ask for it in plain terms, but would mention it remotely as something convenient; though, when it was procured, he soon made it appear for whose sake it had been recommended. Thus he

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fers much from the information I gave him on that head. A picture of Betterton, certainly copied from Kneller by Pope,* Lord Mansfield once showed me at Kenwood-house, adding that it was the only one he ever finished, for that the weakness of his eyes was an obstruction to his use of the pencil.—H.

* See p. 272.

teased Lord Orrery till he obtained a screen. He practised his arts on such small occasions, that Lady Bolingbroke used to say, in a French phrase, that "he played the politician about cabbages and turnips." His unjustifiable impression of "The Patriot King," as it can be imputed to no particular motive, must have proceeded from his general habit of secrecy and cunning: he caught an opportunity of a sly trick, and pleased himself with the thought of outwitting Bolingbroke.

In familiar or convivial conversation, it does not appear that he excelled. He may be said to have resembled Dryden, as being not one that was distinguished by vivacity in company. It is remarkable, that so near his time, so much should be known of what he has written, and so little of what he has said: traditional memory retains no sallies of raillery, nor sentences of observation; nothing either pointed or solid, either wise or merry. One apophthegm only stands upon record. When an objection, raised against his inscription for Shakspeare, was defended by the authority of "Patrick," he replied—"horresco referens"—that "he would allow the publisher of a dictionary to know the meaning of a single word, but not of two words put together."

He was fretful and easily displeased, and allowed himself to be capriciously resentful. He would sometimes leave Lord Oxford silently, no one could tell why, and was to be courted back by more letters and messages than the footmen were willing to carry. The table was indeed infested by Lady Mary Wortley, who was the friend of Lady Oxford, and who, knowing his peevishness, could by no entreaties be restrained from contradicting him, till their disputes were sharpened to such asperity, that one or the other quitted the house.

He sometimes condescended to be jocular with servants or inferiors; but by no merriment, either of others or his own, was he ever seen excited to laughter.

Of his domestic character, frugality was a part eminently remarkable. Having determined not to be dependent, he determined not to be in want, and therefore wisely and magnanimously rejected all temptations to expense unsuitable to his fortune. This general care must be universally approved: but it sometimes appeared in petty artifices of parsimony, such as the practice of writing his compositions on the back of letters, as may be seen in the remaining copy of the "Iliad," by which perhaps in five years five shillings were saved; or in a niggardly reception of his friends, and scantiness of entertainment, as, when he had two guests in his house, he would set at supper a single pint upon the table; and, having himself taken two small glasses, would retire, and say, "Gentlemen, I leave you to your wine." Yet he tells his friends, that, "he has a heart for all, a house for all, and, whatever they may think, a fortune for all."

He sometimes, however, made a splendid dinner, and is said to have wanted no part of the skill or elegance which such performances require. That this magnificence should be often displayed, that obstinate prudence with which he conducted his affairs would not permit, for his revenue, certain and casual, amounted only to about eight hundred pounds a year, of which however he declares himself able to assign one hundred to charity.*

Of this fortune, which, as it arose from public approbation, was very honourably obtained, his imagination seems to have been too full; it would be hard to find a man, so well entitled to notice by his wit, that ever delighted so much in talking of his money. In his letters and his poems, his garden and his grotto, his quincunx and his vines, or some hints of his opulence, are always to be found. The great topic of his ridicule is poverty; the crimes with which he reproaches his antagonists are their debts, their habitation in the Mint, and their want of a dinner. He seems to be of an opinion not very uncommon in the world, that to want money is to want every thing.

Next to the pleasure of contemplating his possessions, seems to be that of enumerating the men of high rank with whom he was acquainted, and whose notice he loudly proclaims not to have been obtained by any practices of meanness or servility; a boast which was never denied to be true, and to which very few poets have ever aspired. Pope never set his genius to sale, he never flattered those whom he did not love, or praised those whom he did not esteem. Savage, however, remarked, that he began a little to relax his dignity when he wrote a distich for his "Highness's dog."

His admiration of the great seems to have increased in the advance of life. He passed over peers and statesmen to inscribe his "Iliad" to Congreve, with a magnanimity of which the praise had been complete, had his friend's virtue been equal to his wit. Why he was chosen for so great an honour, it is not now possible to know; there is no trace in literary history of any particular intimacy between them. The name of Congreve appears in the letters among those of his other friends, but without any observable distinction or consequence.

To his latter works, however, he took care to

* Part of it arose from an annuity of two hundred pounds a-year, which he had purchased either of the late Duke of Buckinghamshire, or the Dutchess his mother, and which was charged on some estate of that family. [See p. 274.] The deed by which it was granted was some years in my custody.—H.

annex names dignified with titles, but was not very happy in his choice; for, except Lord Bathurst, none of his noble friends were such as that a good man would wish to have his intimacy with them known to posterity; he can derive little honour from the notice of Cobham, Burlington, or Bolingbroke.

Of his social qualities, if an estimate be made from his letters, an opinion too favourable cannot easily be formed: they exhibit a perpetual and unclouded effulgence of general benevolence and particular fondness. There is nothing but liberality, gratitude, constancy, and tenderness. It has been so long said as to be commonly believed, that the true characters of men may be found in their letters, and that he who writes to his friend lays his heart open before him. But the truth is, that such were the simple friendships of the Golden Age, and are now the friendships only of children. Very few can boast of hearts which they dare lay open to themselves, and of which, by whatever accident exposed, they do not shun a distinct and continued view; and, certainly, what we hide from ourselves we do not show to our friends. There is, indeed, no transaction which offers stronger temptation to fallacy and sophistication than epistolary intercourse. In the eagerness of conversation the first emotions of the mind often burst out before they are considered; in the tumult of business, interest and passion have their genuine effect; but a friendly letter is a calm and deliberate performance in the cool of leisure, in the stillness of solitude, and surely no man sits down to depreciate by design his own character.

Friendship has no tendency to secure veracity; for by whom can a man so much wish to be thought better than he is, as by him whose kindness he desires to gain or keep! Even in writing to the world there is less constraint; the author is not confronted with his reader, and takes his chance of approbation among the different dispositions of mankind; but a letter is addressed to a single mind, of which the prejudices and partialities are known; and must therefore please, if not by favouring them, by forbearing to oppose them.

To charge those favourable representations, which men give of their own minds, with the guilt of hypocritical falsehood, would show more severity than knowledge. The writer commonly believes himself. Almost every man's thoughts, while they are general, are right; and most hearts are pure while temptation is away. It is easy to awaken generous sentiments in privacy; to despise death when there is no danger; to glow with benevolence when there is nothing to be given. While such ideas are formed, they are felt; and self-love does not suspect the gleam of virtue to be the meteor of fancy.

If the letters of Pope are considered merely as compositions, they seem to be premeditated and artificial. It is one thing to write, because there is something which the mind wishes to discharge; and another, to solicit the imagination, because ceremony or vanity require something to be written. Pope confesses his early letters to be vitiated with *affectation and ambition:* to know whether he disentangled himself from these perverters of epistolary integrity, his book and his life must be set in comparison.

One of his favourite topics is contempt of his own poetry. For this, if it had been real, he would deserve no commendation: and in this he was certainly not sincere, for his high value of himself was sufficiently observed; and of what could he be proud but of his poetry? He writes, he says, when "he has just nothing else to do;" yet Swift complains that he was never at leisure for conversation, because he had "always some poetical scheme in his head." It was punctually required that his writing-box should be set upon his bed before he rose; and Lord Oxford's domestic related, that in the dreadful winter of forty, she was called from her bed by him four times in one night, to supply him with paper, lest he should lose a thought.

He pretends insensibility to censure and criticism, though it was observed by all who knew him that every pamphlet disturbed his quiet, and that his extreme irritability laid him open to perpetual vexation; but he wished to despise his critics, and therefore hoped that he did despise them.

As he happened to live in two reigns when the court paid little attention to poetry, he nursed in his mind a foolish disesteem of kings, and proclaims that "he never sees courts." Yet a little regard shown him by the Prince of Wales melted his obduracy; and he had not much to say, when he was asked by his Royal Highness, "how he could love a prince while he disliked kings?"

He very frequently professes contempt of the world, and represents himself as looking on mankind, sometimes with gay indifference, as on emmets of a hillock, below his serious attention, and sometimes with gloomy indignation, as on monsters more worthy of hatred than of pity. These were dispositions apparently counterfeited. How could he despise those whom he lived by pleasing, and on whose approbation his esteem of himself was superstructed? Why should he hate those to whose favour he owed his honour and his ease? Of things that terminate in human life, the world is the proper judge; to despise its sentence, if it were possible, is not just; and if it were just, is not possible. Pope was far enough from this unreasonable temper: he was sufficiently *a fool to fame*, and his fault was that he pretended to

neglect it. His levity and his sullenness were only in his letters; he passed through common life, sometimes vexed, and sometimes pleased, with the natural emotions of common men.

His scorn of the great is too often repeated to be real; no man thinks much of that which he despises; and as falsehood is always in danger of inconsistency, he makes it his boast at another time that he lives among them.

It is evident that his own importance swells often in his mind. He is afraid of writing, lest the clerks at the Post-office should know his secrets; he has many enemies; he considers himself as surrounded by universal jealousy; "after many deaths, and many dispersions, two or three of us," says he, "may still be brought together, not to plot, but to divert ourselves, and the world too if it pleases;" and they can live together, and "show what friends wits may be, in spite of all the fools in the world." All this while it was likely that the clerks did not know his hand; he certainly had no more enemies than a public character like his inevitably excites; and with what degree of friendship the wits might live, very few were so much fools as ever to inquire.

Some part of this pretended discontent he learned from Swift, and expresses it, I think, most frequently in his correspondence with him. Swift's resentment was unreasonable, but it was sincere; Pope's was the mere mimicry of his friend, a fictitious part which he began to play before it became him. When he was only twenty-five years old, he related that "a glut of study and retirement had thrown him on the world," and that there was danger lest "a glut of the world should throw him back upon study and retirement." To this Swift answered with great propriety, that Pope had not yet acted or suffered enough in the world to have become weary of it. And, indeed, it must have been some very powerful reason that can drive back to solitude him who has once enjoyed the pleasures of society.

In the Letters both of Swift and Pope there appears such narrowness of mind, as makes them insensible of any excellence that has not some affinity with their own, and confines their esteem and approbation to so small a number, that whoever should form his opinion of the age from their representation, would suppose them to have lived amidst ignorance and barbarity, unable to find among their contemporaries either virtue or intelligence, and persecuted by those that could not understand them.

When Pope murmurs at the world, when he professes contempt of fame, when he speaks of riches and poverty, of success and disappointment, with negligent indifference, he certainly does not express his habitual and settled sentiments, but either wilfully disguises his own character, or, what is more likely, invests himself with temporary qualities, and sallies out in the colours of the present moment. His hopes and fears, his joys and sorrows, acted strongly upon his mind; and, if he differed from others, it was not by carelessness; he was irritable and resentful. His malignity to Philips, whom he had first made ridiculous, and then hated for being angry, continued too long. Of his vain desire to make Bentley contemptible, I never heard any adequate reason. He was sometimes wanton in his attacks; and before Chandos, Lady Wortley, and Hill, was mean in his retreat.

The virtues which seem to have had most of his affection were liberality and fidelity of friendship, in which it does not appear that he was other than he describes himself. His fortune did not suffer his charity to be splendid and conspicuous; but he assisted Dodsley with a hundred pound, that he might open a shop; and of the subscription of forty pounds a year that he raised for Savage, twenty were paid by himself. He was accused of loving money; but his love was eagerness to gain, not solicitude to keep it.

In the duties of friendship he was zealous and constant; his early maturity of mind commonly united him with men older than himself, and, therefore, without attaining any considerable length of life, he saw many companions of his youth sink into the grave; but it does not appear that he lost a single friend by coldness or by injury; those who loved him once, continued their kindness. His ungrateful mention of Allen in his will was the effect of his adherence to one whom he had known much longer, and whom he naturally loved with greater fondness. His violation of the trust reposed in him by Bolingbroke could have no motive inconsistent with the warmest affection; he either thought the action so near to indifferent that he forgot it, or so laudable that he expected his friend to approve it.

It was reported, with such confidence as almost to enforce belief, that in the papers intrusted to his executors was found a defamatory life of Swift, which he had prepared as an instrument of vengeance, to be used if any provocation should be ever given. About this I inquired of the Earl of Marchmont, who assured me that no such piece was among his remains.

The religion in which he lived and died was that of the church of Rome, to which, in his correspondence with Racine, he professes himself a sincere adherent. That he was not scrupulously pious in some part of his life, is known by many idle and indecent applications of sentences taken from the Scriptures; a mode of merriment which a good man dreads for its profaneness, and a witty man disdains for its easiness and vulgarity. But to whatever levi-

ties he has been betrayed, it does not appear that his principles were ever corrupted, or that he ever lost his belief of revelation. The positions which he transmitted from Bolingbroke he seems not to have understood, and was pleased with an interpretation that made them orthodox.

A man of such exalted superiority, and so little moderation, would naturally have all his delinquencies observed and aggravated; those who could not deny that he was excellent, would rejoice to find that he was not perfect.

Perhaps it may be imputed to the unwillingness with which the same man is allowed to possess many advantages, that his learning has been depreciated. He certainly was, in his early life, a man of great literary curiosity; and, when he wrote his "Essay on Criticism," had, for his age, a very wide acquaintance with books. When he entered into the living world, it seems to have happened to him as to many others, that he was less attentive to dead masters; he studied in the academy of Paracelsus, and made the universe his favourite volume. He gathered his notions fresh from reality, not from the copies of authors, but the originals of nature. Yet there is no reason to believe that literature ever lost his esteem; he always professed to love reading; and Dobson, who spent some time at his house translating his "Essay on Man," when I asked him what learning he found him to possess, answered, "More than I expected." His frequent references to history, his allusions to various kinds of knowledge, and his images selected from art and nature, with his observations on the operations of the mind and the modes of life, show an intelligence perpetually on the wing, excursive, vigorous, and diligent, eager to pursue knowledge, and attentive to retain it.

From this curiosity arose the desire of travelling, to which he alludes in his verses to Jervas, and which, though he never found an opportunity to gratify it, did not leave him till his life declined.

Of his intellectual character, the constituent and fundamental principle was good sense, a prompt and intuitive perception of consonance and propriety. He saw immediately, of his own conceptions, what was to be chosen, and what to be rejected; and, in the works of others, what was to be shunned, and what was to be copied.

But good sense alone is a sedate and quiescent quality, which manages its possessions well, but does not increase them; it collects few materials for its own operations, and preserves safety, but never gains supremacy. Pope had likewise genius; a mind active, ambitious, and adventurous, always investigating, always aspiring; in its widest searches still longing to go forward, in its highest flights still wishing to be higher; always imagining something greater than it knows, always endeavouring more than it can do.

To assist these powers, he is said to have had great strength and exactness of memory. That which he had heard or read was not easily lost; and he had before him not only what his own meditation suggested, but what he had found in other writers that might be accommodated to his present purpose.

These benefits of nature he improved by incessant and unwearied diligence; he had recourse to every source of intelligence, and lost no opportunity of information; he consulted the living as well as the dead; he read his compositions to his friends, and was never contented with mediocrity when excellence could be attained. He considered poetry as the business of his life; and, however he might seem to lament his occupation, he followed it with constancy; to make verses was his first labour, and to mend them was his last.

From his attention to poetry he was never diverted. If conversation offered any thing that could be improved, he committed it to paper; if a thought, or perhaps an expression more happy than was common rose to his mind, he was careful to write it; an independent distich was preserved for an opportunity of insertion; and some little fragments have been found containing lines, or parts of lines, to be wrought upon at some other time.

He was one of those few whose labour is their pleasure: he was never elevated to negligence, nor wearied to impatience; he never passed a fault unamended by indifference, nor quitted it by despair. He laboured his works, first to gain reputation, and afterwards to keep it.

Of composition there are different methods. Some employ at once memory and invention, and, with little intermediate use of the pen, form and polish large masses by continued meditation, and write their productions only when, in their own opinion, they have completed them. It is related of Virgil, that his custom was to pour out a great number of verses in the morning, and pass the day in retrenching exuberances, and correcting inaccuracies. The method of Pope, as may be collected from his translation, was to write his first thoughts in his first words, and gradually to amplify, decorate, rectify, and refine them.

With such faculties and such dispositions, he excelled every other writer in poetical prudence: he wrote in such a manner as might expose him to few hazards. He used almost always the same fabric of verse: and, indeed, by those few essays which he made of any other, he did not enlarge his reputation. Of this uniformity the certain consequence was readiness and dexterity. By perpetual practice, language had, in

his mind, a systematical arrangement; having always the same use for words, he had words so selected and combined as to be ready at his call. This increase of facility he confessed himself to have perceived in the progress of his translation.

But what was yet of more importance, his effusions were always voluntary, and his subjects chosen by himself. His independence secured him from drudging at a task, and labouring upon a barren topic; he never exchanged praise for money, nor opened a shop of condolence or congratulation. His poems, therefore, were scarcely ever temporary. He suffered coronations and royal marriages to pass without a song; and derived no opportunities from recent events, or any popularity from the accidental disposition of his readers. He was never reduced to the necessity of soliciting the sun to shine upon a birth-day, of calling the Graces and Virtues to a wedding, or of saying what multitudes have said before him. When he could produce nothing new, he was at liberty to be silent.

His publications were for the same reason never hasty. He is said to have sent nothing to the press till it had lain two years under his inspection; it is at least certain, that he ventured nothing without nice examination. He suffered the tumult of imagination to subside, and the novelties of invention to grow familiar. He knew that the mind is always enamoured of its own productions, and did not trust his first fondness. He consulted his friends, and listened with great willingness to criticism; and, what was of more importance, he consulted himself, and let nothing pass against his own judgment.

He professed to have learned his poetry from Dryden, whom, whenever an opportunity was presented, he praised through his whole life with unvaried liberality; and perhaps his character may receive some illustration, if he be compared with his master.

Integrity of understanding and nicety of discernment were not allotted in a less proportion to Dryden than to Pope. The rectitude of Dryden's mind was sufficiently shown by the dismission of his poetical prejudices, and the rejection of unnatural thoughts and rugged numbers. But Dryden never desired to apply all the judgment that he had. He wrote, and professed to write, merely for the people; and when he pleased others, he contented himself. He spent no time in struggles to rouse latent powers; he never attempted to make that better which was already good, nor often to mend what he must have known to be faulty. He wrote, as he tells us, with very little consideration; when occasion or necessity called upon him, he poured out what the present moment happened to supply, and, when once it had passed the press, ejected it from his mind; for when he had no pecuniary interest, he had no further solicitude.

Pope was not content to satisfy, he desired to excel; and therefore always endeavoured to do his best; he did not court the candour, but dared the judgment, of his reader, and, expecting no indulgence from others, he showed none to himself. He examined lines and words with minute and punctilious observation, and retouched every part with indefatigable diligence, till he had left nothing to be forgiven.

For this reason he kept his pieces very long in his hands, while he considered and reconsidered them. The only poems which can be supposed to have been written with such regard to the times as might hasten their publication, were the two satires of "Thirty-eight;" of which Dodsley told me that they were brought to him by the author, that they might be fairly copied. "Almost every line," he said, "was then written twice over; I gave him a clean transcript, which he sent some time afterwards to me for the press, with almost every line written twice over a second time."

His declaration, that his care for his works ceased at their publication, was not strictly true. His parental attention never abandoned them; what he found amiss in the first edition, he silently corrected in those that followed. He appears to have revised the "Iliad," and freed it from some of its imperfections; and the "Essay on Criticism" received many improvements after its first appearance. It will seldom be found that he altered without adding clearness, elegance, or vigour. Pope had perhaps the judgment of Dryden; but Dryden certainly wanted the diligence of Pope.

In acquired knowledge, the superiority must be allowed to Dryden, whose education was more scholastic, and who, before he became an author, had been allowed more time for study, with better means of information. His mind has a larger range, and he collects his images and illustrations from a more extensive circumference of science. Dryden knew more of man in his general nature, and Pope in his local manners. The notions of Dryden were formed by comprehensive speculation; and those of Pope by minute attention. There is more dignity in the knowledge of Dryden, and more certainty in that of Pope.

Poetry was not the sole praise of either; for both excelled likewise in prose; but Pope did not borrow his prose from his predecessor. The style of Dryden is capricious and varied; that of Pope is cautious and uniform. Dryden observes the motions of his own mind; Pope constrains his mind to his own rules of composition. Dryden is sometimes vehement and rapid; Pope is always smooth, uniform, and gentle. Dryden's page is a natural field, rising

into inequalities, and diversified by the varied exuberance of abundant vegetation; Pope's is a velvet lawn, shaven by the scythe, and levelled by the roller.

Of genius, that power which constitutes a poet; that quality without which judgment is cold, and knowledge is inert; that energy which collects, combines, amplifies, and animates; the superiority must, with some hesitation, be allowed to Dryden. It is not to be inferred, that of this poetical vigour Pope had only a little, because Dryden had more; for every other writer since Milton must give place to Pope; and even of Dryden it must be said, that, if he has brighter paragraphs, he has not better poems. Dryden's performances were always hasty, either excited by some external occasion, or extorted by domestic necessity; he composed without consideration, and published without correction. What his mind could supply at call, or gather in one excursion, was all that he sought, and all that he gave. The dilatory caution of Pope enabled him to condense his sentiments, to multiply his images, and to accumulate all that study might produce, or chance might supply. If the flights of Dryden, therefore, are higher, Pope continues longer on the wing. If of Dryden's fire the blaze is brighter, of Pope's the heat is more regular and constant. Dryden often surpasses expectation, and Pope never falls below it. Dryden is read with frequent astonishment, and Pope with perpetual delight.

This parallel will, I hope, when it is well considered, be found just; and if the reader should suspect me, as I suspect myself, of some partial fondness for the memory of Dryden, let him not too hastily condemn me: for meditation and inquiry may, perhaps, show him the reasonableness of my determination.

The Works of Pope are now to be distinctly examined, not so much with attention to slight faults or petty beauties, as to the general character and effect of each performance.

It seems natural for a young poet to initiate himself by pastorals, which, not professing to imitate real life, require no experience; and, exhibiting only the simple operation of unmingled passions, admit no subtle reasoning or deep inquiry. Pope's Pastoral's are not however composed but with close thought; they have reference to the times of the day, the seasons of the year, and the periods of human life. The last, that which turns the attention upon age and death, was the Author's favourite. To tell of disappointment and misery, to thicken the darkness of futurity, and perplex the labyrinth of uncertainty, has been always a delicious employment of the poets. His preference was probably just. I wish, however, that his fondness had not overlooked a line in which the *Zephyrs* are made *to lament in silence*.

To charge these Pastorals with want of invention, is to require what was never intended. The imitations are so ambitiously frequent, that the writer evidently means rather to show his literature than his wit. It is surely sufficient for an author of sixteen, not only to be able to copy the poems of antiquity with judicious selection, but to have obtained sufficient power of language, and skill in metre, to exhibit a series of versification, which had in English poetry no precedent, nor has since had an imitation.

The design of "Windsor Forest" is evidently derived from "Cooper's Hill," with some attention to Waller's poem on "The Park;" but Pope cannot be denied to excel his masters in variety and elegance, and the art of interchanging description, narrative, and morality. The objection made by Dennis is the want of plan, of a regular subordination of parts terminating in the principal and original design. There is this want in most descriptive poems, because as the scenes which they must exhibit successively, are all subsisting at the same time, the order in which they are shown must by necessity be arbitrary, and more is not to be expected from the last part than from the first. The attention, therefore, which cannot be detained by suspense, must be excited by diversity, such as his poem offers to its reader.

But the desire of diversity may be too much indulged; the parts of "Windsor Forest" which deserve least praise are those which were added to enliven the stillness of the scene, the appearance of Father Thames and the transformation of Lodona. Addison had, in his "Campaign," derided the rivers that "rise from their oozy beds" to tell stories of heroes; and it is therefore strange that Pope should adopt a fiction not only unnatural but lately censured. The story of Lodona is told with sweetness; but a new metamorphosis is a ready and puerile expedient; nothing is easier than to tell how a flower was once a blooming virgin, or a rock an obdurate tyrant.

The "Temple of Fame" has, as Steele warmly declared, "a thousand beauties." Every part is splendid; there is great luxuriance of ornaments; the original vision of Chaucer was never denied to be much improved; the allegory is very skilfully continued, the imagery is properly selected, and learnedly displayed; yet, with all this comprehension of excellence, as its scene is laid in remote ages, and its sentiments, if the concluding paragraph be excepted, have little relation to general manners or common life, it never obtained much notice, but is turned silently over, and seldom quoted or mentioned with either praise or blame.

That "The Messiah" excels the "Pollio" is no great praise, if it be considered from what original the improvements are derived.

The "Verses on the unfortunate Lady" have drawn much attention by the illaudable singularity of treating suicide with respect; and they must be allowed to be written in some parts with vigorous animation, and in others with gentle tenderness; nor has Pope produced any poem in which the sense predominates more over the diction. But the tale is not skilfully told; it is not easy to discover the character of either the Lady or her Guardian. History relates that she was about to disparage herself by a marriage with an inferior; Pope praises her for the dignity of ambition, and yet condemns the uncle to detestation for his pride; the ambitious love of a niece may be opposed by the interest, malice, or envy, of an uncle, but never by his pride. On such an occasion a poet may be allowed to be obscure, but inconsistency never can be right.*

The "Ode for St. Cecilia's Day" was undertaken at the desire of Steele. In this the author is generally confessed to have miscarried; yet he has miscarried only as compared with Dryden, for he has far outgone other competitors. Dryden's plan is better chosen; history will always take stronger hold of the attention than fable: the passions excited by Dryden are the pleasures and pains of real life; the scene of Pope is laid in imaginary existence; Pope is read with calm acquiescence, Dryden with turbulent delight; Pope hangs upon the ear, and Dryden finds the passes of the mind.

Both the odes want the essential constituent of metrical compositions, the stated recurrence of settled numbers. It may be alleged that Pindar is said by Horace to have written *numeris lege solutis;* but, as no such lax performances have been transmitted to us, the meaning of that expression cannot be fixed; and perhaps the like return might properly be made to a modern Pindarist, as Mr. Cobb received from Bentley, who, when he found his criticisms upon a Greek Exercise, which Cobb had presented, refuted one after another by Pindar's authority, cried out at last—"Pindar was a bold fellow, but thou art an impudent one."

If Pope's ode be particularly inspected, it will be found that the first stanza consists of sounds, well chosen indeed, but only sounds.

The second consists of hyperbolical commonplaces, easily to be found, and perhaps without much difficulty to be as well expressed.

In the third, however, there are numbers, images, harmony, and vigour, not unworthy the antagonist of Dryden. Had all been like this—but every part cannot be the best.

The next stanzas place and detain us in the dark and dismal regions of mythology, where neither hope nor fear, neither joy nor sorrow, can be found: the poet however faithfully attends us: we have all that can be performed by elegance of diction, or sweetness of versification; but what can form avail without better matter?

The last stanza recurs again to common-places. The conclusion is too evidently modelled by that of Dryden; and it may be remarked that both end with the same fault; the comparison of each is literal on one side, and metaphorical on the other.

Poets do not always express their own thoughts; Pope, with all this labour in the praise of Music, was ignorant of its principles, and insensible of its effects.

One of his greatest, though of his earliest works, is the "Essay on Criticism;" which, if he had written nothing else, would have placed him among the first critics and the first poets, as it exhibits every mode of excellence that can embellish or dignify didactic composition, selection of matter, novelty of arrangement, justness of precept, splendour of illustration, and propriety of digression. I know not whether it be pleasing to consider that he produced this piece at twenty, and never afterwards excelled it: he that delights himself with observing that such powers may be soon attained, cannot but grieve to think that life was ever at a stand.

To mention the particular beauties of the Essay would be unprofitably tedious; but I cannot forbear to observe, that the comparison of a student's progress in the sciences with the journey of a traveller in the Alps, is perhaps the best that English poetry can show. A simile, to be perfect, must both illustrate and ennoble the subject; must show it to the understanding in a clearer view, and display it to the fancy with greater dignity, but either of these qualities may be sufficient to recommend it. In didactic poetry, of which the great purpose is instruction, a simile may be praised which illustrates, though it does not ennoble; in heroics, that may be admitted which ennobles, though it does not illustrate. That it may be complete it is required to exhibit, independently of its referrences, a pleas-

* The account herein before given of this lady and her catastrophe, cited by Johnson from Ruffhead with a kind of acquiescence in the truth thereof, seems no other than might have been extracted from the verses themselves. I have in my possession a letter to Dr. Johnson containing the name of the lady; and a reference to a gentleman well known in the literary world for her history. Him I have seen; and, from a memorandum of some particulars to the purpose, communicated to him by a lady of quality, he informs me, that the unfortunate lady's name was Withinbury, corruptly pronounced Winbury; that she was in love with Pope, and would have married him; that her guardian, though she was deformed in person, looking upon such a match as beneath her, sent her to a convent; and that a noose, and not a sword, put an end to her life.—H.

ing image; for a simile is said to be a short episode. To this antiquity was so attentive, that circumstances were sometimes added, which, having no parallels, served only to fill the imagination, and produced what Perrault ludicrously called "comparisons with a long tail." In their similes the greatest writers have sometimes failed; the ship-race, compared with the chariot-race, is neither illustrated nor aggrandized; land and water make all the difference: when Apollo, running after Daphne, is likened to a grey-hound chasing a hare, there is nothing gained; the ideas of pursuit and flight are too plain to be made plainer; and a god, and the daughter of a god, are not represented much to their advantage by a hare and dog. The simile of the Alps has no useless parts, yet affords a striking picture by itself; it makes the foregoing position better understood, and enables it to take faster hold on the attention; it assists the apprehension, and elevates the fancy.

Let me likewise dwell a little on the celebrated paragraph, in which it is directed that "the sound should seem an echo to the sense;" a precept which Pope is allowed to have observed beyond any other English poet.

This notion of representative metre, and the desire of discovering frequent adaptations of the sound to the sense, have produced, in my opinion, many wild conceits and imaginary beauties. All that can furnish this representation are the sounds of the words considered singly, and the time in which they are pronounced. Every language has some words framed to exhibit the noises which they express, as *thump, rattle, growl, hiss.* These, however, are but few, and the poet cannot make them more, nor can they be of any use but when sound is to be mentioned. The time of pronunciation was in the dactylic measures of the learned languages capable of considerable variety; but that variety could be accommodated only to motion or duration, and different degrees of motion were perhaps expressed by verses rapid or slow, without much attention of the writer, when the image had full possession of his fancy; but our language having little flexibility, our verses can differ very little in their cadence. The fancied resemblances, I fear, arise sometimes merely from the ambiguity of words; there is supposed to be some relation between a *soft* line and a *soft* couch, or between *hard* syllables and *hard* fortune.

Motion, however, may be in some sort exemplified; and yet it may be suspected that, in such resemblances, the mind often governs the ear, and the sounds are estimated by their meaning. One of their most successful attempts has been to describe the labour of Sisyphus:

With many a weary step, and many a groan,
Up a high hill he heaves a huge round stone;
The huge round stone, resulting with a bound,
Thunders impetuous down, and smokes along the ground.

Who does not perceive the stone to move slowly upward, and roll violently back? But set the same numbers to another sense:

While many a merry tale, and many a song,
Cheer'd the rough road, we wish'd the rough road long.
The rough road then returning in a round,
Mock'd our impatient steps, for all was fairy ground.

We have now surely lost much of the delay, and much of the rapidity.

But, to show how little the greatest master of numbers can fix the principles of representative harmony, it will be sufficient to remark that the poet who tells us, that

When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line too labours, and the words move slow:
Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o'er the unbending corn, and skims along the main—

when he had enjoyed for about thirty years the praise of Camilla's lightness of foot, he tried another experiment upon *sound* and *time*, and produced this memorable triplet:

Waller was smooth; but Dryden taught to join
The varying verse, the full resounding line,
The long majestic march, and energy divine.

Here are the swiftness of the rapid race, and the march of slow-paced majesty, exhibited by the same poet in the same sequence of syllables, except that the exact prosodist will find the line of *swiftness* by one time longer that that of *tardiness.*

Beauties of this kind are commonly fancied; and, when real, are technical and nugatory, not to be rejected, and not to be solicited.

To the praises which have been accumulated on "The Rape of the Lock," by readers of every class, from the critic to the waiting-maid, it is difficult to make any addition. Of that which is universally allowed to be the most attractive of all ludicrous compositions, let it rather be now inquired from what sources the power of pleasing is derived.

Dr. Warburton, who excelled in critical perspicacity, has remarked, that the preternatural agents are very happily adapted to the purposes of the poem. The heathen deities can no longer gain attention; we should have turned away from a contest between Venus and Diana. The employment of allegorical persons always excites conviction of its own absurdity; they may pro-

duce effects, but cannot conduct actions: when the phantom is put in motion, it dissolves: thus Discord may raise a mutiny; but Discord cannot conduct a march, nor besiege a town. Pope brought into view a new race of beings, with powers and passions proportionate to their operation. The Sylphs and Gnomes act at the toilet and the tea-table, what more terrific and more powerful phantoms perform on the stormy ocean or the field of battle; they give their proper help, and do their proper mischief.

Pope is said, by an objector, not to have been the inventor of this petty nation; a charge which might, with more justice, have been brought against the author of the "Iliad," who doubtless adopted the religious system of his country; for what is there but the names of his agents, which Pope has not invented? Has he not assigned them characters and operations never heard of before? Has he not, at least, given them their first poetical existence? If this is not sufficient to denominate his work original, nothing original ever can be written.

In this work are exhibited, in a very high degree, the two most engaging powers of an author. New things are made familiar, and familiar things are made new. A race of aërial people, never heard of before, is presented to us in a manner so clear and easy, that the reader seeks for no further information, but immediately mingles with his new acquaintance, adopts their interests, and attends their pursuits; loves a Sylph, and detests a Gnome.

That familiar things are made new, every paragraph will prove. The subject of the poem is an event below the common incidents of common life; nothing real is introduced that is not seen so often as to be no longer regarded; yet the whole detail of a female day is here brought before us, invested with so much art of decoration, that, though nothing is disguised, every thing is striking, and we feel all the appetite of curiosity for that from which we have a thousand times turned fastidiously away.

The purpose of the poet is, as he tells us, to laugh at "the little unguarded follies of the female sex." It is therefore without justice that Dennis charges "The Rape of the Lock" with the want of a moral, and for that reason sets it below the "Lutrin," which exposes the pride and discord of the clergy. Perhaps neither Pope nor Boileau has made the world much better than he found it; but if they had both succeeded, it were easy to tell who would have deserved most from public gratitude. The freaks, and humours, and spleen, and vanity, of women, as they embroil families in discord, and fill houses with disquiet, do more to obstruct the happiness of life in a year than the ambition of the clergy in many centuries. It has been well observed, that the misery of man proceeds not from any single crush of overwhelming evil, but from small vexations continually repeated.

It is remarked by Dennis, likewise, that the machinery is superfluous; that, by all the bustle of preternatural operation, the main event is neither hastened nor retarded. To this charge an efficacious answer is not easily made. The Sylphs cannot be said to help or to oppose; and it must be allowed to imply some want of art, that their power has not been sufficiently intermingled with the action. Other parts may likewise be charged with want of connection; the game at *ombre* might be spared; but, if the lady had lost her hair while she was intent upon her cards, it might have been inferred, that those who are too fond of play will be in danger of neglecting more important interests. Those perhaps are faults; but what are such faults to so much excellence!

The Epistle of *Eloise to Abelard* is one of the most happy productions of human wit: the subject is so judiciously chosen, that it would be difficult, in turning over the annals of the world, to find another which so many circumstances concur to recommend. We regularly interest ourselves most in the fortune of those who most deserve our notice. Abelard and Eloise were conspicuous in their days for eminence of merit. The heart naturally loves truth. The adventures and misfortunes of this illustrious pair are known from undisputed history. Their fate does not leave the mind in hopeless dejection; for they both found quiet and consolation in retirement and piety. So new and so affecting is their story, that it supersedes invention; and imagination ranges at full liberty without straggling into scenes of fable.

The story thus skilfully adopted, has been diligently improved. Pope has left nothing behind him which seems more the effect of studious perseverance and laborious revisal. Here is particularly observable the *curiosa felicitas*, a fruitful soil and careful cultivation. Here is no crudeness of sense, nor asperity of language.

The sources from which sentiments which have so much vigour and efficacy have been drawn are shown to be the mystic writers by the learned author of the "Essay on the Life and Writings of Pope;" a book which teaches how the brow of Criticism may be smoothed, and how she may be enabled, with all her severity, to attract and to delight.

The train of my disquisition has now conducted me to that poetical wonder, the translation of the "Iliad," a performance which no age or nation can pretend to equal. To the Greeks translation was almost unknown; it was totally unknown to the inhabitants of Greece. They had no recourse to the barbarians

for poetical beauties, but sought for every thing in Homer, where, indeed, there is but little which they might not find.

The Italians have been very diligent translators; but I can hear of no version, unless perhaps Anguilara's Ovid may be excepted, which s read with eagerness. The "Iliad" of Salvini every reader may discover to be punctiliously exact; but it seems to be the work of a linguist skilfully pedantic; and his countrymen, the proper judges of its power to please, reject it with disgust.

Their predecessors, the Romans, have left some specimens of translations behind them, and that employment must have had some credit in which Tully and Germanicus engaged; but, unless we suppose, what is perhaps true, that the plays of Terence were versions of Menander, nothing translated seems ever to have risen to high reputation. The French, in the meridian hour of their learning, were very laudably industrious to enrich their own language with the wisdom of the ancients; but found themselves reduced, by whatever necessity, to turn the Greek and Roman poetry into prose. Whoever could read an author could translate him. From such rivals little can be feared.

The chief help of Pope in this arduous undertaking was drawn from the versions of Dryden. Virgil had borrowed much of his imagery from Homer, and part of the debt was now paid by his translator. Pope searched the pages of Dryden for happy combinations of heroic diction; but it will not be denied that he added much to what he found. He cultivated our language with so much diligence and art, that he has left in his Homer a treasure of poetical elegances to posterity. His version may be said to have tuned the English tongue; for since its appearance no writer, however deficient in other powers, has wanted melody. Such a series of lines, so elaborately corrected, and so sweetly modulated, took possession of the public ear; the vulgar was enamoured of the poem, and the learned wondered at the translation.

But, in the most general applause, discordant voices will always be heard. It has been objected by some, who wish to be numbered among the sons of learning, that Pope's version of Homer is not Homerical; that it exhibits no resemblance of the original and characteristic manner of the Father of Poetry, as it wants his awful simplicity, his artless grandeur,* his unaffected majesty. This cannot be totally denied; but it must be remembered, that *necessitas quod cogit defendit*; that may be lawfully done which cannot be forborne. Time and place will always enforce regard. In estimating this translation, consideration must be had of the nature of our language, the form of our metre, and, above all, of the change which two thousand years have made in the modes of life and the habits of thought. Virgil wrote in a language of the same general fabric with that of Homer, in verses of the same measure, and in an age nearer to Homer's time by eighteen hundred years; yet he found, even then, the state of the world so much altered, and the demand for elegance so much increased, that mere nature would be endured no longer; and perhaps, in the multitude of borrowed passages, very few can be shown which he has not embellished.

There is a time when nations, emerging from barbarity, and falling into regular subordination, gain leisure to grow wise, and feel the shame of ignorance and the craving pain of unsatisfied curiosity. To this hunger of the mind plain sense is grateful; that which fills the void removes uneasiness, and to be free from pain for a while is pleasure; but repletion generates fastidiousness; a saturated intellect soon becomes luxurious, and knowledge finds no willing reception till it is recommended by artificial diction. Thus it will be found, in the progress of learning, that in all nations the first writers are simple, and that every age improves in elegance. One refinement always makes way for another; and what was expedient to Virgil was necessary to Pope.

I suppose many readers of the English "Iliad," when they have been touched with some unexpected beauty of the lighter kind, have tried to enjoy it in the original, where, alas! it was not to be found. Homer doubtless owes to his translator many Ovidian graces not exactly suitable to his character; but to have added can be no great crime, if nothing be taken away. Elegance is surely to be desired, if it be not gained at the expense of dignity. A hero would wish to be loved, as well as to be reverenced.

To a thousand cavils one answer is sufficient the purpose of a writer is to be read, and th criticism which would destroy the power o pleasing must be blown aside. Pope wrote fo his own age and his own nation: he knew tha it was necessary to colour the images and poin the sentiments of his author; he therefor

* Bentley was one of these. He and Pope, soon after the publication of Homer, met at Dr. Mead's at dinner; when Pope, desirous of his opinion of the translation, addressed him thus: "Dr. Bentley, I ordered my bookseller to send you your books; I hope you received them." Bentley, who had purposely avoided saying any thing about Homer, pretended not to understand him, and asked, 'Books books! what books?"—"My Homer," replied Pope "which you did me the honour to subscribe for." "Oh," said Bentley, "ay, now I recollect—you translation:—it is a pretty poem, Mr. Pope; but yo must not call it Homer."—H.

made him graceful, but lost him some of his sublimity.

The copious notes with which the version is accompanied, and by which it is recommended to many readers, though they were undoubtedly written to swell the volumes, ought not to pass without praise; commentaries which attract the reader by the pleasure of perusal have not often appeared; the notes of others are read to clear difficulties, those of Pope to vary entertainment.

It has however been objected with sufficient reason, that there is in the commentary too much of unseasonable levity and affected gayety; that too many appeals are made to the ladies, and the ease which is so carefully preserved is sometimes the ease of a trifler. Every art has its terms, and every kind of instruction its proper style; the gravity of common critics may be tedious, but is less despicable than childish merriment.

Of the "Odyssey" nothing remains to be observed; the same general praise may be given to both translations, and a particular examination of either would require a large volume. The notes were written by Broome, who endeavoured, not unsuccessfully, to imitate his master.

Of the "Dunciad" the hint is confessedly taken from Dryden's "Mac Flecknoe;" but the plan is so enlarged and diversified as justly to claim the praise of an original, and affords the best specimen that has yet appeared of personal satire ludicrously pompous.

That the design was moral, whatever the author might tell either his readers or himself, I am not convinced. The first motive was the desire of revenging the contempt in which Theobald had treated his Shakspeare, and regaining the honour which he had lost, by crushing his opponent. Theobald was not of bulk enough to fill a poem, and therefore it was necessary to find other enemies with other names, at whose expense he might divert the public.

In this design there was petulance and malignity enough; but I cannot think it very criminal. An author places himself uncalled before the tribunal of criticism, and solicits fame at the hazard of disgrace. Dulness or deformity are not culpable in themselves, but may be very justly reproached when they pretend to the honour of wit or the influence of beauty. If bad writers were to pass without reprehension, what should restrain them? *impune diem consumpserit ingens Telephus;* and upon bad writers only will censure have much effect. The satire which brought Theobald and Moore into contempt dropped impotent from Bentley, like the javelin of Priam.

All truth is valuable, and satirical criticism may be considered as useful when it rectifies error and improves judgment: he that refines the public taste is a public benefactor.

The beauties of this poem are well known; its chief fault is the grossness of its images. Pope and Swift had an unnatural delight in ideas physically impure, such as every other tongue utters with unwillingness, and of which every ear shrinks from the mention.

But even this fault, offensive as it is, may be forgiven for the excellence of other passages; such as the formation and dissolution of Moore, the account of the traveller, the misfortune of the florist, and the crowded thoughts and stately numbers which dignify the concluding paragraph.

The alterations which have been made in the "Dunciad," not always for the better, require that it should be published, with all its variations.

The "Essay on Man" was a work of great labour and long consideration, but certainly not the happiest of Pope's performances. The subject is perhaps not very proper for poetry, and the poet was not sufficiently master of his subject; metaphysical morality was to him a new study: he was proud of his acquisitions, and, supposing himself master of great secrets, was in haste to teach what he had not learned. Thus he tells us, in the first epistle, that from the nature of the supreme Being may be deduced an order of beings such as mankind, because infinite excellence can do only what is best. He finds out that these beings must be "somewhere;" and that "all the question is, whether man be in a wrong place." Surely if, according to the poet's Leibnitian reasoning, we may infer that man ought to be, only because he is, we may allow that this place is the right place, because he has it. Supreme Wisdom is not less infallible in disposing than in creating. But what is meant by *somewhere* and *place*, and *wrong place*, it had been vain to ask Pope, who probably had never asked himself.

Having exalted himself into the chair of wisdom, he tells us much that every man knows, and much that he does not know himself; that we see but little, and that the order of the universe is beyond our comprehension; an opinion not very uncommon; and that there is a chain of subordinate beings "from infinite to nothing," of which himself and his readers are equally ignorant. But he gives us one comfort, which without his help he supposes unattainable, in the position, "that though we are fools, yet God is wise."

The Essay affords an egregious instance of the predominance of genius, the dazzling splendour of imagery, and the seductive powers of eloquence. Never were penury of knowledge and vulgarity of sentiment so happily disguised. The reader feels his mind full, though he learns nothing; and, when he meets it in its new array, no longer knows the talk of his mother and his nurse. When these wonder-working sounds

sink into sense, and the doctrine of the Essay, disrobed of its ornaments, is left to the powers of its naked excellence, what shall we discover? —That we are, in comparison with our Creator, very weak and ignorant; that we do not uphold the chain of existence; and that we could not make one another with more skill than we are made. We may learn yet more; that the arts of human life were copied from the instinctive operations of other animals; that, if the world be made for man, it may be said that man was made for geese. To those profound principles of natural knowledge are added some moral instructions equally new; that self-interest, well understood, will produce social concord; that men are mutual gainers by mutual benefits; that evil is sometimes balanced by good; that human advantages are unstable and fallacious, of uncertain duration and doubtful effect; that our true honour is, not to have a great part, but to act it well; that virtue only is our own; and that happiness is always in our power.

Surely a man of no very comprehensive search may venture to say that he has heard all this before; but it was never till now recommended by such a blaze of embellishments, or such sweetness of melody. The vigorous contraction of some thoughts, the luxuriant amplification of others, the incidental illustrations, and sometimes the dignity, sometimes the softness, of the verses, enchain philosophy, suspend criticism, and oppress judgment by overpowering pleasure.

This is true of many paragraphs; yet, if I had undertaken to exemplify Pope's felicity of composition before a rigid critic, I should not select the "Essay on Man;" for it contains more lines unsuccessfully laboured, more harshness of diction, more thoughts imperfectly expressed, more levity without elegance, and more heaviness without strength, than will easily be found in all his other works.

The *Characters of Men and Women* are the product of diligent speculation upon human life; much labour has been bestowed upon them, and Pope very seldom laboured in vain. That his excellence may be properly estimated, I recommend a comparison of his *Characters of Women* with Boileau's satire; it will then be seen with how much more perspicacity female nature is investigated and female excellence selected; and he surely is no mean writer to whom Boileau should be found inferior. The *Characters of Men*, however, are written with more, if not with deeper thought, and exhibit many passages exquisitely beautiful. The "Gem and the Flower" will not easily be equalled. In the women's part are some defects; the character of Atossa is not so neatly finished as that of Clodio; and some of the female characters may be found perhaps more frequently among men; what is said of Philomede was true of Prior.

In the Epistles to Lord Bathurst and Lord Burlington, Dr. Warburton has endeavoured to find a train of thought which was never in the writer's head, and to support his hypothesis, has printed that first which was published last. In one, the most valuable passage is perhaps the Elegy on "Good Sense;" and the other, the "End of the Duke of Buckingham."

The epistle to Arbuthnot, now arbitrarily called "The Prologue to the Satires," is a performance consisting, as it seems, of many fragments wrought into one design, which by this union of scattered beauties contains more striking paragraphs than could probably have been brought together into an occasional work. As there is no stronger motive to exertion than self-defence, no part has more elegance, spirit, or dignity, than the poet's vindication of his own character. The meanest passage is the satire upon Sporus.

Of the two poems which derived their names from the year, and which are called "The Epilogue to the Satires," it was very justly remarked by Savage, that the second was in the whole more strongly conceived, and more equally supported, but that it had no single passage equal to the contention in the first for the dignity of vice and the celebration of the triumph of corruption.

The imitations of Horace seem to have been written as relaxations of his genius. This employment became his favourite by its facility; the plan was ready to his hand, and nothing was required but to accommodate as he could the sentiments of an old author to recent facts or familiar images; but what is easy is seldom excellent: such imitations cannot give pleasure to common readers: the man of learning may be sometimes surprised and delighted by an unexpected parallel; but the comparison requires knowledge of the original, which will likewise often detect strained applications. Between Roman images and English manners, there will be an irreconcileable dissimilitude, and the work will be generally uncouth and party-coloured, neither original nor translated, neither ancient nor modern.*

* In one of these poems is a couplet, to which belongs a story that I once heard the Reverend Dr Ridley relate:

> "Slander or poison dread from Delia's rage:
> Harsh words, or hanging, if your judge be ****."

Sir Francis Page, a judge well known in his time, conceiving that his name was meant to fill up the blank, sent his clerk to Mr. Pope, to complain of the insult. Pope told the young man that the blank might be supplied by many monosyllables other

Pope had, in proportions very nicely adjusted to each other, all the qualities that constitute genius. He had invention, by which new trains of events are formed, and new scenes of imagery displayed, as in the "Rape of the Lock;" and by which extrinsic and adventitious embellishments and illustrations are connected with a known subject, as in the "Essay on Criticism." He had imagination, which strongly impresses on the writer's mind, and enables him to convey to the reader, the various forms of nature, incidents of life, and energies of passion, as in his "Eloisa," "Windsor Forest," and the "Ethic Epistles." He had judgment, which selects from life or nature what the present purpose requires, and, by separating the essence of things from its concomitants, often makes the representation more powerful than the reality; and he had colours of language always before him, ready to decorate his matter with every grace of elegant expression, as when he accommodates his diction to the wonderful multiplicity of Homer's sentiments and descriptions.

Poetical expression includes sound as well as meaning: "Music," says Dryden, "is inarticulate poetry;" among the excellences of Pope, therefore, must be mentioned the melody of his metre. By perusing the works of Dryden he discovered the most perfect fabric of English verse, and habituated himself to that only which he found the best; in consequence of which restraint, his poetry has been censured as too uniformly musical, and as glutting the ear with unvaried sweetness. I suspect this objection to be the cant of those who judge by principles rather than perception; and who would even themselves have less pleasure in his works, if he had tried to relieve attention by studied discords, or affected to break his lines and vary his pauses.

But though he was thus careful of his versification, he did not oppress his powers with superfluous rigour. He seems to have thought with Boileau, that the practice of writing might be refined till the difficulty should overbalance the advantage. The construction of his language is not always strictly grammatical: with those rhymes which prescription had conjoined, he contented himself, without regard to Swift's remonstrances, though there was no striking consonance; nor was he very careful to vary his terminations, or to refuse admission, at a small distance, to the same rhymes.

To Swift's edict for the exclusion of Alexandrines and triplets he paid little regard; he admitted them, but, in the opinion of Fenton, too rarely; he uses them more liberally in his translation than his poems.

He has a few double rhymes; and always, I think, unsuccessfully, except once in the "Rape of the Lock."

Expletives he very early ejected from his verses; but he now and then admits an epithet rather commodious than important. Each of the six first lines of the "Iliad" might lose two syllables with very little diminution of the meaning; and sometimes, after all his art and labour, one verse seems to be made for the sake of another. In his latter productions the diction is sometimes vitiated by French idioms, with which Bolingbroke had perhaps infected him.

I have been told that the couplet by which he declared his own ear to be most gratified was this:

> Lo, where Mæotis sleeps, and hardly flows
> The freezing Tanais through a waste of snows.

But the reason of this preference I cannot discover.

It is remarked by Watts, that there is scarcely a happy combination of words, or a phrase poetically elegant in the English language, which Pope has not inserted into his version of Homer. How he obtained possession of so many beauties of speech, it were desirable to know. That he gleaned from authors, obscure as well as eminent, what he thought brilliant or useful, and preserved it all in a regular collection, is not unlikely. When, in his last years, Hall's Satires were shown him, he wished that he had seen them sooner.

New sentiments and new images others may produce; but to attempt any further improvement of versification will be dangerous. Art and diligence have now done their best, and what shall be added will be the effort of tedious toil and needless curiosity.

After all this, it is surely superfluous to answer the question that has once been asked, Whether Pope was a poet? otherwise than by asking, in return, If Pope be not a poet, where is poetry to be found? To circumscribe poetry by a definition will only show the narrowness of the definer, though a definition which shall exclude Pope will not easily be made. Let us look round upon the present time, and back upon the past; let us inquire to whom the voice of mankind has decreed the wreath of poetry; let their productions be examined, and their claims stated, and the pretensions of Pope will be no more disputed. Had he given the world only his version, the name of poet must have been allowed him; if the writer of the "Iliad" were to class his successors, he would assign a very high place to his translator, without requiring any other evidence of genius.

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than the judge's name:—"But, Sir," said the clerk, "the judge says that no other word will make sense of the passage." "So then it seems," says Pope, "your master is not only a judge, but a poet: as that is the case, the odds are against me. Give my respects to the judge, and tell him, I will not contend with one that has the advantage of me, and he may fill up the blank as he pleases."—H.

The following letter, of which the original is in the hands of Lord Hardwicke, was communicated to me by the kindness of Mr. Jodrell.

" To Mr. Bridges, at the Bishop of London's, at Fulham.

" Sir,

" The favour of your letter, with your remark, can never be enough acknowledged; and the speed with which you discharged so troublesome a task doubles the obligation.

" I must own, you have pleased me very much by commendations so ill bestowed upon me; but, I assure you, much more by the frankness of your censure, which I ought to take the more kindly of the two, as it is more advantageous to a scribbler to be improved in his judgment than to be soothed in his vanity. The greater part of those deviations from the Greek which you have observed, I was led into by Chapman and Hobbes; who are, it seems, as much celebrated for their knowledge of the original, as they are decried for the badness of their translations. Chapman pretends to have restored the genuine sense of the author, from the mistakes of all former explainers, in several hundred places; and the Cambridge editors of the large Homer, in Greek and Latin, attributed so much to Hobbes, that they confess they have corrected the old Latin interpretation very often by his version. For my part, I generally took the author's meaning to be as you have explained it; yet their authority, joined to the knowledge of my own imperfectness in the language, overruled me. However, Sir, you may be confident I think you in the right, because you happen to be of my opinion; for men (let them say what they will) never approve any other's sense, but as it squares with their own. But you have made me much more proud of, and positive in my judgment, since it is strengthened by yours. I think your criticisms which regard the expression very just, and shall make my profit of them; to give you some proof that I am in earnest, I will alter three verses on your bare objection, though I have Mr. Dryden's example for each of them. And this, I hope, you will account no small piece of obedience from one who values the authority of one true poet above that of twenty critics or commentators. But, though I speak thus of commentators, I will continue to read carefully all I can procure, to make up, that way, for my own want of critical understanding in the original beauties of Homer. Though the greatest of them are certainly those of invention and design, which are not at all confined to the language; for the distinguishing excellences of Homer are (by the consent of the best critics of all nations) first in the manners (which include all the speeches, as being no other than the representations of each person's manners by his words;) and then in that rapture and fire which carries you away with him, with that wonderful force, that no man who has a true poetical spirit is master of himself while he reads him. Homer makes you interested and concerned before you are aware, all at once, whereas Virgil does it by soft degrees. This, I believe, is what a translator of Homer ought principally to imitate; and it is very hard for any translator to come up to it, because the chief reason why all translations fall short of their originals is, that the very constraint they are obliged to renders them heavy and dispirited.

" The great beauty of Homer's language, as I take it, consists in that noble simplicity which runs through all his works; (and yet his diction, contrary to what one would imagine consistent with simplicity, is at the same time very copious.) I don't know how I have run into this pedantry in a letter, but I find I have said too much, as well as spoken too inconsiderately: what farther thoughts I have upon this subject I shall be glad to communicate to you (for my own improvement) when we meet; which is a happiness I very earnestly desire, as I do likewise some opportunity of proving how much I think myself obliged to your friendship, and how truly I am, Sir,

" Your most faithful, humble servant,

" A. Pope."

The criticism upon Pope's Epitaphs, which was printed in " The Universal Visitor," is placed here, being too minute and particular to be inserted in the Life.

Every art is best taught by example. Nothing contributes more to the cultivation of propriety than remarks on the works of those who have most excelled. I shall therefore endeavour, at this *visit*, to entertain the young students in poetry with an examination of Pope's Epitaphs.

To define an epitaph is useless; every one knows that it is an inscription on a tomb. An epitaph, therefore, implies no particular character of writing, but may be composed in verse or prose. It is indeed commonly panegyrical; because we are seldom distinguished with a stone but by our friends; but it has no rule to restrain or modify it, except this, that it ought not to be longer than common beholders may be expected to have leisure and patience to peruse.

I.

On Charles *Earl of* Dorset, *in the Church of Wythyham in Sussex.*

Dorset, the grace of courts, the muse's pride,
Patron of arts, and judge of nature, died—

The scourge of pride, though sanctified or great;
Of fops in learning, and of knaves in state;
Yet soft in nature, though severe his lay,
His anger moral, and his wisdom gay.
Blest satirist! who touch'd the means so true,
As show'd, Vice had his hate and pity too.
Blest courtier! who could king and country please,
Yet sacred kept his friendships and his ease.
Blest peer! his great forefather's every grace
Reflecting, and reflected on his race;
Where other Buckhursts, other Dorsets shine,
And patriots still, or poets, deck the line.

The first distich of this epitaph contains a kind of information which few would want, that the man for whom the tomb was erected died. There are indeed some qualities worthy of praise ascribed to the dead, but none that were likely to exempt him from the lot of man, or incline us much to wonder that he should die. What is meant by "judge of nature," is not easy to say. Nature is not the object of human judgment; for it is vain to judge where we cannot alter. If by nature is meant what is commonly called nature by the critics, a just representation of things really existing and actions really performed, nature cannot be properly opposed to art; nature being, in this sense, only the best effect of art.

The scourge of pride—

Of this couplet, the second line is not, what is intended, an illustration of the former. Pride in the great is indeed well enough connected with knaves in state, though knaves is a word rather too ludicrous and light; but the mention of sanctified pride will not lead the thoughts to fops in learning, but rather to some species of tyranny or oppression, something more gloomy and more formidable than foppery.

Yet soft his nature—

This is a high compliment, but was not first bestowed on Dorset by Pope. The next verse is extremely beautiful.

Blest satirist!—

In this distich is another line of which Pope was not the author. I do not mean to blame these imitations with much harshness; in long performances they are scarcely to be avoided, and in shorter they may be indulged, because the train of the composition may naturally involve them, or the scantiness of the subject allow little choice. However, what is borrowed is not to be enjoyed as our own; and it is the business of critical justice to give every bird of the muses his proper feather.

Blest courtier!

Whether a courtier can properly be commended for keeping his *ease sacred*, may perhaps be disputable. To please king and country, without sacrificing friendship to any change of times, was a very uncommon instance of prudence or felicity, and deserved to be kept separate from so poor a commendation as care of his ease. I wish our poets would attend a little more accurately to the use of the word sacred, which surely should never be applied in a serious composition but where some reference may be made to a higher Being, or where some duty is exacted or implied. A man may keep his friendship sacred, because promises of friendship are very awful ties; but methinks he cannot, but in a burlesque sense, be said to keep his ease sacred.

Blest peer!

The blessing ascribed to the peer has no connection with his peerage; they might happen to any other man whose ancestors were remembered, or whose posterity are likely to be regarded.

I know not whether this epitaph be worthy either of the writer or the man entombed.

II.

On Sir William Trumbull, *one of the principal Secretaries of State to* King William III. *who, having resigned his place, died in his retirement at Easthamstead in Berkshire*, 1716.

A pleasing form; a firm, yet cautious mind;
Sincere, though prudent, constant, yet resign'd;
Honour unchanged, a principle profest,
Fix'd to one side, but moderate to the rest;
An honest courtier, yet a patriot too;
Just to his prince, and to his country true;
Fill'd with the sense of age, the fire of youth,
A scorn of wrangling, yet a zeal for truth;
A generous faith, from superstition free;
A love to peace, and hate of tyranny;
Such this man was; who, now from earth removed,
At length enjoys that liberty he loved.

In this epitaph, as in many others, there appears, at the first view, a fault which I think scarcely any beauty can compensate. The name is omitted. The end of an epitaph is to convey some account of the dead; and to what purpose is any thing told of him whose name is concealed? An epitaph, and a history of a nameless hero, are equally absurd, since the virtues and qualities so recounted in either are scattered at the mercy of fortune to be appropriated by guess. The name, it is true, may be read upon the stone; but what obligation has it to the poet, whose verses wander over the earth and leave their subject behind them, and who is forced, like an unskilful painter, to make his purpose known by adventitious help?

This epitaph is wholly without elevation, and it r

contains nothing striking or particular; but the poet is not to be blamed for the defects of his subject. He said, perhaps, the best that could be said. There are, however, some defects which were not made necessary by the character in which he was employed. There is no opposition between an *honest courtier* and a *patriot*; for, an *honest courtier* cannot but be a *patriot*.

It was unsuitable to the nicety required in short compositions to close his verse with the word *too:* every rhyme should be a word of emphasis; nor can this rule be safely neglected, except where the length of the poem makes slight inaccuracies excusable, or allows room for beauties sufficient to overpower the effects of petty faults.

At the beginning of the seventh line the word *filled* is weak and prosaic, having no particular adaptation to any of the words that follow it.

The thought in the last line is impertinent, having no connection with the foregoing character, nor with the condition of the man described. Had the epitaph been written on the poor conspirator* who died lately in prison after a confinement of more than forty years, without any crime proved against him, the sentiment had been just and pathetical; but why should Trumbull be congratulated upon his liberty, who had never known restraint?

III.

On the Hon. SIMON HARCOURT, *only Son of the Lord Chancellor* HARCOURT, *at the Church of Stanton-Harcourt in Oxfordshire,* 1720.

To this sad shrine, whoe'er thou art, draw near;
Here lies the friend most loved, the son most dear:
Who ne'er knew joy, but friendship might divide,
Or gave his father grief but when he died.
How vain is reason! eloquence how weak!
If Pope must tell what Harcourt cannot speak.
Oh! let thy once-loved friend inscribe thy stone,
And with a father's sorrows mix his own!

This epitaph is principally remarkable for the artful introduction of the name, which is inserted with a peculiar felicity, to which chance must concur with genius, which no man can hope to attain twice, and which cannot be copied but with servile imitation.

I cannot but wish that of this inscription the two last lines had been omitted, as they take away from the energy what they do not add to the sense.

* Major Bernardi, who died in Newgate, Sept. 20, 1736. See Gent. Mag. vol. 1. p. 125.—N.

IV.

On JAMES CRAGGS, *Esq.*
In Westminster Abbey.

JACOBVS CRAGGS,
REGI MAGNÆ BRITANNIÆ A SECRETIS
ET CONSILIIS SANCTIORIBVS
PRINCIPIS PARITER AC POPVLI AMOR ET DELICIÆ:
VIXIT TITVLIS ET INVIDIA MAJOR
ANNOS HEV PAVCOS, XXXV.
OB. FEB. XVI. MDCCXX.

Statesman, yet friend to truth! of soul sincere,
In action faithful, and in honour clear!
Who broke no promise, served no private end,
Who gain'd no title, and who lost no friend!
Ennobled by himself, by all approved,
Praised, wept, and honour'd by the Muse he loved!

The lines on Craggs were not originally intended for an epitaph; and therefore some faults are to be imputed to the violence with which they are torn from the poem that first contained them. We may, however, observe some defects. There is a redundancy of words in the first couplet: it is superfluous to tell of him who was *sincere, true,* and *faithful,* that he was *in honour clear.*

There seems to be an opposition intended in the fourth line, which is not very obvious: where is the relation between the two positions, that he *gained no title,* and *lost no friend?*

It may be proper here to remark the absurdity of joining in the same inscription Latin and English, or verse and prose. If either language be preferable to the other, let that only be used; for no reason can be given why part of the information should be given in one tongue, and part in another, on a tomb more than in any other place, or any other occasion; and to tell all that can be conveniently told in verse, and then to call in the help of prose, has always the appearance of a very artless expedient, or of an attempt unaccomplished. Such an epitaph resembles the conversation of a foreigner, who tells part of his meaning by words, and conveys part by signs.

V.

Intended for Mr. ROWE.
*In Westminster Abbey.**

Thy relics, Rowe, to this fair urn we trust,
And, sacred, place by Dryden's awful dust;
Beneath a rude and nameless stone he lies,
To which thy tomb shall guide inquiring eyes

* This was altered much for the better as it now stands on the monument in the Abbey, erected to Rowe and his daughter.—WARB.

Peace to thy gentle shade, and endless rest!
Blest in thy genius, in thy love too blest!
One grateful woman to thy fame supplies
What a whole thankless land to his denies.

Of this inscription the chief fault is, that it belongs less to Rowe, for whom it is written, than to Dryden, who was buried near him; and indeed gives very little information concerning either.

To wish *Peace to thy shade* is too mythological to be admitted into a Christian temple: the ancient worship has infected almost all our other compositions, and might therefore be contented to spare our epitaphs. Let fiction at least cease with life, and let us be serious over the grave.

VI.

On Mrs. Corbet,
*Who died of a Cancer in her Breast.**

Here rests a woman, good without pretence,
Blest with plain reason and with sober sense;
No conquest she, but o'er herself, desired:
No arts essay'd, but not to be admired.
Passion and pride were to her soul unknown,
Convinced that virtue only is our own.
So unaffected, so composed a mind,
So firm, yet soft, so strong, yet so refined,
Heaven, as its purest gold, by tortures tried;
The saint sustain'd it, but the woman died.

I have always considered this as the most valuable of all Pope's epitaphs; the subject of it is a character not discriminated by any shining or eminent peculiarities; yet that which really makes, though not the splendour, the felicity of life, and that which every wise man will choose for his final and lasting companion in the langour of age, in the quiet of privacy, when he departs weary and disgusted from the ostentatious, the volatile, and the vain. Of such a character, which the dull overlook, and the gay despise, it was fit that the value should be made known, and the dignity established. Domestic virtue, as it is exerted without great occasions, or conspicuous consequences, in an even unnoted tenor, required the genius of Pope to display it in such a manner as might attract regard, and enforce reverence. Who can forbear to lament that this amiable woman has no name in the verses?

If the particular lines of this inscription be examined, it will appear less faulty than the rest. There is scarcely one line taken from common-places, unless it be that in which *only virtue* is said to be *our own*. I once heard a lady of great beauty and elegance object to the fourth line, that it contained an unnatural and incredible panegyric. Of this let the ladies judge.

* In the north aisle of the parish church of St. Marguret, Westminster.—H.

VII.

On the Monument of the Hon. Robert Digby, *and of his Sister* Mary, *erected by their Father, the* Lord Digby, *in the Church of Sherborne in Dorsetshire*, 1727.

Go! fair example of untainted youth,
Of modest wisdom and pacific truth:
Composed in sufferings, and in joy sedate,
Good without noise, without pretension great:
Just of thy word, in every thought sincere,
Who knew no wish but what the world might hear:
Of softest manners, unaffected mind,
Lover of peace, and friend of human kind:
Go, live! for heaven's eternal year is thine,
Go, and exalt thy moral to divine.
And thou, blest maid! attendant on his doom,
Pensive hast follow'd to the silent tomb;
Steer'd the same course to the same quiet shore,
Not parted long, and now to part no more!
Go, then, where only bliss sincere is known!
Go, where to love and to enjoy are one!
Yet take these tears, Mortality's relief,
And, till we share your joys, forgive our grief:
These little rites, a stone, a verse receive,
'Tis all a father, all a friend can give!

This epitaph contains of the brother only a general indiscriminate character, and of the sister tells nothing but that she died. The difficulty in writing epitaphs is to give a particular and appropriate praise. This, however, is not always to be performed, whatever be the diligence or ability of the writer; for the greater part of mankind *have no character at all*, have little that distinguishes them from others equally good or bad, and therefore nothing can be said of them which may not be applied with equal propriety to a thousand more. It is indeed no great panegyric, that there is inclosed in this tomb one who was born in one year and died in another; yet many useful and amiable lives have been spent which yet leave little materials for any other memorial. These are however not the proper subjects of poetry; and whenever friendship, or any other motive, obliges a poet to write on such subjects, he must be forgiven if he sometimes wanders in generalities, and utters the same praises over different tombs.

The scantiness of human praises can scarcely be made more apparent, than by remarking how often Pope has, in the few epitaphs which he composed, found it necessary to borrow from himself. The fourteen epitaphs which he has written, comprise about a hundred and forty lines, in which there are more repetitions than will easily be found in all the rest of his works. In the eight lines which make the character of Digby, there is scarce any thought, or word, which may not be found in the other epitaphs.

The ninth line, which is far the strongest and most elegant, is borrowed from Dryden. The

conclusion is the same with that on Harcourt, but is here more elegant and better connected.

VIII.

On Sir Godfrey Kneller.
In Westminster-Abbey, 1723.

Kneller, by Heaven, and not a master taught,
Whose art was nature and whose pictures thought,
Now for two ages, having snatch'd from fate
Whate'er was beauteous or whate'er was great,
Lies crown'd with prince's honours, poet's lays,
Due to his merit and brave thirst of praise.
Living, great Nature fear'd he might outvie
Her works; and dying, fears herself may die.

Of this epitaph the first couplet is good, the second not bad, the third is deformed with a broken metaphor, the word *crowned* not being applicable to the *honours* or the *lays;* and the fourth is not only borrowed from the epitaph on Raphael, but of a very harsh construction.

IX.

On General Henry Withers.

In Westminster-Abbey, 1729.

Here, Withers, rest! thou bravest, gentlest mind!
Thy country's friend, but more of human kind.
O! born to arms! O! worth in youth approved!
O! soft humanity in age beloved!
For thee the hardy veteran drops a tear,
And the gay courtier feels the sigh sincere.
Withers, adieu! yet not with thee remove
Thy martial spirit or thy social love!
Amidst corruption, luxury, and rage,
Still leave some ancient virtues to our age;
Nor let us say (those English glories gone)
The last true Briton lies beneath this stone.

The epitaph on Withers affords another instance of common-places, though somewhat diversified by mingled qualities and the peculiarity of a profession.

The second couplet is abrupt, general, and unpleasing; exclamation seldom succeeds in our language; and, I think, it may be observed that the particle O! used at the beginning of the sentence always offends.

The third couplet is more happy; the value expressed for him, by different sorts of men, raises him to esteem: there is yet something of the common cant of superficial satirists, who suppose that the insincerity of the courtier destroys all his sensations, and that he is equally a dissembler to the living and the dead.

At the third couplet I should wish the epitaph to close, but that I should be unwilling to lose the two next lines, which yet are dearly bought if they cannot be retained without the four that follow them.

X.

On Mr. Elijah Fenton.
At Easthamstead in Berkshire, 1730.

This modest stone, what few vain marbles can,
May truly say, Here lies an honest man:
A poet, blest beyond the poet's fate,
Whom Heaven kept sacred from the proud and great:
Foe to loud praise, and friend to learned ease,
Content with science in the vale of peace.
Calmly he look'd on either life, and here
Saw nothing to regret, or there to fear;
From Nature's temperate feast rose satisfied,
Thank'd Heaven that he lived, and that he died.

The first couplet of this epitaph is borrowed from Crashaw. The four next lines contain a species of praise peculiar, original, and just. Here, therefore, the inscription should have ended, the latter part containing nothing but what is common to every man who is wise and good. The character of Fenton was so amiable, that I cannot forbear to wish for some poet or biographer to display it more fully for the advantage of posterity. If he did not stand in the first rank of genius, he may claim a place in the second; and, whatever criticism may object to his writings, censure could find very little to blame in his life.

XI.

On Mr. Gay.
In Westminster-Abbey, 1732.

Of manners gentle, of affections mild;
In wit, a man; simplicity, a child;
With native humour tempering virtuous rage,
Form'd to delight at once and lash the age:
Above temptation in a low estate,
And uncorrupted, e'en among the great:
A safe companion and an easy friend,
Unblamed through life, lamented in thy end,
These are thy honours! not that here thy bust
Is mix'd with heroes, or with kings thy dust;
But that the worthy and the good shall say,
Striking their pensive bosoms—Here lies Gay.

As Gay was the favourite of our Author, this epitaph was probably written with an uncommon degree of attention; yet it is not more successfully executed than the rest, for it will not always happen that the success of a poet is proportionate to his labour. The same observation may be extended to all works of imagination, which are often influenced by causes wholly out of the performer's power, by hints of which he perceives not the origin, by sudden elevations of mind which he cannot produce himself, and which sometimes rise when he expects them least.

The two parts of the first line are only echoes of each other; *gentle manners* and *mild affec-*

tions, if they mean any thing, must mean the same.

That Gay was a *man in wit* is a very frigid commendation; to have the wit of a man is not much for a poet. The *wit of man*,* and the *simplicity of a child*, make a poor and vulgar contrast, and raise no ideas of excellence either intellectual or moral.

In the next couplet *rage* is less properly introduced after the mention of *mildness* and *gentleness*, which are made the constituents of his character; for a man so *mild* and *gentle* to *temper* his *rage* was not difficult.

The next line is inharmonious in its sound and mean in its conception; the opposition is obvious, and the word *lash*, used absolutely, and without any modification, is gross and improper.

To be *above temptation* in poverty, and *free from corruption among the great*, is indeed such a peculiarity as deserved notice. But to be a *safe companion* is a praise merely negative, arising not from possession of virtue, but the absence of vice, and that one of the most odious.

As little can be added to his character by asserting that he was *lamented in his end*. Every man that dies is, at least by the writer of his epitaph, supposed to be lamented; and therefore this general lamentation does no honour to Gay.

The first eight lines have no grammar; the adjectives are without any substantive, and the epithets without a subject.

The thought in the last line, that Gay is buried in the bosoms of the *worthy* and the *good*, who are distinguished only to lengthen the line, is so dark that few understand it; and so harsh, when it is explained, that still fewer approve.

XII.

Intended for Sir Isaac Newton.

In Westminster-Abbey.

ISAACUS NEWTONIUS:

Quem Immortalem
Testantur, *Tempus, Natura, Cœtum*,
Mortalem
Hoc marmor fatetur.
Nature and Nature's laws, lay hid in night,
God said, *Let Newton be!* And all was light.

Of this epitaph, short as it is, the faults seem not to be very few. Why part should be Latin, and part English, it is not easy to discover. In the Latin the opposition of *Immortalis* and *Mortalis* is a mere sound, or a mere quibble; he is not *immortal* in any sense contrary to that in which he is *mortal*.

In the verses the thought is obvious, and the words *night* and *light* are too nearly allied.

XIII.

On Edmund Duke *of* Buckingham, *who died in the* 19*th Year of his Age*, 1735.

If modest youth with cool reflection crown'd,
And every opening virtue blooming round,
Could save a parent's justest pride from fate,
Or add one patriot to a sinking state;
This weeping marble had not ask'd thy tear,
Or sadly told how many hopes lie here!
The living virtue now had shone approved,
The senate heard him, and his country loved.
Yet softer honours, and less noisy fame,
Attend the shade of gentle Buckingham:
In whom a race, for courage famed and art,
Ends in the milder merit of the heart:
And, chiefs or sages long to Britain given,
Pays the last tribute of a saint to Heaven.

This epitaph Mr. Warburton prefers to the rest; but I know not for what reason. To *crown* with *reflection* is surely a mode of speech approaching to nonsense. *Opening virtues blooming round* is something like tautology; the six following lines are poor and prosaic. *Art* is another couplet used for *arts*, that a rhyme may be had to *heart*. The six last lines are the best, but not excellent.

The rest of his sepulchral performances hardly deserve the notice of criticism. The contemptible "Dialogue" between He and She should have been suppressed for the author's sake.

In his last epitaph on himself, in which he attempts to be jocular upon one of the few things that make wise men serious, he confounds the living man with the dead:

Under this stone, or under this sill,
Or under this turf, &c.

When a man is once buried, the question, under what he is buried, is easily decided. He forgot that, though he wrote the epitaph in a state of uncertainty, yet it could not be laid over him till his grave was made. Such is the folly of wit when it is ill employed.

The world has but little new; even this wretchedness seems to have been borrowed from the following tuneless lines:

Ludovici Arcosti humantur ossa
Sub hoc marmore, vel sub hac humo, seu
Sub quicquid voluit benignus hæres,
Sive hærede benignior comes, seu
Opportunius incidens Viator:

---

* "Her *wit* was more than *man*, her *innocence* a *child*."
Dryden on Mrs. Killigrew.—C.

Nam scire haud potuit futura, sed nec
Tanti erat vacuum sibi cadaver
Ut urnam cuperet parare vivens,
Vivens ista tamen sibi paravit.
Quæ inscribi voluit suo sepulchro
Olim siquod haberet is sepulchrum.

Surely Ariosto did not venture to expect that his trifle would have ever had such an illustrious imitator.

PITT.

Christopher Pitt, of whom, whatever I shall relate, more than has been already published, I owe to the kind communication of Dr. Warton, was born in 1699, at Blandford, the son of a physician much esteemed.

He was, in 1714, received as a scholar into Winchester College, where he was distinguished by exercises of uncommon elegance, and, at his removal to New College, in 1719, presented to the electors, as the product of his private and voluntary studies, a complete version of Lucan's poem, which he did not then know to have been translated by Rowe.

This is an instance of early diligence, which well deserves to be recorded. The suppression of such a work, recommended by such uncommon circumstances, is to be regretted. It is indeed culpable to load libraries with superfluous books; but incitements to early excellence are never superfluous, and from this example the danger is not great of many imitations.

When he had resided at his college three years, he was presented to the rectory of Pimpern, in Dorsetshire (1722), by his relation, Mr. Pitt, of Stratfield Say, in Hampshire; and, resigning his fellowship, continued at Oxford two years longer, till he became master of arts (1724).

He probably about this time translated Vida's "Art of Poetry," which Tristram's splendid edition had then made popular. In this translation he distinguished himself, both by its general elegance, and by the skilful adaptation of his numbers to the images expressed; a beauty which Vida has with great ardour enforced and exemplified.

He then retired to his living, a place very pleasing by its situation, and therefore likely to excite the imagination of a poet; where he passed the rest of his life, reverenced for his virtue, and beloved for the softness of his temper, and the easiness of his manners. Before strangers he had something of the scholar's timidity or distrust; but, when he became familiar, he was, in a very high degree, cheerful and entertaining. His general benevolence procured general respect; and he passed a life placid and honourable, neither too great for the kindness of the low, nor too low for the notice of the great.

At what time he composed his "Miscellany," published in 1727, it is not easy or necessary to know: those which have dates appear to have been very early productions; and I have not observed that any rise above mediocrity.

The success of his "Vida" animated him to a higher undertaking; and in his thirtieth year he published a version of the first book of the "Æneid." This being, I suppose, commended by his friends, he some time afterwards added three or four more, with an advertisement, in which he represents himself as translating with great indifference, and with a progress of which himself was hardly conscious. This can hardly be true, and, if true, is nothing to the reader.

At last, without any further contention with his modesty, or any awe of the name of Dryden, he gave us a complete English "Æneid," which I am sorry not to see joined in this publication with his other poems.* It would have been pleasing to have an opportunity of comparing the two best translations that perhaps were ever produced by one nation of the same author.

Pitt, engaging as a rival with Dryden, naturally observed his failures, and avoided them; and, as he wrote after Pope's "Iliad," he had an example of an exact, equable, and splendid versification. With these advantages, seconded by great diligence, he might successfully labour particular passages and escape many errors. If the two versions are compared, perhaps the result would be, that Dryden leads the reader forward by his general vigour and sprightliness, and Pitt often stops him to contemplate the excellence of a single couplet: that Dryden's faults are forgotten in the hurry of delight, and that Pitt's beauties are neglected in the langour of a cold and listless perusal, that Pitt pleases the

* It has since been added to the collection.

critics, and Dryden the people; that Pitt is quoted, and Dryden read.

He did not long enjoy the reputation which this great work deservedly conferred; for he left the world in 1748, and lies buried under a stone at Blandford, on which is this inscription:—

In Memory of
CHR. PITT. clerk, M A.
Very eminent
for his talents in poetry;
and yet more
For the universal candour of
his mind, and the primitive
simplicity of his manners.
He lived innocent;
and died beloved,
Apr. 13, 1748.
Aged 48.

THOMSON.

JAMES THOMSON, the son of a minister well esteemed for his piety and diligence, was born September 7, 1700, at Ednam, in the shire of Roxburgh, of which his father was pastor. His mother, whose name was Hume,* inherited as co-heiress a portion of a small estate. The revenue of a parish in Scotland is seldom large; and it was probably in commiseration of the difficulty with which Mr. Thomson supported his family, having nine children, that Mr. Riccarton, a neighbouring minister, discovering in James uncommon promises of future excellence, undertook to superintend his education and provide him books.

He was taught the common rudiments of learning at the school of Jedburg, a place which he delights to recollect in his poem of "Autumn;" but was not considered by his master as superior to common boys, though in those early days he amused his patron and his friends with poetical compositions; with which, however, he so little pleased himself, that on every new-year's day he threw into the fire all the productions of the foregoing year.

From the school he was removed to Edinburgh, where he had not resided two years when his father died, and left all his children to the care of their mother, who raised upon her little estate what money a mortgage could afford, and, removing with her family to Edinburgh, lived to see her son rising into eminence.

The design of Thomson's friends was to breed him a minister. He lived at Edinburgh, as at school, without distinction or expectation, till, at the usual time, he performed a probationary exercise by explaining a psalm. His diction was so poetically splendid, that Mr. Hamilton, the Professor of Divinity, reproved him for speaking language unintelligible to a popular audience; and he censured one of his expressions as indecent if not profane.

This rebuke is reported to have repressed his thoughts of an ecclesiastical character, and he probably cultivated with new diligence his blossoms of poetry, which, however, were in some danger of a blast; for, submitting his productions to some who thought themselves qualified to criticise, he heard of nothing but faults; but finding other judges more favourable, he did not suffer himself to sink into despondence.

He easily discovered that the only stage on which a poet could appear with any hope of advantage was London; a place too wide for the operation of petty competition and private malignity, where merit might soon become conspicuous, and would find friends as soon as it became reputable to befriend it. A lady who was acquainted with his mother advised him to the journey, and promised some countenance or assistance, which at last he never received; however, he justified his adventure by her encouragement, and came to seek in London patronage and fame.

At his arrival he found his way to Mr. Mallet, then tutor to the sons of the Duke of Montrose. He had recommendations to several persons of consequence, which he had tied up carefully in his handkerchief; but as he passed along the street, with the gaping curiosity of a new-comer, his attention was upon every thing rather than his pocket, and his magazine of credentials was stolen from him.

His first want was a pair of shoes. For the supply of all his necessities, his whole fund was his "Winter," which for a time could find no purchaser; till, at last, Mr. Millan was persuaded to buy it at a low price; and this low price he had for some time reason to regret; but by accident, Mr. Whatley, a man not wholly

* His mother's name was Beatrix Trotter His grandmother's name was Hume.—C.

unknown among authors, happening to turn his eye upon it, was so delighted that he ran from place to place celebrating its excellence. Thomson obtained likewise the notice of Aaron Hill, whom, being friendless and indigent, and glad of kindness, he courted with every expression of servile adulation.

"Winter" was dedicated to Sir Spencer Compton, but attracted no regard from him to the author, till Aaron Hill awakened his attention by some verses addressed to Thomson, and published in one of the newspapers, which censured the great for their neglect of ingenious men. Thomson then received a present of twenty guineas, of which he gives this account to Mr. Hill:

"I hinted to you in my last, that on Saturday morning I was with Sir Spencer Compton. A certain gentleman without my desire spoke to him concerning me: his answer was, that I had never come near him. Then the gentleman put the question, If he desired that I should wait on him? He returned, he did. On this, the gentleman gave me an introductory letter to him. He received me in what they commonly call a civil manner; asked me some commonplace questions, and made me a present of twenty guineas. I am very ready to own that the present was larger than my performance deserved; and shall ascribe it to his generosity, or any other cause, rather than the merit of the address."

The poem, which, being of a new kind, few would venture at first to like, by degrees gained upon the public; and one edition was very speedily succeeded by another.

Thomson's credit was now high, and every day brought him new friends; among others Dr. Rundle, a man afterwards unfortunately famous, sought his acquaintance, and found his qualities such, that he recommended him to the Lord Chancellor Talbot.

"Winter" was accompanied, in many editions, not only with a preface and dedication, but with poetical praises by Mr. Hill, Mr. Mallet (then Malloch,) and Mira, the fictitious name of a lady once too-well-known. Why the dedications are to "Winter" and the other Seasons, contrarily to custom, left out in the collected works, the reader may inquire.

The next year (1727) he distinguished himself by three publications: of "Summer," in pursuance of his plan; of "A Poem on the Death of Sir Isaac Newton," which he was enabled to perform as an exact philosopher by the instruction of Mr. Gray; and of "Britannia," a kind of poetical invective against the ministry, whom the nation then thought not forward enough in resenting the depredations of the Spaniards. By this piece he declared himself an adherent to the opposition, and had therefore no favour to expect from the court.

Thomson, having been some time entertained in the family of the Lord Binning, was desirous of testifying his gratitude by making him the patron of his "Summer;" but the same kindness which had first disposed Lord Binning to encourage him determined him to refuse the dedication, which was by his advice addressed to Mr. Dodington, a man who had more power to advance the reputation and fortune of a poet.

"Spring" was published next year, with a dedication to the Countess of Hertford; whose practice it was to invite every summer some poet into the country, to hear her verses and assist her studies. This honour was one summer conferred on Thomson, who took more delight in carousing with Lord Hertford and his friends than assisting her ladyship's poetical operations, and therefore never received another summons.

"Autumn," the season to which the "Spring" and "Summer" are preparatory, still remained unsung, and was delayed till he published (1730) his works collected.

He produced in 1727 the tragedy of "Sophonisba," which raised such expectation, that every rehearsal was dignified with a splendid audience, collected to anticipate the delight that was preparing for the public. It was observed, however, that nobody was much affected, and that the company rose as from a moral lecture.

It had upon the stage no unusual degree of success. Slight accidents will operate upon the taste of pleasure. There is a feeble line in the play:

O Sophonisba, Sophonisba, O!

This gave occasion to a waggish parody

O Jemmy Thomson, Jemmy Thomson, O!

which for a while was echoed through the town.

I have been told by Savage, that of the prologue to "Sophonisba" the first part was written by Pope, who could not be persuaded to finish it, and that the concluding lines were added by Mallet.

Thomson was not long afterwards, by the influence of Dr. Rundle, sent to travel with Mr. Charles Talbot, the eldest son of the Chancellor. He was yet young enough to receive new impressions, to have his opinions rectified, and his views enlarged; nor can he be supposed to have wanted that curiosity which is inseparable from an active and comprehensive mind. He may therefore now be supposed to have revelled in all the joys of intellectual luxury; he was every day feasted with instructive novelties; he lived splendidly without expense; and might expect when he returned home a certain establishment.

At this time a long course of opposition to Sir Robert Walpole had filled the nation with

clamours for liberty, of which no man felt the want; and with care for liberty, which was not in danger. Thomson, in his travels on the Continent, found or fancied so many evils arising from the tyranny of other governments, that he resolved to write a very long poem, in five parts upon Liberty.

While he was busy on the first book, Mr. Talbot died; and Thomson, who had been rewarded for his attendance by the place of secretary of the briefs, pays in the initial lines a decent tribute to his memory.

Upon this great poem two years were spent, and the author congratulated himself upon it, as his noblest work; but an author and his reader are not always of a mind. Liberty called in vain upon her votaries to read her praises and reward her encomiast; her praises were condemned to harbour spiders and to gather dust; none of Thomson's performances were so little regarded.

The judgment of the public was not erroneous; the recurrence of the same images must tire in time; an enumeration of examples to prove a position which nobody denied, as it was from the beginning superfluous, must quickly grow disgusting.

The poem of "Liberty" does not now appear in its original state; but, when the author's works were collected after his death was shortened by Sir George Lyttleton, with a liberty which, as it has a manifest tendency to lessen the confidence of society, and to confound the characters of authors, by making one man write by the judgment of another, cannot be justified by any supposed propriety of the alteration, or kindness of the friend.—I wish to see it exhibited as its author left it.

Thomson now lived in ease and plenty, and seems for awhile to have suspended his poetry; but he was soon called back to labour by the death of the Chancellor, for his place then became vacant; and though the Lord Hardwicke delayed for some time to give it away, Thomson's bashfulness or pride, or some other motive perhaps not more laudable, withheld him from soliciting; and the new Chancellor would not give him what he would not ask.

He now relapsed to his former indigence; but the Prince of Wales was at that time struggling for popularity, and by the influence of Mr. Lyttleton professed himself the patron of wit: to him Thomson was introduced, and being gaily interrogated about the state of his affairs, said, "that they were in a more poetical posture than formerly;' and had a pension allowed him of one hundred pounds a year.

Being now obliged to write, he produced (1738*) the tragedy of "Agamemnon," which was much shortened in the representation. It had the fate which most commonly attends mythological stories, and was only endured, but not favoured. It struggled with such difficulty through the first night, that Thomson, coming late to his friends with whom he was to sup, excused his delay by telling them how the sweat of his distress had so disordered his wig, that he could not come till he had been refitted by a barber.

He so interested himself in his own drama, that, if I remember right, as he sat in the upper gallery, he accompanied the players by audible recitation, till a friendly hint frighted him to silence. Pope countenanced "Agamemnon," by coming to it the first night, and was welcomed to the theatre by a general clap; he had much regard for Thomson, and once expressed it in a poetical epistle sent to Italy, of which however he abated the value, by translating some of the lines into his epistle to Arbuthnot.

About this time the act was passed for licensing plays, of which the first operation was the prohibition of "Gustavus Vasa," a tragedy of Mr. Brooke, whom the public recompensed by a very liberal subscription; the next was the refusal of "Edward and Eleonora," offered by Thomson. It is hard to discover why either play should have been obstructed. Thomson likewise endeavoured to repair his loss by a subscription, of which I cannot now tell the success.

When the public murmured at the unkind treatment of Thomson, one of the ministerial writers remarked, that "he had taken a *liberty* which was not agreeable to *Britannia* in any *season*.

He was soon after employed, in conjunction with Mr. Mallet, to write the mask of "Alfred," which was acted before the Prince at Cliefden-House.

His next work (1745) was "Tancred and Sigismunda," the most successful of all his tragedies, for it still keeps its turn upon the stage. It may be doubted whether he was, either by the bent of nature or habits of study, much qualified for tragedy. It does not appear that he had much sense of the pathetic; and his diffusive and descriptive style produced declamation rather than dialogue.

His friend Mr. Lyttleton was now in power, and conferred upon him the office of surveyor-general of the Leeward Islands; from which, when his deputy was paid, he received about three hundred pounds a year.

The last piece that he lived to publish was the "Castle of Indolence," which was many

* It is not generally known that in this year an edition of Milton's "Arcopagitica" was published by Millar, to which Thomson wrote a preface.—C.

years under his hand, but was at last finished with great accuracy. The first canto opens a scene of lazy luxury that fills the imagination.

He was now at ease, but was not long to enjoy it; for, by taking cold on the water between London and Kew, he caught a disorder, which, with some careless exasperation, ended in a fever that put an end to his life, August 27, 1748. He was buried in the church of Richmond, without an inscription; but a monument has been erected to his memory in Westminster-Abbey.

Thomson was of a stature above the middle size, and "more fat than bard beseems," of a dull countenance, and a gross, unanimated, uninviting appearance; silent in mingled company, but cheerful among select friends, and by his friends very tenderly and warmly beloved.

He left behind him the tragedy of "Coriolanus," which was, by the zeal of his patron, Sir George Lyttleton, brought upon the stage for the benefit of his family, and recommended by a prologue, which Quin, who had long lived with Thomson in fond intimacy, spoke in such a manner as showed him "to be," on that occasion, "no actor." The commencement of this benevolence is very honourable to Quin; who is reported to have delivered Thomson, then known to him only for his genius, from an arrest by a very considerable present; and its continuance is honourable to both, for friendship is not always the sequel of obligation. By this tragedy a considerable sum was raised, of which part discharged his debts, and the rest was remitted to his sisters, whom, however removed from them by place or condition, he regarded with great tenderness, as will appear by the following letter, which I communicate with much pleasure, as it gives me at once an opportunity of recording the fraternal kindness of Thomson, and reflecting on the friendly assistance of Mr. Boswell, from whom I received it.

"Hagely, in Worcestershire,
"October the 4th, 1747.

"My dear Sister,

"I thought you had known me better than to interpret my silence into a decay of affection, especially as your behaviour has always been such as rather to increase than diminish it. Don't imagine, because I am a bad correspondent, that I can ever prove an unkind friend and brother. I must do myself the justice to tell you, that my affections are naturally very fixed and constant; and if I had ever reason of complaint against you (of which by-the-bye I have not the least shadow,) I am conscious of so many defects in myself, as dispose me to be not a little charitable and forgiving.

"It gives me the truest heart-felt satisfaction to hear you have a good, kind husband, and are in easy, contented circumstances; but were they otherwise, that would only awaken and heighten my tenderness towards you. As our good and tender-hearted parents did not live to receive any material testimonies of that highest human gratitude I owed them (than which nothing could have given me equal pleasure,) the only return I can make them now is by kindness to those they left behind them. Would to God poor Lizy had lived longer, to have been a farther witness of the truth of what I say, and that I might have had the pleasure of seeing once more a sister who so truly deserved my esteem and love! But she is happy, while we must toil a little longer here below; let us however do it cheerfully and gratefully, supported by the pleasing hope of meeting yet again on a safer shore, where to recollect the storms and difficulties of life will not perhaps be inconsistent with that blissful state. You did right to call your daughter by her name; for you must needs have had a particular tender friendship for one another, endeared as you were by nature, by having passed the affectionate years of your youth together, and by that great softener and engager of hearts, mutual hardship. That it was in my power to ease it a little, I account one of the most exquisite pleasures of my life.—But enough of this melancholy, though not unpleasing strain.

"I esteem you for your sensible and disinterested advice to Mr. Bell, as you will see by my letter to him; as I approve entirely of his marrying again, you may readily ask me why I don't marry at all. My circumstances have hitherto been so variable and uncertain in this fluctuating world, as induce to keep me from engaging in such a state; and now, though they are more settled, and of late (which you will be glad to hear) considerably improved, I begin to think myself too far advanced in life for such youthful undertakings, not to mention some other petty reasons that are apt to startle the delicacy of difficult old bachelors. I am, however, not a little suspicious that, was I to pay a visit to Scotland (which I have some thoughts of doing soon), I might possibly be tempted to think of a thing not easily repaired if done amiss. I have always been of opinion, that none make better wives than the ladies of Scotland; and yet, who more forsaken than they, while the gentlemen are continually running abroad all the world over? Some of them, it is true, are wise enough to return for a wife. You see I am beginning to make interest already with the Scots ladies. But no more of this infectious subject.—Pray let me hear from you now and then; and though I am not a regular correspondent, yet perhaps I may mend in that respect. Remember me kindly to your husband, and believe me to be

"Your most affectionate brother,
"James Thomson."

Addressed "To Mrs. Thomson in Lanark."

The benevolence of Thomson was fervid, but not active; he would give on all occasions what assistance his purse would supply; but the offices of intervention or solicitation he could not conquer his sluggishness sufficiently to perform. The affairs of others, however, were not more neglected than his own. He had often felt the inconveniences of idleness, but he never cured it; and was so conscious of his own character, that he talked of writing an eastern tale "of the Man who loved to be in Distress."

Among his peculiarities was a very unskilful and inarticulate manner of pronouncing any lofty or solemn composition. He was once reading to Dodington, who, being himself a reader eminently elegant, was so much provoked by his odd utterance, that he snatched the paper from his hands, and told him that he did not understand his own verses.

The biographer of Thomson has remarked, that an author's life is best read in his works: his observation was not well-timed. Savage, who lived much with Thomson, once told me, he heard a lady remarking that she could gather from his works three parts of his character, that he was a great lover, a great swimmer, and rigorously abstinent;" but, said Savage, he knows not any love but that of the sex; he was perhaps never in cold water in his life; and he indulges himself in all the luxury that comes within his reach. Yet Savage always spoke with the most eager praise of his social qualities, his warmth and constancy of friendship, and his adherence to his first acquaintance when the advancement of his reputation had left them behind him.

As a writer, he is entitled to one praise of the highest kind: his mode of thinking, and of expressing his thoughts, is original. His blank verse is no more the blank verse of Milton, or of any other poet, than the rhymes of Prior are the rhymes of Cowley. His numbers, his pauses, his diction, are of his own growth, without transcription, without imitation. He thinks in a peculiar train, and he thinks always as a man of genius: he looks round on Nature and on Life with the eye which Nature bestows only on a poet; the eye that distinguishes, in every thing presented to its view, whatever there is on which imagination can delight to be detained, and with a mind that at once comprehends the vast and attends to the minute. The reader of "The Seasons" wonders that he never saw before what Thomson shows him, and that he never yet has felt what Thomson impresses.

His is one of the works in which blank verse seems properly used. Thomson's wide expansion of general views, and his enumeration of circumstantial varieties, would have been obstructed and embarrassed by the frequent intersections of the sense which are the necessary effects of rhyme.

His descriptions of extended scenes and general effects bring before us the whole magnificence of Nature, whether pleasing or dreadful. The gayety of Spring, the splendour of Summer, the tranquillity of Autumn, and the horror of Winter, take in their turns possession of the mind. The poet leads us through the appearances of things as they are successively varied by the vicissitudes of the year, and imparts to us so much of his own enthusiasm, that our thoughts expand with his imagery and kindle with his sentiments. Nor is the naturalist without his part in the entertainment; for he is assisted to recollect and to combine, to range his discoveries and to amplify the sphere of his contemplation

The great defect of "The Seasons" is want of method; but for this I know not that there was any remedy. Of many appearances subsisting all at once, no rule can be given why one should be mentioned before another; yet the memory wants the help of order, and the curiosity is not excited by suspense or expectation.

His diction is in the highest degree florid and luxuriant, such as may be said to be to his images and thoughts "both their lustre and their shade;" such as invest them with splendour, through which perhaps they are not always easily discerned. It is too exuberant, and sometimes may be charged with filling the ear more than the mind.

These poems, with which I was acquainted at their first appearance, I have since found altered and enlarged by subsequent revisals, as the Author supposed his judgment to grow more exact, and as books or conversation extended his knowledge and opened his prospects. They are, I think, improved in general; yet I know not whether they have not lost part of what Temple calls their "race;" a word which, applied to wines in its primitive sense, means the flavour of the soil.

"Liberty," when it first appeared, I tried to read, and soon desisted. I have never tried again, and therefore will not hazard either praise or censure.

The highest praise which he has received ought not to be suppressed: it is said by Lord Lyttelton, in the prologue to his posthumous play, that his works contained

No line which, dying, he could wish to blot.

WATTS.

The poems of Dr. Watts were by my recommendation inserted in the late Collection; the readers of which are to impute to me whatever pleasure or weariness they may find in the perusal of Blackmore, Watts, Pomfret, and Yalden.

Isaac Watts was born July 17, 1674, at Southampton, where his father, of the same name, kept a boarding-school for young gentlemen, though common report makes him a shoemaker. He appears, from the narrative of Dr. Gibbons, to have been neither indigent nor illiterate.

Isaac, the eldest of nine children, was given to books from his infancy; and began, we are told, to learn Latin when he was four years old; I suppose, at home. He was afterwards taught Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, by Mr. Pinhorn, a clergyman, master of the free-school at Southampton, to whom the gratitude of his scholar afterwards inscribed a Latin ode.

His proficiency at school was so conspicuous, that a subscription was proposed for his support at the university; but he declared his resolution of taking his lot with the dissenters. Such he was as every Christian church would rejoice to have adopted.

He therefore repaired, in 1690, to an academy taught by Mr. Rowe, where he had for his companions and fellow-students Mr. Hughes the poet, and Dr. Horte, afterwards archbishop of Tuam. Some Latin essays, supposed to have been written as exercises at this academy, show a degree of knowledge both philosophical and theological, such as very few attain by a much longer course of study.

He was, as he hints in his Miscellanies, a maker of verses from fifteen to fifty, and in his youth he appears to have paid attention to Latin poetry. His verses to his brother, in the *glyconick* measure, written when he was seventeen, are remarkably easy and elegant. Some of his other odes are deformed by the Pindaric folly then prevailing, and are written with such neglect of all metrical rules, as is without example among the ancients; but his diction, though perhaps not always exactly pure, has such copiousness and splendour, as shows that he was but a very little distance from excellence.

His method of study was to impress the contents of his books upon his memory by abridging them, and by interleaving them to amplify one system with supplements from another.

With the congregation of his tutor, Mr. Rowe, who were, I believe, independents, he communicated in his nineteenth year.

At the age of twenty he left the academy, and spent two years in study and devotion at the house of his father, who treated him with great tenderness; and had the happiness, indulged to few parents, of living to see his son eminent for literature, and venerable for piety.

He was then entertained by Sir John Hartopp five years, as domestic tutor to his son; and in that time particularly devoted himself to the study of the Holy Scriptures; and, being chosen assistant to Dr. Chauncey, preached the first time on the birth-day that completed his twenty-fourth year; probably considering that as the day of a second nativity, by which he entered on a new period of existence.

In about three years he succeeded Dr. Chauncey; but soon after his entrance on his charge, he was seized by a dangerous illness, which sunk him to such weakness, that the congregation thought an assistant necessary, and appointed Mr. Price. His health then returned gradually; and he performed his duty till (1712) he was seized by a fever of such violence and continuance, that from the feebleness which it brought upon him he never perfectly recovered.

This calamitous state made the compassion of his friends necessary, and drew upon him the attention of Sir Thomas Abney, who received him into his house; where, with a constancy of friendship and uniformity of conduct not often to be found, he was treated for thirty-six years with all the kindness that friendship could prompt, and all the attention that respect could dictate. Sir Thomas died about eight years afterwards; but he continued with the lady and her daughters to the end of his life. The lady died about a year after him.

A coalition like this, a state in which the motions of patronage and dependence were overpowered by the perception of reciprocal benefits, deserves a particular memorial; and I will not withhold from the reader Dr. Gibbon's representation; to which regard is to be paid, as to the narrative of one who writes what he knows, and what is known likewise to multitudes besides.

"Our next observation shall be made upon that remarkably kind Providence which brought the Doctor into Sir Thomas Abney's family, and continued him there till his death, a period of no less than thirty-six years. In the midst of his sacred labours for the glory of God, and good of his generation, he is seized with a most violent and threatening fever, which leaves him oppressed with great weakness, and puts a stop at least to his public services for four years. In this distressing season, doubly so to his active and pious spirit, he is invited to Sir Thomas Abney's family, nor ever removes from it till he had finished his days. Here he enjoyed the uninterrupted demonstrations of the truest friendship. Here, without any care of his own, he had every thing which could contribute to the enjoyment of life, and favour the unwearied pursuits of his studies. Here he dwelt in a family, which for piety, order, harmony, and every virtue, was an house of God. Here he had the privilege of a country recess, the fragrant bower, the spreading lawn, the flowery garden, and other advantages, to soothe his mind and aid his restoration to health; to yield him, whenever he chose them, most grateful intervals from his laborious studies, and enable him to return to them with redoubled vigour and delight. Had it not been for this most happy event, he might, as to outward view, have feebly, it may be painfully, dragged on through many more years of languor, and inability for public service, and even for profitable study, or perhaps might have sunk into his grave under the overwhelming load of infirmities in the midst of his days; and thus the church and world would have been deprived of those many excellent sermons and works which he drew up and published during his long residence in this family. In a few years after his coming hither, Sir Thomas Abney dies; but his amiable consort survives, who shows the Doctor the same respect and friendship as before, and most happily for him and great numbers besides; for, as her riches were great, her generosity and munificence were in full proportion; her thread of life was drawn out to a great age, even beyond that of the Doctor's; and thus this excellent man, through her kindness, and that of her daughter, the present Mrs. Elizabeth Abney, who in a like degree esteemed and honoured him, enjoyed all the benefits and felicities he experienced at his first entrance into this family, till his days were numbered and finished; and, like a shock of corn in its season, he ascended into the regions of perfect and immortal life and joy."

If this quotation has appeared long, let it be considered that it comprises an account of six-and thirty years, and those the years of Dr. Watts.

From the time of his reception into this family, his life was no otherwise diversified than by successive publications. The series of his works I am not able to deduce; their number and their variety show the intenseness of his industry, and the extent of his capacity.

He was one of the first authors that taught the dissenters to court attention by the graces of language. Whatever they had among them before, whether of learning or acuteness, was commonly obscured and blunted by coarseness and inelegance of style. He showed them, that zeal and purity might be expressed and enforced by polished diction.

He continued to the end of his life the teacher of a congregation; and no reader of his works can doubt his fidelity or diligence. In the pulpit, though his low stature, which very little exceeded five feet, graced him with no advantages of appearance, yet the gravity and propriety of his utterance made his discourses very efficacious. I once mentioned the reputation which Mr. Foster had gained by his proper delivery to my friend Dr. Hawkesworth, who told me, that in the art of pronunciation he was far inferior to Dr. Watts.

Such was his flow of thoughts, and such his promptitude of language, that in the latter part of his life he did not precompose his cursory sermons, but having adjusted the heads, and sketched out some particulars, trusted for success to his extemporary powers.

He did not endeavour to assist his eloquence by any gesticulations; for, as no corporeal actions have any correspondence with theological truth, he did not see how they could enforce it.

At the conclusion of weighty sentences he gave time, by a short pause, for the proper impression.

To stated and public instruction he added familiar visits and personal application, and was careful to improve the opportunities which conversation offered of diffusing and increasing the influence of religion.

By his natural temper he was quick of resentment; but by his established and habitual practice he was gentle, modest, and inoffensive. His tenderness appeared in his attention to children, and to the poor. To the poor, while he lived in the family of his friend, he allowed the third part of his annual revenue, though the whole was not a hundred a-year; and for children he condescended to lay aside the scholar, the philosopher, and the wit, to write little poems of devotion, and systems of instruction, adapted to their wants and capacities, from the dawn of reason through its gradations of advance in the morning of life. Every man, acquainted with the common principles of human action, will look with veneration on the writer, who is at one time combating Locke, and at another making a catechism for children in their fourth year. A

voluntary descent from the dignity of science is perhaps the hardest lesson that humility can teach.

As his mind was capacious, his curiosity excursive, and his industry continual, his writings are very numerous, and his subjects various. With his theological works I am only enough acquainted to admire his meekness of opposition and his mildness of censure. It was not only in his book, but in his mind, that *orthodoxy* was *united* with *charity*.

Of his philosophical pieces, his "Logic" has been received into the universities, and therefore wants no private recommendation; if he owes part of it to Le Clerc, it must be considered that no man, who undertakes merely to methodize or illustrate a system, pretends to be its author.

In his metaphysical disquisitions, it was observed by the late learned Mr. Dyer, that he confounded the idea of *space* with that of *empty space*, and did not consider that though space might be without matter, yet matter being extended could not be without space.

Few books have been perused by me with greater pleasure than his "Improvement of the Mind," of which the radical principles may indeed be found in Locke's "Conduct of the Understanding;" but they are so expanded and ramified by Watts, as to confer upon him the merit of a work in the highest degree useful and pleasing. Whoever has the care of instructing others may be charged with deficience in his duty if this book is not recommended.

I have mentioned his treatises of theology as distinct from his other productions; but the truth is, that whatever he took in hand was, by his incessant solicitude for souls, converted to theology. As piety predominated in his mind, it is diffused over his works; under his direction it may be truly said, *theologiæ philosophia ancillatur*, philosophy is subservient to evangelical instruction; it is difficult to read a page without learning, or at least wishing, to be better. The attention is caught by indirect instruction, and he that sat down only to reason is on a sudden compelled to pray.

It was therefore with great propriety that, in 1728, he received from Edinburgh and Aberdeen an unsolicited diploma, by which he became a doctor of divinity. Academical honours would have more value, if they were always bestowed with equal judgment.

He continued many years to study and to preach, and to do good by his instruction and example; till at last the infirmities of age disabled him from the more laborious part of his ministerial functions, and, being no longer capable of public duty, he offered to remit the salary appendant to it; but his congregation would not accept the resignation.

By degrees his weakness increased, and at last confined him to his chamber and his bed; where he was worn gradually away without pain, till he expired, Nov. 25, 1743, in the seventy-fifth year of his age.

Few men have left behind such purity of character, or such monuments of laborious piety. He has provided instruction for all ages, from those who are lisping their first lessons, to the enlightened readers of Malbranche and Locke. he has left neither corporeal nor spiritual nature unexamined; he has taught the art of reasoning and the science of the stars.

His character, therefore, must be formed from the multiplicity and diversity of his attainments rather than from any single performance; for it would not be safe to claim for him the highest rank in any single denomination of literary dignity; yet perhaps there was nothing in which he would not have excelled, if he had not divided his powers to different pursuits.

As a poet, had he been only a poet, he would probably have stood high among the authors with whom he is now associated. For his judgment was exact, and he noted beauties and faults with very nice discernment; his imagination, as the "Dacian Battle" proves, was vigorous and active, and the stores of knowledge were large by which his fancy was to be supplied. His ear was well tuned, and his diction was elegant and copious, but his devotional poetry is, like that of others, unsatisfactory. The paucity of its topics enforces perpetual repetition, and the sanctity of the matter rejects the ornaments of figurative diction. It is sufficient for Watts to have done better than others what no man has done well.

His poems on other subjects seldom rise higher than might be expected from the amusements of a man of letters, and have different degrees of value as they are more or less laboured, or as the occasion was more or less favourable to invention.

He writes too often without regular measures, and too often in blank verse; the rhymes are not always sufficiently correspondent. He is particularly unhappy in coining names expressive of characters. His lines are commonly smooth and easy, and his thoughts always religiously pure; but who is there that, to so much piety and innocence, does not wish for a greater measure of sprightliness and vigour! He is at least one of the few poets with whom youth and ignorance may be safely pleased; and happy will be that reader whose mind is disposed, by his verses or his prose, to imitate him in all but his nonconformity, to copy his benevolence to man, and his reverence to God.

A. PHILIPS.

Of the birth or early part of the life of Ambrose Philips I have not been able to find any account. His academical education he received at St. John's College, in Cambridge,* where he first solicited the notice of the world by some English verses, in the collection published by the university on the death of Queen Mary.

From this time how he was employed, or in what station he passed his life, is not yet discovered. He must have published his Pastorals before the year 1708, because they are evidently prior to those of Pope.

He afterwards (1709) addressed to the universal patron, the Duke of Dorset, a "Poetical Letter from Copenhagen," which was published in the "Tatler," and is by Pope in one of his first letters mentioned with high praise, as the production of a man "who could write very nobly."

Philips was a zealous whig, and therefore easily found access to Addison and Steele; but his ardour seems not to have procured him any thing more than kind words; since he was reduced to translate the "Persian Tales" for Tonson, for which he was afterwards reproached, with this addition of contempt, that he worked for half-a-crown. The book is divided into many sections, for each of which, if he received half-a-crown, his reward, as writers then were paid, was very liberal; but half-a-crown had a mean sound.

He was employed in promoting the principles of his party, by epitomising Hacket's "Life of Archbishop Williams." The original book is written with such depravity of genius, such mixture of the fop and pedant, as has not often appeared. The epitome is free enough from affectation, but has little spirit or vigour.†

In 1712 he brought upon the stage "The Distrest Mother," almost a translation of Racine's "Andromaque." Such a work requires no uncommon powers; but the friends of Philips exerted every art to promote his interest. Before the appearance of the play, a whole Spectator, none indeed of the best, was devoted to its praise; while it yet continued to be acted, another Spectator was written, to tell what impression it made upon Sir Roger; and on the first night a select audience, says Pope,* was called together to applaud it.

It was concluded with the most successful epilogue that was ever yet spoken on the English theatre. The three first nights it was recited twice; and not only continued to be demanded through the run, as it is termed, of the play, but whenever it is recalled to the stage, where by peculiar fortune, though a copy from the French, it yet keeps its place, the epilogue is still expected, and is still spoken.

The propriety of epilogues in general, and consequently of this, was questioned by a correspondent of "The Spectator," whose letter was undoubtedly admitted for the sake of the answer, which soon followed, written with much zeal and acrimony. The attack and the defence equally contributed to stimulate curiosity and continue attention. It may be discovered in the defence, that Prior's epilogue to "Phædra" had a little excited jealousy; and something of Prior's plan may be discovered in the performance of his rival. Of this distinguished epilogue the reputed author was the wretched Budgel, whom Addison used to denominate * "the man who calls me cousin;" and when he was asked how such a silly fellow could write so well, replied, "The epilogue was quite another thing when I saw it first." It was known in Tonson's family, and told to Garrick, that Addison was himself the author of it, and that, when it had been at first printed with his name, he came early in the morning, before the copies were distributed, and ordered it to be given to Budgel, that it might add weight to the solicitation which he was then making for a place.

Philips was now high in the ranks of literature. His play was applauded: his translations from Sappho had been published in "The Spectator;" he was an important and distinguished associate of clubs, witty and political; and nothing was wanting to his happiness, but that he should be sure of its continuance.

* He took his degrees, A. B. 1696, A. M. 1700.—C.

† This ought to have been noticed before. It was published in 1700, when he appears to have obtained a fellowship of St. John's.—C.

* Spence.

The work which had procured him the first notice from the public was his six pastorals, which, flattering the imagination with Arcadian scenes, probably found many readers, and might have long passed as a pleasing amusement, had they not been unhappily too much commended.

The rustic poems of Theocritus were so highly valued by the Greeks and Romans, that they attracted the imitation of Virgil, whose Eclogues seem to have been considered as precluding all attempts of the same kind; for no shepherds were taught to sing by any succeeding poet, till Nemesian and Calphurnius ventured their feeble efforts in the lower age of Latin literature.

At the revival of learning in Italy, it was soon discovered that a dialogue of imaginary swains might be composed with little difficulty; because the conversation of shepherds excludes profound or refined sentiment; and for images and descriptions, satyrs and fauns, and naiads and dryads, were always within call; and woods and meadows, and hills and rivers, supplied variety of matter, which, having a natural power to soothe the mind, did not quickly cloy it.

Petrarch entertained the learned men of his age with the novelty of modern pastorals in Latin. Being not ignorant of Greek, and finding nothing in the word *eclogue* of rural meaning, he supposed it to be corrupted by the copiers, and therefore called his own productions *æclogues*, by which he meant to express the talk of goatherds, though it will mean only the talk of goats. This new name was adopted by subsequent writers, and amongst others by our Spenser.

More than a century afterwards (1498) Mantuan published his Bucolics with such success, that they were soon dignified by Badius with a comment, and, as Scaliger complained, received into schools, and taught as classical; his complaint was vain, and the practice, however injudicious, spread far, and continued long. Mantuan was read, at least in some of the inferior schools of this kingdom, to the beginning of the present century. The speakers of Mantuan carried their disquisitions beyond the country, to censure the corruptions of the church; and from him Spenser learned to employ his swains on topics of controversy.

The Italians soon transferred pastoral poetry into their own language; Sanazzaro wrote "Arcadia," in prose and verse; Tasso and Guarini wrote "Favole Boschareccie," or sylvan dramas; and all the nations of Europe filled volumes with Thyrsis and Damon, and Thestylis and Phylis.

Philips thinks it "somewhat strange to conceive how, in an age so addicted to the Muses, pastoral poetry never comes to be so much as thought upon." His wonder seems very unseasonable; there had never, from the time of Spenser, wanted writers to talk occasionally of Arcadia and Strephon; and half the book, in which he first tried his powers, consists of dialogues on Queen Mary's death, between Tityrus and Corydon, or Mopsus and Menalcas. A series or book of pastorals, however I know not that any one had then lately published.

Not long afterwards Pope made the first display of his powers in four pastorals, written in a very different form. Philips had taken Spenser, and Pope took Virgil for his pattern. Philips endeavoured to be natural, Pope laboured to be elegant.

Philips was now favoured by Addison, and by Addison's companions, who were very willing to push him into reputation. The "Guardian" gave an account of pastoral, partly critical, and partly historical; in which, when the merit of the modern is compared, Tasso and Guarini are censured for remote thoughts and unnatural refinements; and, upon the whole, the Italians and French are all excluded from rural poetry; and the pipe of the pastoral muse is transmitted by lawful inheritance from Theocritus to Virgil, from Virgil to Spenser, and from Spenser to Philips.

With this inauguration of Philips, his rival Pope was not much delighted; he therefore drew a comparison of Philip's performance with his own, in which, with an unexampled and unequalled artifice of irony, though he has himself always the advantage, he gives the preference to Philips. The design of aggrandizing himself he disguised with such dexterity, that, though Addison discovered it, Steele was deceived, and was afraid of displeasing Pope by publishing his paper. Published however it was (Guard. 40.); and from that time Pope and Philips lived in a perpetual reciprocation of malevolence.

In poetical powers, of either praise or satire, there was no proportion between the combatants; but Philips, though he could not prevail by wit, hoped to hurt Pope with another weapon, and charged him, as Pope thought, with Addison's approbation, as disaffected to the government.

Even with this he was not satisfied; for, indeed, there is no appearance that any regard was paid to his clamours. He proceeded to grosser insults, and hung up a rod at Button's, with which he threatened to chastise Pope, who appears to have been extremely exasperated; for in the first edition of his Letters he calls Philips "rascal," and in the last charges him with detaining in his hands the subscriptions for Homer delivered to him by the Hanover Club.

I suppose it was never suspected that he meant to appropriate the money; he only delayed, and with sufficient meanness, the gratification of him by whose prosperity he was pained.

Men sometimes suffer by injudicious kindness; Philips became ridiculous, without his own fault, by the absurd admiration of his friends, who decorated him with honorary garlands, which the first breath of contradiction blasted.

When upon the succession of the house of Hanover every whig expected to be happy, Philips seems to have obtained too little notice; he caught few drops of the golden shower, though he did not omit what flattery could perform. He was only made a commissioner of the lottery (1717), and, what did not much elevate his character, a justice of the peace.

The success of his first play must naturally dispose him to turn his hopes towards the stage; he did not however soon commit himself to the mercy of an audience, but contented himself with the fame already acquired, till after nine years he produced (1722) "The Briton," a tragedy, which, whatever was its reception, is now neglected; though one of the scenes, between Vanoc, the British prince, and Valens, the Roman general, is confessed to be written with great dramatic skill, animated by spirit truly poetical.

He had not been idle, though he had been silent; for he exhibited another tragedy the same year, on the story of "Humphrey Duke of Gloucester." This tragedy is only remembered by its title.

His happiest undertaking was of a paper called "The Freethinker," in conjunction with associates, of whom one was Dr. Boulter, who, then only minister of a parish in Southwark, was of so much consequence to the government, that he was made first, bishop of Bristol, and afterwards primate of Ireland, where his piety and his charity will be long honoured.

It may easily be imagined that what was printed under the direction of Boulter would have nothing in it indecent or licentious; its title is to be understood as implying only freedom from unreasonable prejudice. It has been reprinted in volumes, but is little read; nor can impartial criticism recommend it as worthy of revival.

Boulter was not well qualified to write diurnal essays; but he knew how to practise the liberality of greatness and the fidelity of friendship. When he was advanced to the height of ecclesiastical dignity, he did not forget the companion of his labours. Knowing Philips to be slenderly supported, he took him to Ireland, as partaker of his fortune; and, making him his secretary,* added such preferments as enabled him to represent the county of Armagh in the Irish parliament.

In December, 1726, he was made secretary to the Lord Chancellor; and in August, 1733, became judge of the Prerogative Court.

After the death of his patron he continued some years in Ireland; but at last longing, as it seems, for his native country, he returned (1748) to London, having doubtless survived most of his friends and enemies, and among them his dreaded antagonist, Pope. He found however the Duke of Newcastle still living, and to him he dedicated his poems collected into a volume.

Having purchased an annuity of four hundred pounds, he now certainly hoped to pass some years of life in plenty and tranquillity; but his hope deceived him: he was struck with a palsy, and died* June 18, 1749, in his seventy-eighth year.

Of his personal character all that I have heard is, that he was eminent for bravery and skill in the sword, and that in conversation he was solemn and pompous. He had great sensibility of censure, if judgment may be made by a single story which I heard long ago from Mr. Ing, a gentleman of great eminence in Staffordshire. "Philips," said he, "was once at table, when I asked him, How came thy king of Epirus to drive oxen, and to say, 'I'm goaded on by love?' After which question he never spoke again."

Of "The Distrest Mother" not much is pretended to be his own, and therefore it is no subject of criticism; his other two tragedies, I believe, are not below mediocrity, nor above it. Among the Poems comprised in the late Collection, the *Letter from Denmark* may be justly praised; the Pastorals, which by the writer of the "Guardian" were ranked as one of the four genuine productions of the rustic muse, cannot surely be despicable. That they exhibit a mode of life which did not exist, nor ever existed, is not to be objected: the supposition of such a state is allowed to pastoral. In his other poems he cannot be denied the praise of lines sometimes elegant; but he has seldom much force or much comprehension. The pieces that please best are those which, from Pope and Pope's adherents, procured him the name of Namby Pamby, the poems of short lines, by which he paid his court to all ages and characters, from Walpole, the "steerer of the realm," to Miss Pulteney in the nursery. The numbers are smooth and sprightly, and the diction is seldom faulty. They are not loaded with much thought, yet, if they had been written by Addison, they would have had admirers: little things are not valued but when they are done by those who can do greater.

In his translations from Pindar he found the

* The Archbishop's "Letters," published in 1769 the originals of which are now in Christ Church library, Oxford) were collected by Mr. Philips.—C.

* At his house in Hanover-street, and was buried in Audley Chapel.—C.

art of reaching all the obscurity of the Theban bard, however he may fall below his sublimity; he will be allowed, if he has less fire, to have more smoke.

He has added nothing to English poetry, yet at least half his book deserves to be read: perhaps he valued most himself that part which the critic would reject.

WEST.

Gilbert West is one of the writers of whom I regret my inability to give a sufficient account; the intelligence which my inquiries have obtained is general and scanty.

He was the son of the Rev. Dr. West; perhaps* him who published "Pindar" at Oxford about the beginning of this century. His mother was sister to Sir Richard Temple, afterwards Lord Cobham. His father, purposing to educate him for the church, sent him first to Eton, and afterwards to Oxford; but he was seduced to a more airy mode of life, by a commission in a troop of horse, procured him by his uncle.

He continued some time in the army; though it is reasonable to suppose that he never sunk into a mere soldier, nor ever lost the love, or much neglected the pursuit, of learning; and afterwards, finding himself more inclined to civil employment, he laid down his commission, and engaged in business under the Lord Townshend, then secretary of state, with whom he attended the king to Hanover.

His adherence to Lord Townshend ended in nothing but a nomination (May 1729) to be clerk-extraordinary of the privy-council, which produced no immediate profit; for it only placed him in a state of expectation and right of succession, and it was very long before a vacancy admitted him to profit.

Soon afterwards he married, and settled himself in a very pleasant house at Wickham, in Kent, where he devoted himself to learning and to piety. Of his learning the late Collection exhibits evidence, which would have been yet fuller, if the dissertations which accompany his version of Pindar had not been improperly omitted. Of his piety the influence has, I hope, been extended far by his "Observations on the Resurrection," published in 1747, for which the university of Oxford created him a doctor of laws by diploma (March 30, 1748) and would doubtless have reached yet further, had he lived to complete what he had for some time meditated, the evidences of the truth of the "New Testament." Perhaps it may not be without effect to tell, that he read the prayers of the public liturgy every morning to his family, and that on Sunday evening he called his servants into the parlour, and read to them first a sermon and then prayers. Crashaw is now not the only maker of verses to whom may be given the two venerable names of poet and saint.

He was very often visited by Lyttelton and Pitt, who, when they were weary of faction and debates, used at Wickham to find books and quiet, a decent table, and literary conversation. There is at Wickham a walk made by Pitt; and, what is of far more importance, at Wickham Lyttelton received that conviction which produced his "Dissertation on St. Paul."

These two illustrious friends had for a while listened to the blandishments of infidelity; and when West's book was published, it was bought by some who did not know his change of opinion, in expectation of new objections against Christianity; and as infidels do not want malignity, they revenged the disappointment by calling him a methodist.

Mr. West's income was not large; and his friends endeavoured, but without success, to obtain an augmentation. It is reported, that the education of the young prince was offered to him, but that he required a more extensive power of superintendance than it was thought proper to allow him.

In time, however, his revenue was improved; he lived to have one of the lucrative clerkships of the privy council (1752;) and Mr. Pitt at last had it in his power to make him treasurer of Chelsea Hospital.

He was now sufficiently rich; but wealth came too late to be long enjoyed; nor could it secure him from the calamities of life; he lost (1755) his only son; and the year after (March 26) a stroke of the palsy brought to the grave one of the few poets to whom the grave might be without its terrors.

Of his translations I have only compared the first Olympic ode with the original, and found my expectation surpassed, both by its elegance and its exactness. He does not confine himself

* Certainly him. It was published in 1697.—C.

to his author's train of stanzas, for he saw that the difference of the languages required a different mode of versification. The first strophe is eminently happy; in the second he has a little strayed from Pindar's meaning, who says, "if thou, my soul, wishest to speak of games, look not in the desert sky for a planet hotter than the sun; nor shall we tell of nobler games than those of Olympia." He is sometimes too paraphrastical. Pindar bestows upon Hiero an epithet, which, in one word, signifies *delighting in horses*; a word which, in the translation, generates these lines:

> Hiero's royal brows, whose care
> Tends the courser's noble breed,
> Pleased to nurse the pregnant mare,
> Pleased to train the youthful steed.

Pindar says of Pelops, that "he came alone in the dark to the White Sea;" and West,

> Near the billow-beaten side
> Of the foam-besilver'd main,
> Darkling, and alone, he stood:

which however is less exuberant than the former passage.

A work of this kind must, in a minute examination, discover many imperfections; but West's version, so far as I have discovered it, appears to be the product of great labour and great abilities.

His *Institution of the Garter* (1742) is written with sufficient knowledge of the manners that prevailed in the age to which it is referred, and with great elegance of diction; but, for want of a process of events, neither knowledge nor elegance preserves the reader from weariness.

His *Imitations of Spenser* are very successfully performed, both with respect to the metre, the language, and the fiction; and being engaged at once by the excellence of the sentiments, and the artifice of the copy, the mind has two amusements together. But such compositions are not to be reckoned among the great achievements of intellect, because their effect is local and temporary, they appeal not to reason or passion, but to memory, and presuppose an accidental or artificial state of mind. An imitation of Spenser is nothing to a reader, however acute, by whom Spenser has never been perused. Works of this kind may deserve praise, as proofs of great industry, and great nicety of observation: but the highest praise, the praise of genius, they cannot claim. The noblest beauties of art are those of which the effect is coextended with rational nature, or at least with the whole circle of polished life; what is less than this can be only pretty, the plaything of fashion, and the amusement of a day.

There is in the "Adventurer" a paper of verses given to one of the authors as Mr. West's, and supposed to have been written by him. It should not be concealed, however, that it is printed with Mr. Jago's name in Dodsley's Collection, and is mentioned as his in a letter of Shenstone's. Perhaps West gave it without naming the author; and Hawkesworth, receiving it from him, thought it his; for his he thought it, as he told me, and as he tells the public.

COLLINS.

William Collins was born at Chichester, on the twenty-fifth day of December, about 1720. His father was a hatter of good reputation. He was in 1733, as Dr. Warburton has kindly informed me, admitted scholar of Winchester College, where he was educated by Dr. Burton. His English exercises were better than his Latin.

He first courted the notice of the public by some verses to "A Lady Weeping," published in "The Gentleman's Magazine."

In 1740, he stood first in the list of the scholars to be received in succession at New College, but unhappily there was no vacancy. This was the original misfortune of his life. He became a commoner of Queen's College, probably with a scanty maintenance; but was, in about half a year, elected a demy of Magdalen College, where he continued till he had taken a bachelor's degree, and then suddenly left the university; for what reason I know not that he told.

He now (about 1744) came to London a literary adventurer, with many projects in his head, and very little money in his pockets. He designed many works; but his great fault was irresolution; or the frequent calls of immedi-

ate necessity broke his scheme, and suffered him to pursue no settled purpose. A man doubtful of his dinner, or trembling at a creditor, is not much disposed to abstracted meditation, or remote inquiries. He published proposals for a history of the Revival of Learning; and I have heard him speak with great kindness of Leo the Tenth, and with keen resentment of his tasteless successor. But probably not a page of his history was ever written. He planned several tragedies, but he only planned them. He wrote now and then odes and other poems, and did something, however little.

About this time I fell into his company. His appearance was decent and manly; his knowledge considerable, his views extensive, his conversation elegant, and his disposition cheerful. By degrees I gained his confidence; and one day was admitted to him when he was immured by a bailiff, that was prowling in the street. On this occasion recourse was had to the booksellers, who, on the credit of a translation of Aristotle's Poetics, which he engaged to write with a large commentary, advanced as much money as enabled him to escape into the country. He showed me the guineas safe in his hand. Soon afterwards his uncle, Mr. Martin, a lieutenant-colonel, left him about two thousand pounds; a sum which Collins could scarcely think exhaustible, and which he did not live to exhaust. The guineas were then repaid, and the translation neglected.

But man is not born for happiness. Collins, who, while he *studied to live*, felt no evil but poverty, no sooner *lived to study*, than his life was assailed by more dreadful calamities, disease and insanity.

Having formerly written his character,* while perhaps it was yet more distinctly impressed upon my memory, I shall insert it here.

"Mr. Collins was a man of extensive literature, and of vigorous faculties. He was acquainted not only with the learned tongues, but with the Italian, French, and Spanish languages. He had employed his mind chiefly upon works of fiction, and subjects of fancy; and, by indulging some peculiar habits of thought, was eminently delighted with those flights of imagination which pass the bounds of nature, and to which the mind is reconciled only by a passive acquiescence in popular traditions. He loved fairies, genii, giants, and monsters; he delighted to rove through the meanders of enchantment, to gaze on the magnificence of golden palaces, to repose by the water-falls of Elysian gardens.

"This was however the character rather of his inclination than his genius; the grandeur wildness, and the novelty of extravagance, we always desired by him, but not always attaine Yet, as diligence is never wholly lost, if his e forts sometimes caused harshness and obscurit they likewise produced in happier momen sublimity and splendour. This idea which h had formed of excellence led him to oriental fi tions and allegorical imagery, and perhaps, whi he was intent upon description, he did not suffi ciently cultivate sentiment. His poems are th production of a mind not deficient in fire, no unfurnished with knowledge either of books o life, but somewhat obstructed in its progress b deviation in quest of mistaken beauties.

"His morals were pure, and his opinions pi ous: in a long continuance of poverty, and lon habits of dissipation, it cannot be expected tha any character should be exactly uniform. Ther is a degree of want by which the freedom o agency is almost destroyed; and long associatio with fortuitous companions will at last relax th strictness of truth, and abate the fervour of sin cerity. That this man, wise and virtuous as h was, passed almost unentangled through th snares of life, it would be prejudice and temerit to affirm; but it may be said that at least h preserved the source of action unpolluted, tha his principles were never shaken, that his dis tinctions of right and wrong were never con founded, and that his faults had nothing of ma lignity or design, but proceeded from some un expected pressure, or casual temptation.

"The latter part of his life cannot be remem bered but with pity and sadness. He languishe some years under that depression of mind whic enchains the faculties without destroying them and leaves reason the knowledge of right with out the power of pursuing it. These cloud which he perceived gathering on his intellects he endeavoured to disperse by travel, and passe into France; but found himself constrained t yield to his malady, and returned. He was fo some time confined in a house of lunatics, an afterwards retired to the care of his sister i Chichester, where death, in 1756, came to h relief.

"After his return from France, the writer this character paid him a visit at Islington where he was waiting for his sister, whom h had directed to meet him: there was then n thing of disorder discernible in his mind by an but himself; but he had withdrawn from study and travelled with no other book than an En lish Testament, such as children carry to th school: when his friend took it into his hand out of curiosity to see what companion a man letters had chosen, 'I have but one book,' sa Collins, 'but that is the best.'"

Such was the fate of Collins, with whom once delighted to converse, and whom I yet r member with tenderness.

* In the "Poetical Calendar," a collection of poems by Fawkes and Woty, in several volumes, 1763, &c.—C.

He was visited at Chichester, in his last illness, by his learned friends Dr. Warton and his brother, to whom he spoke with disapprobation of his Oriental Eclogues, as not sufficiently expressive of Asiatic manners, and called them his Irish Eclogues. He showed them, at the same time, an ode inscribed to Mr. John Hume, on the superstitions of the Highlands; which they thought superior to his other works, but which no search has yet found.*

His disorder was not alienation of mind, but general laxity and feebleness, a deficiency rather of his vital than his intellectual powers. What he spoke wanted neither judgment nor spirit; but a few minutes exhausted him, so that he was forced to rest upon the couch, till a short cessation restored his powers, and he was again able to talk with his former vigour.

The approaches of this dreadful malady he began to feel soon after his uncle's death; and, with the usual weakness of men so diseased, eagerly snatched that temporary relief with which the table and the bottle flatter and seduce. But his health continually declined, and he grew more and more burdensome to himself.

To what I have formerly said of his writings may be added, that his diction was often harsh, unskilfully laboured, and injudiciously selected. He affected the obsolete when it was not worthy of revival; and he puts his words out of the common order, seeming to think, with some later candidates for fame, that not to write prose is certainly to write poetry. His lines commonly are of slow motion, clogged and impeded with clusters of consonants. As men are often esteemed who cannot be loved, so the poetry of Collins may sometimes extort praise when it gives little pleasure.

Mr. Collins's first production is added here from the "Poetical Calendar."

TO MISS AURELIA C——R,

ON HER WEEPING AT HER SISTER'S WEDDING.

CEASE, fair Aurelia, cease to mourn;
Lament not Hannah's happy state;
You may be happy in your turn,
And seize the treasure you regret.
With love united Hymen stands,
And softly whispers to your charms,
"Meet but your lover in my bands,
You'll find your sister in his arms."

DYER.

JOHN DYER, of whom I have no other account to give than his own letters, published with Hughes's correspondence, and the notes added by the editor, have afforded me, was born in 1700, the second son of Robert Dyer, of Aberglasney, in Caermarthenshire, a solicitor of great capacity and note.

He passed through Westminster-school under the care of Dr. Freind, and was then called home to be instructed in his father's profession. But his father died soon, and he took no delight in the study of the law; but, having always amused himself with drawing, resolved to turn painter, and became pupil to Mr. Richardson, an artist then of high reputation, but now better known by his books than by his pictures.

Having studied awhile under his master, he became, as he tells his friend, an itinerant painter, and wandered about South Wales, and the parts adjacent; but he mingled poetry with painting, and about 1727, printed "Grongar Hill" in Lewis's Miscellany.

Being, probably, unsatisfied with his own proficiency, he, like other painters, travelled to Italy; and coming back in 1740, published "The Ruins of Rome."

If his poem was written soon after his return, he did not make much use of his acquisitions in painting, whatever they might be: for decline of health and love of study determined him to the church. He therefore entered into orders; and, it seems, married about the same time a lady of the name of Ensor; "whose grandmother," says he, "was a Shakspeare descended from a brother of every body's Shakspeare;" by her, in 1756, he had a son and three daughters living.

His ecclesiastical provision was for a long time but slender. His first patron, Mr. Harper, gave him, in 1741, Calthorp, in Leicestershire, of eighty pounds a year, on which he lived ten years, and then exchanged it for Belchford, in Lincolnshire, of seventy-five. His condition now began to mend. In 1751, Sir John Heath-

* It is printed in the late Collection.—R.

cote gave him Coningsby, of one hundred and forty pounds a year; and in 1755, the Chancellor added Kirkby, of one hundred and ten. He complains that the repair of the house at Coningsby, and other expenses, took away the profit. In 1757, he published "The Fleece," his greatest poetical work, of which I will not suppress a ludicrous story. Dodsley, the bookseller, was one day mentioning it to a critical visitor, with more expectation of success than the other could easily admit. In the conversation the Author's age was asked, and being represented as advanced in life, "He will," said the critic, "be buried in woollen."

He did not indeed long survive that publication, nor long enjoy the increase of his preferments; for in* 1758 he died.

Dyer is not a poet of bulk or dignity sufficient to require an elaborate criticism. "Grongar Hill" is the happiest of his productions: it is not indeed very accurately written; but the scenes which it displays are so pleasing, the images which they raise are so welcome to the mind, and the reflections of the writer so consonant to the general sense or experience of mankind, that when it is once read, it will be read again.

The idea of "The Ruins of Rome" strikes more, but pleases less, and the title raises greater expectation than the performance gratifies. Some passages, however, are conceived with the mind of a poet; as when, in the neighbourhood of dilapidating edifices, he says,

—The pilgrim oft
At dead of night, 'mid his orison, hears
Aghast the voice of time, disparting towers,
Tumbling all precipitate, down dash'd,
Rattling around, loud thundering to the moon.

Of "The Fleece," which never became popular, and is now universally neglected, I can say little that is likely to recall it to attention. The wool-comber and the poet appear to me such discordant natures, that an attempt to bring them together is to *couple the serpent with the fowl*. When Dyer, whose mind was not unpoetical, has done his utmost, by interesting his reader in our native commodity, by interspersing rural imagery, and incidental digressions, by clothing small images in great words, and by all the writer's arts of delusion, the meanness naturally adhering, and the irreverence habitually annexed to trade and manufacture, sink him under insuperable oppression; and the disgust which blank verse, encumbering and encumbered, superadds to an unpleasing subject, soon repels the reader, however willing to be pleased.

Let me however honestly report whatever may counterbalance this weight of censure. I have been told, that Akenside, who, upon a poetical question, has a right to be heard, said "That he would regulate his opinion of the reigning taste by the fate of Dyer's 'Fleece;' for, if that were ill-received, he should no think it any longer reasonable to expect fame from excellence."

* July 24th.—C.

SHENSTONE.

William Shenstone, the son of Thomas Shenstone and Anne Pen, was born in November, 1714, at the Leasowes in Hales-Owen, one of those insulated districts which, in the division of the kingdom, was appended, for some reason not now discoverable, to a distant county; and which, though surrounded by Warwickshire and Worcestershire, belongs to Shropshire, though perhaps thirty miles distant from any other part of it.

He learned to read of an old dame, whom his poem of "The School-Mistress" has delivered to posterity; and soon received such delight from books, that he was always calling for fresh entertainment, and expected that, when any of the family went to market, a new book should be brought him, which, when it came, was in fondness carried to bed and laid by him. It is said, that when his request had been neglected his mother wrapt up a piece of wood of the same form, and pacified him for the night.

As he grew older, he went for a while to the Grammar-school, in Hales-Owen, and was placed afterwards with Mr. Crumpton, an eminent schoolmaster at Solihul, where he distinguished himself by the quickness of his progress.

When he was young (June, 1724) he was deprived of his father, and soon after (August 1726) of his grandfather, and was, with his brother, who died afterwards unmarried, left to the care of his grandmother, who managed the estate.

From school he was sent in 1732 to Pembroke College, in Oxford, a society which for half a century has been eminent for English poetry and elegant literature. Here it appears that he found delight and advantage; for he continued his name in the book ten years, though he took no degree. After the first four years, he put on the civilian's gown, but without showing any intention to engage in the profession.

About the time when he went to Oxford, the death of his grandmother devolved his affairs to the care of the Reverend Mr. Dolman, of Brome, in Staffordshire, whose attention he always mentioned with gratitude.

At Oxford he employed himself upon English poetry; and in 1737 published a small miscellany, without his name.

He then for a time wandered about, to acquaint himself with life, and was sometimes at London, sometimes at Bath, or any other place of public resort; but he did not forget his poetry. He published in 1741 his "Judgment of Hercules," addressed to Mr. Lyttelton, whose interest he supported with great warmth at an election: this was next year followed by "The School-Mistress."

Mr. Dolman, to whose care he was indebted for his ease and leisure, died in 1745, and the care of his own fortune now fell upon him. He tried to escape it awhile, and lived at his house with his tenants, who were distantly related: but, finding that imperfect possession inconvenient, he took the whole estate into his own hands, more to the improvement of its beauty, than the increase of its produce.

Now was excited his delight in rural pleasures, and his ambition of rural elegance: he began from this time to point his prospects, to diversify his surface, to entangle his walks, and to wind his waters; which he did with such judgment and such fancy, as made his little domain the envy of the great, and the admiration of the skilful; a place to be visited by travellers, and copied by designers. Whether to plant a walk in undulating curves, and to place a bench at every turn where there is an object to catch the view; to make water run where it will be heard, and to stagnate where it will be seen; to leave intervals where the eye will be pleased, and to thicken the plantation where there is something to be hidden; demand any great powers of mind, I will not inquire: perhaps a curly and sullen spectator may think such performances rather the sport than the business of human reason. But it must be at least confessed, that to embellish the form of Nature is an innocent amusement; and some praise must be allowed, by the most supercilious observer, to him who does best what such multitudes are contending to do well.

This praise was the praise of Shenstone; but, like all other modes of felicity, it was not enjoyed without its abatements. Lyttelton was his neighbour and his rival, whose empire, spacious and opulent, looked with disdain on the *petty state* that *appeared behind it*. For a while the inhabitants of Hagley affected to tell their acquaintance of the little fellow that was trying to make himself admired; but when by degrees the Leasowes forced themselves into notice, they took care to defeat the curiosity which they could not suppress, by conducting their visitants perversely to inconvenient points of view, and introducing them at the wrong end of a walk to detect a deception; injuries of which Shenstone would heavily complain. Where there is emulation there will be vanity; and where there is vanity there will be folly.*

The pleasure of Shenstone was all in his eye; he valued what he valued merely for its looks; nothing raised his indignation more than to ask if there were any fishes in his water.

His house was mean, and he did not improve it; his care was of his grounds. When he came home from his walks, he might find his floors flooded by a shower through the broken roof; but could spare no money for its reparation.

In time his expenses brought clamours about him, that overpowered the lamb's bleat and the linnet's song; and his groves were haunted by beings very different from fauns and fairies.† He spent his estate in adorning it, and his death was probably hastened by his anxieties.

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* This charge against the Lyttelton family has been denied with some degree of warmth by Mr. Potter, and since by Mr. Graves. The latter says, "The truth of the case, I believe, was, that the Lyttelton family went so frequently with their family to the Leasowes, that they were unwilling to break in upon Mr. Shenstone's retirement on every occasion, and therefore often went to the principal points of view without waiting for any one to conduct them regularly through the whole walks. Of this Mr. Shenstone would sometimes peevishly complain: though, I am persuaded, he never really suspected any ill-natured intention in his worthy and much-valued neighbours."—R.

† Mr. Graves, however, expresses his belief that this is a groundless surmise. "Mr. Shenstone," he adds, "was too much respected in the neighbourhood to be treated with rudeness; and though his works, (frugally as they were managed,) added to his manner of living, must necessarily have made him exceed his income, and, of course, he might sometimes be distressed for money, yet he had too much spirit to expose himself to insults from trifling sums, and guarded against any great distress, by anticipating a few hundreds: which his estate could very well bear, as appeared by what remained to his executors after the payment of his debts, and his legacies to his friends, and annuities of thirty pounds a year to one servant, and six pounds to another; for his will was dictated with equal justice and generosity."—R.

He was a lamp that spent its oil in blazing. It is said, that, if he had lived a little longer, he would have been assisted by a pension: such bounty could not have been ever more properly bestowed; but that it was ever asked is not certain; it is too certain that it never was enjoyed.

He died at the Leasowes, of a putrid fever, about five on Friday morning, February 11, 1763; and was buried by the side of his brother in the churchyard of Hales-Owen.

He was never married, though he might have obtained the lady, whoever she was, to whom his "Pastoral Ballad" was addressed. He is represented by his friend Dodsley as a man of great tenderness and generosity, kind to all that were within his influence; but, if once offended, not easily appeased: inattentive to economy, and careless of his expenses. In his person he was larger than the middle size, with something clumsy in his form; very negligent of his clothes, and remarkable for wearing his grey hair in a particular manner; for he held that the fashion was no rule of dress, and that every man was to suit his appearance to his natural form.*

His mind was not very comprehensive, nor his curiosity active; he had no value for those parts of knowledge which he had not himself cultivated.

His life was unstained by any crime; the *Elegy on Jesse*, which has been supposed to relate an unfortunate and criminal amour of his own, was known by his friends to have been suggested by the story of Miss Godfrey, in Richardson's "Pamela."

What Gray thought of his character, from the perusal of his letters, was this:—

"I have read too an octavo volume of Shenstone's Letters. Poor man! he was always wishing for money, for fame, and other distinctions; and his whole philosophy consisted in living against his will in retirement, and in a place which his taste had adorned, but which he only enjoyed when people of note came to see and commend it; his correspondence is about nothing else but this place and his own writings, with two or three neighbouring clergymen, who wrote verses too."

His poems consist of elegies, odes, and ballads, humorous sallies, and moral pieces.

His conception of an elegy he has in his preface very judiciously and discriminately explained. It is, according to his account, the effusion of a contemplative mind, sometimes plaintive, and always serious, and therefore superior to the glitter of slight ornaments. His compositions suit not ill to this description. His top of praise are the domestic virtues, and thoughts are pure and simple; but, wanti combination, they want variety. The peace solitude, the innocence of inactivity, and unenvied security of an humble station, can but a few pages. That of which the essenc uniformity will be soon described. His eleg have therefore too much resemblance of e other.

The lines are sometimes such as elegy requir smooth and easy; but to this praise his claim not constant; his diction is often harsh, i proper, and affected; his words ill-coined, or i chosen; and his phrase unskilfully inverted.

The lyric poems are almost all of the lig and airy kind, such as trip lightly and nimb along, without the load of any weighty mea ing. From these, however, *Rural Elegance* some right to be excepted. I once heard praised by a very learned lady; and though t lines are irregular, and the thoughts diffus with too much verbosity, yet it cannot be deni to contain both philosophical argument a poetical spirit.

Of the rest I cannot think any excellen "The Skylark" pleases me best, which h however, more of the epigram than of the od

But the four parts of his "Pastoral Balla demand particular notice. I cannot but reg that it is pastoral; an intelligent reader, quainted with the scenes of real life, sickens the mention of the *crook*, the *pipe*, the *sheep*, a the *kids*, which it is not necessary to bring f ward to notice, for the poet's art is selecti and he ought to show the beauties without t grossness of the country life. His stanza see to have been chosen in imitation of Row "Despairing Shepherd."

In the first part are two passages, to which any mind denies its sympathy, it has no a quaintance with love or nature.

I prized every hour that went by,
Beyond all that had pleased me before;
But now they are past, and I sigh,
And I grieve that I prized them no more.

When forced the fair nymph to forego,
What anguish I felt in my heart!
Yet I thought (but it might not be so)
'Twas with pain that she saw me depart.

She gazed, as I slowly withdrew,
My path I could hardly discern;
So sweetly she bade me adieu,
I thought that she bade me return.

In the second this passage has its prettin though it be not equal to the former:—

I have found out a gift for my fair;
I have found where the wood-pigeons breed;
But let me that plunder forbear,
She will say 'twas a barbarous deed:

* "These," says Mr. Graves, "were not precisely his sentiments, though he thought right enough, that every one should, in some degree, consult his particular shape and complexion in adjusting his dress; and that no fashion ought to sanctify what was ungraceful, absurd, or really deformed."

For he ne'er could be true, she averr'd,
Who could rob a poor bird of its young;
And I loved her the more when I heard
Such tenderness fall from her tongue.

In the third he mentions the common-places of amorous poetry with some address:—

'Tis his with mock-passions to glow!
'Tis his in smooth tales to unfold,
How her face is as bright as the snow,
And her bosom, be sure, is as cold;

How the nightingales labour the strain,
With the notes of this charmer to vie;
How they vary their accents in vain,
Repine at her triumphs, and die.

In the fourth I find nothing better than this natural strain of Hope:—

Alas! from the day that we met,
What hope of an end to my woes,
When I cannot endure to forget
The glance that undid my repose?

Yet Time may diminish the pain:
The flower, and the shrub, and the tree,
Which I rear'd for her pleasure in vain,
In time may have comfort for me.

His *Levities* are by their title exempted from the severities of criticism; yet it may be remarked in a few words, that his humour is sometimes gross, and seldom sprightly.

Of the moral poems, the first is "The Choice of Hercules," from Xenophon. The numbers are smooth, the diction elegant, and the thoughts just; but something of vigour is still to be wished, which it might have had by brevity and compression. His "Fate of Delicacy" has an air of gayety, but not a very pointed and general moral. His blank verses, those that can read them may probably find to be like the blank verses of his neighbours. "Love and Honour" is derived from the old ballad, "Did you not hear of a Spanish Lady?"—I wish it well enough to wish it were in rhyme.

"The School Mistress," of which I know not what claim it has to stand among the moral works, is surely the most pleasant of Shenstone's performances. The adoption of a particular style, in light and short compositions, contributes much to the increase of pleasure; we are entertained at once with two imitations, of nature in the sentiments, of the original author in the style; and between them the mind is kept in perpetual employment.

The general recommendation of Shenstone is easiness and simplicity; his general defect is want of comprehension and variety. Had his mind been better stored with knowledge, whether he could have been great, I know not; he could certainly have been agreeable.

YOUNG.

The following life was written, at my request, by a gentleman who had better information than I could easily have obtained; and the public will perhaps wish that I had solicited and obtained more such favours from him.*

"Dear Sir,

"In consequence of our different conversations about authentic materials for the life of Young, I send you the following detail.

"Of great men, something must always be said to gratify curiosity. Of the illustrious Author of the "Night Thoughts" much has been told of which there never could have been proofs; and little care appears to have been taken to tell that, of which proofs, with little trouble, might have been procured."

Edward Young was born at Upham, near Winchester, in June, 1681. He was the son of Edward Young, at that time fellow of Winchester College and rector of Upham; who was the son of Jo. Young, of Woodhay, in Berkshire, styled by Wood, *gentleman*. In September, 1682, the Poet's father was collated to the prebend of Gillingham Minor, in the church of Sarum, by Bishop Ward. When Ward's faculties were impaired through age, his duties were necessarily performed by others. We learn from Wood, that at a visitation of Sprat's, July the 12th, 1686, the prebendary preached a Latin sermon, afterwards published, with which the bishop was so pleased, that he told the chapter

* See Gent. Mag. vol. lxx. p. 225.—N.

he was concerned to find the preacher had one of the worst prebends in their church. Some time after this, in consequence of his merit and reputation, or of the interest of Lord Bradford, to whom, in 1702, he dedicated two volumes of sermons, he was appointed chaplain to King William and Queen Mary, and preferred to the deanery of Sarum. Jacob, who wrote in 1720, says, "he was chaplain and clerk of the closet to the late queen, who honoured him by standing godmother to the Poet." His fellowship of Winchester he resigned in favour of a gentleman of the name of Harris, who married his only daughter. The Dean died at Sarum, after a short illness, in 1705, in the sixty-third year of his age. On the Sunday after his decease Bishop Burnet preached at the cathedral, and began his sermon with saying, "Death has been of late walking round us, and making breach upon breach upon us, and has now carried away the head of this body with a stroke; so that he, whom you saw a week ago distributing the holy mysteries, is now laid in the dust. But he still lives in the many excellent directions he has left us, both how to live and how to die."

The Dean placed his son upon the foundation at Winchester College, where he had himself been educated. At this school Edward Young remained till the election after his eighteenth birth-day, the period at which those upon the foundation are superannuated. Whether he did not betray his abilities early in life, or his masters had not skill enough to discover in their pupil any marks of genius for which he merited reward, or no vacancy at Oxford offered them an opportunity to bestow upon him the reward provided for merit by William of Wykeham; certain it is, that to an Oxford fellowship our Poet did not succeed. By chance, or by choice, New College cannot claim the honour of numbering among its fellows him who wrote the "Night Thoughts."

On the 13th of October, 1703, he was entered an independent member of New College, that he might live at little expense in the warden's lodgings, who was a particular friend of his father's, till he should be qualified to stand for a fellowship at All Souls. In a few months the warden of New College died. He then removed to Corpus College. The president of this society, from regard also for his father, invited him thither, in order to lessen his academical expenses. In 1708, he was nominated to a law-fellowship at All Souls by Archbishop Tenison, into whose hands it came by devolution. Such repeated patronage, while it justifies Burnet's praise of the father, reflects credit on the conduct of the son: the manner in which it was exerted seems to prove that the father did not leave behind much wealth.

On the 23d of April, 1714, Young took his degree of bachelor of civil laws, and his doctor's degree on the 10th of June, 1719.

Soon after he went to Oxford, he discovered, it is said, an inclination for pupils. Whether he ever commenced tutor is not known. None has hitherto boasted to have received his academical instruction from the author of the "Night Thoughts."

It is probable that his College was proud of him no less as a scholar than as a poet; for, in 1716, when the foundation of the Codrington Library was laid, two years after he had taken his bachelor's degree, Young was appointed to speak the Latin oration. This is at least particular for being dedicated in English "To the Ladies of the Codrington Family." To these ladies he says, that "he was unavoidably flung into a singularity, by being obliged to write an epistle dedicatory void of common-place, and such a one was never published before by any author whatever; that this practice absolved them from any obligation of reading what was presented to them; and that the bookseller approved of it, because it would make people stare, was absurd enough, and perfectly right."

Of this oration there is no appearance in his own edition of his works; and prefixed to an edition by Curll and Tonson, 1741, in a letter from Young to Curll, if we may credit Curll, dated December the 9th, 1739, wherein he says, that he has not leisure to review what he formerly wrote, and adds, "I have not the 'Epistle to Lord Lansdowne.' If you will take my advice, I would have you omit that, and the Oration on Codrington. I think the collection will sell better without them."

There are who relate, that, when first Young found himself independent, and his own master at All Souls, he was not the ornament to religion and morality which he afterwards became.

The authority of his father, indeed, had ceased, some time before, by his death; and Young was certainly not ashamed to be patronised by the infamous Wharton. But Wharton befriended in Young, perhaps, the poet, and particularly the tragedian. If virtuous authors must be patronised only by virtuous peers, who shall point them out?

Yet Pope is said by Ruffhead to have told Warburton, that "Young had much of a sublime genius, though without common sense; so that his genius, having no guide, was perpetually liable to degenerate into bombast. This made him pass a *foolish youth*, the sport of peers and poets, but his having a very good heart enabled him to support the clerical character when he assumed it, first with decency, and afterwards with honour."

They who think ill of Young's morality in the early part of his life, may perhaps be wrong; but Tindal could not err in his opinion of Young's warmth and ability in the cause of re-

ligion. Tindal used to spend much of his time at All Souls. "The other boys," said the Atheist, "I can always answer, because I always know whence they have their arguments, which I have read a hundred times; but that fellow Young is continually pestering me with something of his own."*

After all, Tindal and the censurers of Young may be reconcileable. Young might, for two or three years, have tried that kind of life, in which his natural principles would not suffer him to wallow long. If this were so, he has left behind him not only his evidence in favour of virtue, but the potent testimony of experience against vice.

We shall soon see that one of his earliest productions was more serious than what comes from the generality of unfledged poets.

Young perhaps ascribed the good fortune of Addison to the "Poem to his Majesty," presented, with a copy of verses, to Somers; and hoped that he also might soar to wealth and honour on wings of the same kind. His first poetical flight was when Queen Anne called up to the House of Lords the sons of the Earls of Northampton and Aylesbury, and added, in one day, ten others to the number of peers. In order to reconcile the people to one, at least, of the new lords, he published, in 1712, "An Epistle to the Right Honourable George Lord Lansdowne." In this composition the Poet pours out his panegyric with the extravagance of a young man, who thinks his present stock of wealth will never be exhausted.

The poem seems intended also to reconcile the public to the late peace. This is endeavoured to be done by showing that men are slain in war, and that in peace "harvests wave, and Commerce swells her sail." If this be humanity, for which he meant it; is it politics? Another purpose of this Epistle appears to have been, to prepare the public for the reception of some tragedy he might have in hand. His Lordship's patronage, he says, will not let him "repent his passion for the stage;" and the particular praise bestowed on "Othello" and "Oroonoko" looks as if some such character as Zanga was even then in contemplation. The affectionate mention of the death of his friend Harrison, of New College, at the close of this poem, is an instance of Young's art, which displayed itself so wonderfully some time afterwards in the "Night Thoughts," of making the public a party in his private sorrow.

Should justice call upon you to censure this poem, it ought at least to be remembered that he did not insert it in his works; and that in the letter to Curll, as we have seen, he advises its omission. The booksellers, in the late body of English Poetry, should have distinguished what was deliberately rejected by the respective authors.* This I shall be careful to do with regard to Young. "I think," says he, "the following pieces in *four* volumes to be the most excusable of all that I have written; and I wish *less apology* was needful for these. As there is no recalling what is got abroad, the pieces here republished I have revised and corrected, and rendered them as *pardonable* as it was in my power to do."

Shall the gates of repentance be shut only against literary sinners?

When Addison published "Cato" in 1713, Young had the honour of prefixing to it a recommendatory copy of verses. This is one of the pieces which the Author of the "Night Thoughts" did not republish.

On the appearance of his *Poem on the Last Day*, Addison did not return Young's compliment; but "The Englishman" of October 29, 1713, which was probably written by Addison, speaks handsomely of this poem. "The Last Day" was published soon after the peace. The vice-chancellor's *imprimatur*, for it was printed at Oxford, is dated March the 19th, 1713. From the exordium, Young appears to have spent some time on the composition of it. While other bards "with Britain's hero set their souls on fire," he draws, he says, a deeper scene. Marlborough *had been* considered by Britain as her *hero;* but, when the "Last Day" was published, female cabal had blasted for a time the laurels of Blenheim. This serious poem was finished by Young as early as 1710, before he was thirty, for part of it is printed in the "Tatler."† It was inscribed to the Queen, in a dedication, which, for some reason, he did not admit into his works. It tells her, that his only title to the great honour he now does himself, is the obligation which he formerly received from her royal indulgence.

Of this obligation nothing is now known, unless he alluded to her being his godmother. He is said indeed to have been engaged at a settled stipend as a writer for the court. In Swift's "Rhapsody on Poetry" are these lines, speaking of the court—

> Whence Gay was banish'd in disgrace,
> Where Pope will never show his face,

* As my great friend is now become the subject of biography, it should be told, that, every time I called upon Johnson during the time I was employed in collecting materials for this life and putting it together, he never suffered me to depart without some such farewell as this: "Don't forget that rascal Tindal, Sir. Be sure to hang up the Atheist." Alluding to this anecdote, which Johnson had mentioned to me.

* Dr. Johnson, in many cases, thought and directed differently, particularly in Young's Works.—J. N.

† Not in the "Tatler," but in the Guardian," May 9, 1713.—C

Where Y— must torture his invention
To flatter knaves, or lose his pension.

That Y— means Young seems clear from four other lines in the same poem:

Attend, ye Popes and Youngs and Gays
And tune your harps and strew your bays;
Your panegyrics here provide;
You cannot err on flattery's side.

Yet who shall say with certainty, that Young was a pensioner? In all modern periods of this country, have not the writers on one side been regularly called hirelings, and on the other patriots?

Of the dedication the complexion is clearly political. It speaks in the highest terms of the late peace; it gives her Majesty praise indeed for her victories, but says, that the Author is more pleased to see her rise from this lower world, soaring above the clouds, passing the first and second heavens, and leaving the fixed stars behind her; nor will he lose her there, he says, but keep her still in view through the boundless spaces on the other side of creation, in her journey towards eternal bliss, till he beholds the heaven of heavens open, and angels receiving and conveying her still onward from the stretch of his imagination, which tires in her pursuit, and falls back again to earth.

The Queen was soon called away from this lower world, to a place where human praise or human flattery, even less general than this, are of little consequence. If Young thought the dedication contained only the praise of truth, he should not have omitted it in his works. Was he conscious of the exaggeration of party? Then he should not have written it. The poem itself is not without a glance towards politics, notwithstanding the subject. The cry that the church was in danger had not yet subsided. The "Last Day," written by a layman, was much approved by the ministry and their friends.

Before the Queen's death, "The Force of Religion, or Vanquished Love," was sent into the world. This poem is founded on the execution of Lady Jane Grey, and her husband, Lord Guildford, 1554, a story chosen for the subject of a tragedy by Edmund Smith and wrought into a tragedy by Rowe. The dedication of it to the Countess of Salisbury does not appear in his own edition. He hopes it may be some excuse for his presumption, that the story could not have been read without thoughts of the Countess of Salisbury, though it had been dedicated to another. "To behold," he proceeds, "a person *only* virtuous, stirs in us a prudent regret; to behold a person *only* amiable to the sight, warms us with a religious indignation; but to turn our eyes to a Countess of Salisbury, gives us pleasure and improvement; it works a sort of miracle, occasions the bias of our nature to fall off from sin, and makes our very senses and affections converts to our religion, and promoters of our duty." His flattery was as ready for the other sex as for ours, and was at least as well adapted.

August the 27th, 1714, Pope writes to his friend Jervas, that he is just arrived from Oxford; that every one is much concerned for the Queen's death, but that no panegyrics are ready yet for the King. Nothing like friendship had yet taken place between Pope and Young; for, soon after the event which Pope mentions, Young published a poem on the Queen's death, and his Majesty's accession to the throne. It is inscribed to Addison, then secretary to the lords justices. Whatever were the obligations which he had formerly received from Anne, the Poet appears to aim at something of the same sort from George. Of the poem the intention seems to have been, to show that he had the same extravagant strain of praise for a King as for a queen. To discover, at the very onset of a foreigner's reign, that the gods bless his new subjects in such a king, is something more than praise. Neither was this deemed one of his *excusable pieces*. We do not find it in his works.

Young's father had been well acquainted with Lady Anne Wharton, the first wife of Thomas Wharton, Esq. afterwards Marquis of Wharton; a lady celebrated for her poetical talents by Burnet and by Waller

To the Dean of Sarum's visitation sermon, already mentioned, were added some verses "by that excellent poetess Mrs. Anne Wharton," upon its being translated into English, at the instance of Waller, by Atwood. Wharton, after he became ennobled, did not drop the son of his old friend. In him, during the short time he lived, Young found a patron, and in his dissolute descendant a friend and a companion. The Marquis died in April, 1715. In the beginning of the next year the young Marquis set out upon his travels, from which he returned in about a twelvemonth. The beginning of 1717 carried him to Ireland; where, says the Biographia, "on the score of his extraordinary qualities, he had the honour done him of being admitted, though under age, to take his seat in the House of Lords."

With this unhappy character, it is not unlikely that Young went to Ireland. From his letter to Richardson on "Original Composition," it is clear he was, at some period of his life, in that country. "I remember," says he, in that letter, speaking of Swift, "as I and others were taking with him an evening walk, about a mile out of Dublin, he stopped short; we passed on; but perceiving he did not follow us I went back and found him fixed as a statue, and earnestly gazing upward at a noble elm

which in its uppermost branches was much withered and decayed. Pointing at it, he said, 'I shall be like that tree, I shall die at top.'" Is it not probable that this visit to Ireland was paid when he had an opportunity of going thither with his avowed friend and patron?

From "The Englishman" it appears that a tragedy by Young was in the theatre so early as 1713. Yet "Busiris" was not brought upon Drury-lane stage till 1719. It was inscribed to the Duke of Newcastle, "because the late instances he had received of his Grace's undeserved and uncommon favour, in an affair of some consequence, foreign to the theatre, had taken from him the privilege of choosing a patron." The dedication he afterwards suppressed.

"Busiris" was followed in the year 1731 by "The Revenge." He dedicated this famous tragedy to the Duke of Wharton. "Your Grace," says the dedication, "has been pleased to make yourself accessary to the following scenes, not only by suggesting the most beautiful incident in them, but by making all possible provision for the success of the whole."

That his Grace should have suggested the incident to which he alludes, whatever that incident might have been, is not unlikely. The last mental exertion of the superannuated young man, in his quarters at Lerida, in Spain, was some scenes of a tragedy on the story of Mary Queen of Scots.

Dryden dedicated "Marriage-a-la-Mode" to Wharton's infamous relation Rochester, whom he acknowledges not only as the defender of his poetry, but as the promoter of his fortune. Young concludes his address to Wharton thus—"My present fortune is his bounty, and my future his care, which I will venture to say will be always remembered to his honour, since he, I know, intended his generosity as an encouragement to merit, though, through his very pardonable partiality to one who bears him so sincere a duty and respect, I happened to receive the benefit of it." That he ever had such a patron as Wharton, Young took all the pains in his power to conceal from the world, by excluding this dedication from his works. He should have remembered that he at the same time concealed his obligation to Wharton for *the most beautiful incident* in what is surely not his least beautiful composition. The passage just quoted is, in a poem afterwards addressed to Walpole, literally copied:

> Be this thy partial smile from censure free!
> 'Twas meant for merit, though it fell on me.

While Young, who, in his "Love of Fame," complains grievously how often "dedications wash an Æthiop white," was painting an amiable Duke of Wharton in perishable prose, Pope was, perhaps, beginning to describe the "scorn and wonder of his days" in lasting verse.

To the patronage of such a character, had Young studied men as much as Pope, he would have known how little to have trusted. Young, however, was certainly indebted to it for something material; and the Duke's regard for Young, added to his "lust of praise," procured to All Souls College a donation, which was not forgotten by the poet when he dedicated "The Revenge."

It will surprise you to see me cite second Atkins, Case 136, Stiles *versus* the Attorney General, March 14, 1740, as authority for the life of a poet. But biographers do not always find such certain guides as the oaths of the persons whom they record. Chancellor Hardwicke was to determine whether two annuities, granted by the Duke of Wharton to Young, were for legal considerations. One was dated the 24th of March, 1719, and accounted for his Grace's bounty in a style princely and commendable, if not legal—"considering that the public good is advanced by the encouragement of learning and the polite arts, and being pleased therein with the attempts of Dr. Young, in consideration thereof, and of the love I bear him," &c. The other was dated the 10th of July, 1722.

Young, on his examination, swore that he quitted the Exeter family, and refused an annuity of one hundred pounds, which had been offered him for life if he would continue tutor to Lord Burleigh, upon the pressing solicitations of the Duke of Wharton, and his Grace's assurances of providing for him in a much more ample manner. It also appeared that the Duke had given him a bond for six hundred pounds, dated the 15th of March, 1721, in consideration of his taking several journeys, and being at great expenses, in order to be chosen member of the House of Commons, at the Duke's desire, and in consideration of his not taking two livings of two hundred pounds and four hundred pounds, in the gift of All Souls College, on his Grace's promises of serving and advancing him in the world.

Of his adventures in the Exeter family I am unable to give any account. The attempt to get into parliament was at Cirencester, where Young stood a contested election. His Grace discovered in him talents for oratory as well as for poetry: nor was this judgment wrong. Young, after he took orders, became a very popular preacher, and was much followed for the grace and animation of his delivery. By his oratorical talents he was once in his life, according to the Biographia, deserted. As he wa preaching in his turn at St. James's, he plainly perceived it was out of his power to command the attention of his audience. This so affected the feelings of the preacher, that he sat back in the pulpit and burst into tears. But we must pursue his poetical life.

In 1719 he lamented the death of Addison, in

a letter addressed to their common friend Tickell. For the secret history of the following lines, if they contain any, it is now vain to seek:

> *In joy once join'd*, in sorrow, now, for years—
> Partner in grief, and brother of my tears,
> Tickell, accept this verse, thy mournful due.

From your account of Tickell it appears that he and Young used to "communicate to each ther whatever verses they wrote, even to the ast things."

In 1719 appeared a "Paraphrase on Part of the Book of Job." Parker, to whom it is dedicated, had not long, by means of the seals, been qualified for a patron. Of this work the Author's opinion may be known from his letter to Curll: "You seem, in the Collection you propose, to have omitted what I think may claim the first place in it; I mean a Translation from Part of Job, printed by Mr. Tonson." The Dedication, which was only suffered to appear in Mr. Tonson's edition, while it speaks with satisfaction of his present retirement, seems to make an unusual struggle to escape from retirement. But every one who sings in the dark does not sing from joy. It is addressed, in no common strain of flattery, to a chancellor, of whom he clearly appears to have had no kind of knowledge.

Of his Satires it would not have been possible to fix the dates without the assistance of first editions, which, as you had occasion to observe in your account of Dryden, are with difficulty found. We must then have referred to the poems, to discover when they were written. For these internal notes of time we should not have referred in vain. The first Satire laments, that "Guilt's chief foe in Addison is fled." The second, addressing himself, asks

> Is thy ambition sweating for a rhyme,
> Thou unambitious fool, at this late time
> A fool at *forty* is a fool indeed

The Satires were originally published separately in folio, under the title of "The Universal Passion." These passages fix the appearance of the first to about 1725, the time at which it came out. As Young seldom suffered his pen to dry after he had once dipped it in poetry, we may conclude that he began his Satires soon after he had written the *Paraphrase on Job*. The last Satire was certainly finished in the beginning of the year 1726. In December, 1725, the King, in his passage from Helvoetsluys, escaped with great difficulty from a storm by landing at Rye; and the conclusion of the Satire turns the escape into a miracle, in such an encomiastic strain of compliment as poetry too often seeks to pay to royalty.

From the sixth of these poems we learn,

> Midst empire's charms, how Carolina's heart
> Glow'd with the love of virtue and of art:

since the grateful poet tells us, in the next couplet,

> Her favour is diffused to that degree,
> Excess of goodness, it has dawn'd on me.

Her Majesty had stood godmother, and given her name to the daughter of the lady whom Young married in 1731; and had perhaps shown some attention to Lady Elizabeth's future husband.

The fifth Satire, "On Women," was not published till 1727; and the sixth not till 1728.

To these poems, when, in 1728, he gathered them into one publication, he prefixed a Preface; in which he observes, that "no man can converse much in the world, but at what he meets with he must either be insensible or grieve, or be angry or smile. Now to smile at it, and turn it into ridicule," he adds, "I think most eligible, as it hurts ourselves least, and gives vice and folly the greatest offence. Laughing at the misconduct of the world will, in a great measure, ease us of any more disagreeable passion about it. One passion is more effectually driven out by another than by reason, whatever some teach." So wrote, and so of course thought, the lively and witty satirist at the grave age of almost fifty, who, many years earlier in life, wrote "The Last Day." After all, Swift pronounced of these Satires, that they should either have been more angry or more merry.

Is it not somewhat singular that Young preserved, without any palliation, this Preface, so bluntly decisive in favour of laughing at the world, in the same collection of his works which contains the mournful, angry, gloomy, "Night Thoughts?"

At the conclusion of the Preface he applies Plato's beautiful fable of "The Birth of Love" to modern poetry, with the addition "that poetry, like love, is a little subject to blindness, which makes her mistake her way to preferments and honours; and that she retains a dutiful admiration of her father's family; but divides her favours, and generally lives with her mother's relations." Poetry, it is true, did not lead Young to preferments or to honours; but was there not something like blindness in the flattery which he sometimes forced her and her sister Prose to utter? She was always, indeed, taught by him to entertain a most dutiful admiration of riches; but surely Young, though nearly related to Poetry, had no connection with her whom Plato makes the mother of Love. That he could not well complain of being related to Poverty appears clearly from the frequent bounties which his gratitude records, and from the wealth which he left behind him. By "The Universal Passion" he acquired no vulgar fortune, more than three thousand pounds. A considerable sum had already been swallowed up in the South Sea. For this loss he took the

vengeance of an author. His muse makes poetical use more than once of a South Sea dream.

It is related by Mr. Spence in his Manuscript Anecdotes, on the authority of Mr. Rawlinson, that Young, upon the publication of his "Universal Passion," received from the Duke of Grafton two thousand pounds, and that, when one of his friends exclaimed, "Two thousand pounds for a poem!" he said it was the best bargain he ever made in his life, for the poem was worth four thousand.

This story may be true; but it seems to have been raised from the two answers of Lord Burghley and Sir Philip Sidney in Spenser's Life.

After inscribing his Satires, not perhaps without the hopes of preferment and honours, to such names as the Duke of Dorset, Mr. Dodington, Mr. Spencer Compton, Lady Elizabeth Germaine, and Sir Robert Walpole, he returns to plain panegyric. In 1726 he addressed a poem to Sir Robert Walpole, of which the title sufficiently explains the intention. If Young must be acknowledged a ready celebrator, he did not endeavour, or did not choose, to be a lasting one. "The Instalment" is among the pieces he did not admit into the number of his *excusable writings*. Yet it contains a couplet which pretends to pant after the power of bestowing immortality:

O! how I long, enkindled by the theme,
In deep eternity to launch thy name.

The bounty of the former reign seems to have been continued, possibly increased, in this. Whatever it might have been, the Poet thought he deserved it; for he was not ashamed to acknowledge what, without his acknowledgment, would now perhaps never have been known:

My breast, O Walpole, glows with grateful fire,
The streams of royal bounty, turn'd by thee,
Refresh the dry domains of poesy.

If the purity of modern patriotism will term Young a pensioner, it must at least be confessed he was a grateful one.

The reign of the new monarch was ushered in by Young with "Ocean, an Ode." The hint of it was taken from the royal speech, which recommended the increase and the encouragement of the seamen; that they might be "invited rather than compelled by force and violence, to enter into the service of their country;" a plan which humanity must lament that policy has not even yet been able or willing to carry into execution. Prefixed to the original publication were an "Ode to the King, Pater Patriæ," and an "Essay on Lyric Poetry." It is but justice to confess, that he preserved neither of them; and that the Ode itself, which in the first edition, and in the last, consists of seventy-three stanzas, in the Author's own edition is reduced to forty-nine. Among the omitted passages is a "Wish," that concluded the poem, which few would have suspected Young of forming; and of which, few after having formed it, would confess something like their shame by suppression.

It stood originally so high in the Author's opinion, that he entitled the poem, "Ocean, an Ode. Concluding with a Wish." This wish consists of thirteen stanzas. The first runs thus:

O may I *steal*
Along the *vale*
Of humble live secure from foes!
My friend sincere,
My judgment clear,
And gentle business my repose!

The three last stanzas are not more remarkable for just rhymes: but, altogether, they will make rather a curious page in the life of Young:

Prophetic scheme,
And golden dreams,
May I, unsanguine, cast away!
Have what I *have*,
And live, not *leave*,
Enamour'd of the present day!

My hours my own!
My faults unknown!
My chief revenue in content!
Then leave one *beam*
Of honest *fame!*
And scorn the labour'd monument!

Unhurt my urn
Till that great TURN
When mighty Nature's self shall die,
Time cease to glide,
With human pride,
Sunk in the ocean of eternity!

It is whimsical, that he, who was soon to bid adieu to rhyme, should fix upon a measure in which rhyme abounds even to satiety. Of this he said, in his "Essay on Lyric Poetry," prefixed to the poem—"For the more *harmony* likewise I chose the frequent return of rhyme, which laid me under great difficulties. But difficulties overcome, give grace and pleasure. Nor can I account for the *pleasure of rhyme in general* (of which the moderns are too fond) but from this truth." Yet the moderns surely deserve not much censure for their fondness of what, by their own confession, affords pleasure, and abounds in harmony.

The next paragraph in his Essay did not occur to him when he talked of "that great turn" in the stanza just quoted. "But then the writer must take care that the difficulty is over-

come. That is, he must make rhyme consist with as perfect sense and expression, as could be expected if he was perfectly free from that shackle."

Another part of this Essay will convict the following stanza of, what every reader will discover in it, "involuntary burlesque."

> The northern blast,
> The shatter'd mast,
> The syrt, the whirlpool, and the rock,
> The breaking spout,
> The *stars gone out*,
> The boiling streight, the monster's shock.

But would the English poets fill quite so many volumes, if all their productions were to be tried, like this, by an elaborate essay on each particular species of poetry of which they exhibit specimens?

If Young be not a lyric poet, he is at least a critic in that sort of poetry; and, if his lyric poetry can be proved bad, it was first proved so by his own criticism. This surely is candid.

Milbourn was styled by Pope "the fairest of critics," only because he exhibited his own version of Virgil to be compared with Dryden's which he condemned, and with which every reader had it not otherwise in his power to compare it. Young was surely not the most unfair of poets for prefixing to a lyric composition an Essay on Lyric Poetry, so just and impartial as to condemn himself.

We shall soon come to a work, before which we find indeed no critical essay, but which disdains to shrink from the touchstone of the severest critic; and which certainly, as I remember to have heard you say, if it contain some of the worst, contains also some of the best things in the language.

Soon after the appearance of "Ocean," when he was almost fifty, Young entered into orders. In April, 1728,* not long after he had put on the gown, he was appointed chaplain to George the Second.

The tragedy of "The Brothers," which was already in rehearsal, he immediately withdrew from the stage. The managers resigned it with some reluctance to the delicacy of the new clergyman. The epilogue to "The Brothers," the only appendages to any of his three plays which he added himself, is, I believe, the only one of the kind. He calls it an historical epilogue. Finding that "Guilt's dreadful close his narrow scene denied," he, in a manner, continues the tragedy in the epilogue, and relates how Rome revenged the shade of Demetrius, and punished Perseus "for this night's deed."

Of Young's taking orders, something is told by the biographer of Pope, which places the easiness and simplicity of the Poet in a singular light. When he determined on the church, he did not address himself to Sherlock, to Atterbury, or to Hare, for the best instructions in theology; but to Pope, who, in a youthful frolic, advised the diligent perusal of Thomas Aquinas. With this treasure Young retired from interruption to an obscure place in the suburbs. His poetical guide to godliness hearing nothing of him during half a year, and apprehending he might have carried the jest too far, sought after him, and found him just in time to prevent what Ruffhead calls "an irretrievable derangement."

That attachment to his favourite study, which made him think a poet the surest guide to his new profession, left him little doubt whether poetry was the surest path to its honours and preferments. Not long indeed after he took orders, he published in prose, 1728, "A true Estimate of Human Life," dedicated, notwithstanding the Latin quotations with which it abounds, to the Queen; and a sermon preached before the House of Commons, 1729, on the martyrdom of King Charles, intituled, "An Apology for Princes, or the Reverence due to Government." But the "Second Course," the counterpart of his "Estimate," without which it cannot be called "A true Estimate," though in 1728 it was announced as "soon to be published," never appeared; and his old friends the muses were not forgotten. In 1730, he relapsed to poetry, and sent into the world "Imperium Pelagi: a Naval Lyric, written in Imitation of Pindar's Spirit, occasioned by his Majesty's Return from Hanover, September, 1729, and the succeeding Peace." It is inscribed to the Duke of Chandos. In the Preface we are told, that the ode is the most spirited kind of poetry, and that the Pindaric is the most spirited kind of ode. "This I speak," he adds, "with sufficient candour, at my own very great peril. But truth has an eternal title to our confession, though we are sure to suffer by it." Behold, again, the fairest of poets. Young's "Imperium Pelagi" was ridiculed in Fielding's "Tom Thumb;" but, let us not forget that it was one of his pieces which the Author of the "Night Thoughts" deliberately refused to own.

Not long after this Pindaric attempt, he published Epistles to Pope, "concerning the Authors of the Age," 1730. Of these poems one occasion seems to have been an apprehension lest from the liveliness of his satires, he should not be deemed sufficiently serious for promotion in the church.

In July, 1730, he was presented by his College to the rectory of Welwyn, in Hertfordshire. In May, 1731, he married Lady Elizabeth Lee, daughter of the Earl of Lichfield, and widow of Colonel Lee. His connection with this lady

* Davies, in his Life of Garrick, says 1720, and that it was produced thirty-three years after, which corresponds with the date in p. 284.—C.

arose from his father's acquaintance, already mentioned, with Lady Anne Wharton, who was coheiress of Sir Henry Lee of Ditchley, in Oxfordshire. Poetry had lately been taught by Addison to aspire to the arms of nobility, though not with extraordinary happiness.

We may naturally conclude that Young now gave himself up in some measure to the comforts of his new connection, and to the expectations of that preferment which he thought due to his poetical talents, or, at least, to the manner in which they had so frequently been exerted.

The next production of his Muse was *The Sea-piece*, in two odes.

Young enjoys the credit of what is called an "Extempore Epigram on Voltaire;" who when he was in England, ridiculed, in the company of the jealous English poet, Milton's allegory of "Sin and Death"——

You are so witty, profligate, and thin,
At once we think thee Milton, Death, and Sin.

From the following passage in the poetical Dedication of his *Sea-piece* to Voltaire, it seems that this extemporaneous reproof, if it must be extemporaneous (for what few will now affirm Voltaire to have deserved any reproof) was something longer than a distich, and something more gentle than the distich just quoted.

No stranger, Sir, though born in foreign climes,
On *Dorset* downs, when Milton's page,
With Sin and Death provoked thy rage,
Thy rage provoked, who soothed with *gentle* rhymes?

By *Dorset downs* he probably meant Mr. Dodington's seat. In Pitt's Poems is "An Epistle to Dr. Edward Young, at Eastbury, in Dorsetshire, on the Review at Sarum, 1722."

While with your Dodington retired you sit,
Charm'd with his flowing Burgundy and wit, &c.

Thomson, in his Autumn, addressing Mr. Dodington, calls his seat the seat of the Muses,

Where, in the secret bower and winding way
For virtuous Young and thee they twine the bay

The praises Thomson bestows but a few lines before on Philips, the second

Who nobly durst, in rhyme unfetter'd verse,
With British freedom sing the British song,

added to Thomson's example and success, might perhaps induce Young, as we shall see presently, to write his great work without rhyme.

In 1734, he published "The Foreign Address, or the best Argument for Peace, occasioned by the British fleet and the Posture of Affairs. Written in the Character of a Sailor." It is not to be found in the Author's four volumes.

He now appears to have given up all hopes of overtaking Pindar, and perhaps at last resolved to turn his ambition to some original species of poetry. This poem concludes with a formal farewell to Ode, which few of Young's readers will regret:

My shell, which Clio gave, which *Kings applaud*,
Which Europe's bleeding Genius call'd abroad,
Adieu!

In a species of Poetry altogether his own, he next tried his skill, and succeeded.

Of his wife he was deprived 1741. Lady Elizabeth had lost, after her marriage with Young, an amiable daughter, by her former husband, just after she was married to Mr. Temple, son of Lord Palmerston. Mr. Temple did not long remain after his wife, though he was married a second time, to a daughter of Sir John Barnard's, whose son is the present peer. Mr. and Mrs. Temple have generally been considered as Philander and Narcissa. From the great friendship which constantly subsisted between Mr. Temple and Young, as well as from other circumstances, it is probable that the Poet had both him and Mrs. Temple in view for these characters; though at the same time some passages respecting Philander do not appear to suit either Mr. Temple or any other person with whom Young was known to be connected or acquainted, while all the circumstances relating to Narcissa have been constantly found applicable to Young's daughter-in-law.

At what short intervals the Poet tells us he was wounded by the deaths of the three persons particularly lamented; none that has read "The Night Thoughts" (and who has not read them?) needs to be informed.

Insatiate Archer! could not one suffice?
Thy shaft flew thrice; and thrice my peace was slain;
And thrice, ere thrice yon moon had fill'd her horn.

Yet how is it possible that Mr. and Mrs. Temple and Lady Elizabeth Young could be these three victims, over whom Young has hitherto been pitied for having to pour the "Midnight Sorrows" of his religious poetry; Mrs. Temple died in 1736; Mr. Temple four years afterwards, in 1740; and the Poet's wife seven months after Mr. Temple, in 1741. How could the insatiate Archer thrice slay his peace in these three persons, "ere thrice the moon had fill'd her horn?"

But in the short Preface to "The Complaint" he seriously tells us, "that the occasion of this poem was real, not fictitious; and that the facts mentioned did naturally pour these moral reflections on the thought of the writer." It is probable, therefore, that in these three contradictory lines the Poet complains more than the father-in-law, the friend, or the widower.

Whatever names belong to these facts, or, if the names be those generally supposed, whatever

neightening a poet's sorrow may have given the facts; to the sorrow Young felt from them, religion and morality are indebted for the "Night Thoughts." There is a pleasure sure in sadness which mourners only know!

Of these poems the two or three first have been perused perhaps more eagerly and more frequently than the rest. When he got as far as the fourth or fifth, his original motive for taking up the pen was answered; his grief was naturally either diminished or exhausted. We still find the same pious poet; but we hear less of Philander and Narcissa, and less of the mourner whom he loved to pity.

Mrs. Temple died of a consumption at Lyons, in her way to Nice, the year after her marriage; that is, when poetry relates the fact, "in her bridal hour." It is more than poetically true, that Young accompanied her to the Continent:

> I flew, I snatch'd her from the rigid North,
> And bore her nearer to the sun.

But in vain. Her funeral was attended with the difficulties painted in such animated colours in "Night the Third." After her death, the remainder of the party passed the ensuing winter at Nice.

The Poet seems perhaps in these compositions to dwell with more melancholy on the death of Philander and Narcissa, than of his wife. But it is only for this reason. He who runs and reads may remember, that in the "Night Thoughts" Philander and Narcissa are often mentioned and often lamented. To recollect lamentations over the Author's wife, the memory must have been charged with distinct passages. This lady brought him one child, Frederick, to whom the Prince of Wales was godfather.

That domestic grief is, in the first instance, to be thanked for these ornaments to our language, it is impossible to deny. Nor would it be common hardiness to contend, that worldly discontent had no hand in these joint productions of poetry and piety. Yet am I by no means sure that, at any rate, we should not have had something of the same colour from Young's pencil, notwithstanding the liveliness of his satires. In so long a life, causes for discontent and occasions for grief must have occurred. It is not clear to me that his Muse was not sitting upon the watch for the first which happened. "Night Thoughts" were not uncommon to her, even when first she visited the Poet, and at a time when he himself was remarkable neither for gravity nor gloominess. In his "Last Day," almost his earliest poem, he calls her "the melancholy maid,"

> ——Whom dismal scenes delight,
> Frequent at tombs and in the realms of Night.

In the prayer which concludes the second book of the same poem, he says—

> —Oh! permit the gloom of solemn night
> To sacred thought may forcibly invite.
> Oh! how divine to tread the milky way,
> To the bright palace of Eternal Day!

When Young was writing a tragedy, Grafton is said by Spence to have sent him a human skull, with a candle in it, as a lamp; and the Poet is reported to have used it.

What he calls "The *true* Estimate of Human Life," which has already been mentioned, exhibits only the wrong side of the tapestry; and, being asked why he did not show the right, he is said to have replied, that he could not. By others it has been told me that this was finished; but that, before there existed any copy, it was torn in pieces by a lady's monkey.

Still, is it altogether fair to dress up the Poet for the man, and to bring the gloominess of the "Night Thoughts" to prove the gloominess of Young, and to show that his genius, like the genius of Swift, was in some measure the sullen inspiration of discontent?

From them who answer in the affirmative it should not be concealed that, though *Invisibilia non decipiunt* appeared upon a deception in Young's grounds; and *Ambulantes in horto audierunt vocem Dei* on a building in his garden, his parish was indebted to the good humour of the Author of the "Night Thoughts" for an assembly and a bowling-green.

Whether you think with me I know not; but the famous *De mortuis nil nisi bonum* always appeared to me to savour more of female weakness than of manly reason. He that has too much feeling to speak ill of the dead, who, if they cannot defend themselves, are at least ignorant of his abuse, will not hesitate by the most wanton calumny to destroy the quiet, the reputation, the fortune of the living. Yet censure is not heard beneath the tomb, any more than praise. *De mortuis nil nisi verum—De vivis nil nisi bonum*—would approach much nearer to good sense. After all, the few handfuls of remaining dust which once composed the body of the Author of the "Night Thoughts," feel not much concern whether Young pass now for a man of sorrow, or for a "fellow of infinite jest." To this favour must come the whole family of Yorick. His immortal part, wherever that now dwells, is still less solicitous on this head.

But to a son of worth and sensibility it is of some little consequence whether contemporaries believe, and posterity be taught to believe, that his debauched and reprobate life cast a Stygian gloom over the evening of his father's days, saved him the trouble of feigning a character completely detestable, and succeeded at last in

bringing his "grey hairs with sorrow to the grave."

The humanity of the world, little satisfied with inventing perhaps a melancholy disposition for the father, proceeds next to invent an argument in support of their invention, and chooses that Lorenzo should be Young's own son. The Biographia, and every account of Young pretty roundly assert this to be the fact; of the absolute possibility of which, the Biographia itself, in particular dates, contains undeniable evidence. Readers I know there are of a strange turn of mind, who will hereafter peruse the "Night Thoughts" with less satisfaction; who will wish they had still been deceived; who will quarrel with me for discovering that no such character as their Lorenzo ever yet disgraced human nature, or broke a father's heart. Yet would these admirers of the sublime and terrible be offended, should you set them down for cruel and for savage.

Of this report, inhuman to the surviving son, if it be true, in proportion as the character of Lorenzo is diabolical, where are we to find the proof? Perhaps it is clear from the poems.

From the first line to the last of the "Night Thoughts" not one expression can be discovered which betrays any thing like the father. In the "Second Night" I find an expression which betrays something else; that Lorenzo was his friend; one, it is possible, of his former companions, one of the Duke of Wharton's set. The Poet styles him "gay friend;" an appellation not very natural from a pious incensed father to such a being as he paints Lorenzo, and that being his son.

But let us see how he has sketched this dreadful portrait, from the sight of some of whose features the artist himself must have turned away with horror. A subject more shocking, if his only child really sat to him, than the crucifixion of Michael Angelo; upon the horrid story told of which, Young composed a short poem of fourteen lines in the early part of his life, which he did not think deserved to be republished.

In the "First Night," the address to the Poet's supposed son is,

> Lorenzo, fortune makes her court to thee.

In the "Fifth Night"—

> And burns Lorenzo still for the sublime
> Of life, to hang his airy nest on high?

Is this a picture of the son of the Rector of Welwyn?

"Eighth Night"—

> In foreign realms (for thou hast travell'd far)—

which even now does not apply to his son.

In "Night Five"—

> So wept Lorenzo fair Clarissa's fate;
> Who gave that angel boy on whom he dotes;
> And died to give him, orphan'd in his birth!

At the beginning of the "Fifth Night" we find—

> Lorenzo, to recriminate is just,
> I grant the man is vain who writes for praise.

But to cut short all inquiry; if any one of these passages, if any passage in the poems, be applicable, my friend shall pass for Lorenzo. The son of the Author of the "Night Thoughts" was not old enough, when they were written, to recriminate, or to be a father. The "Night Thoughts" were begun immediately after the mournful event of 1741. The first "Night's" appear, in the books of the Company of Stationers, as the property of Robert Dodsley, in 1742. The Preface to "Night Seven" is dated July the 7th, 1744. The marriage, in consequence of which the supposed Lorenzo was born, happened in May, 1731. Young's child was not born till June, 1733. In 1741 this Lorenzo, this finished infidel, this father to whose education Vice had for some years put the last hand, was only eight years old.

An anecdote of this cruel sort, so open to contradiction, so impossible to be true, who could propagate? Thus easily are blasted the reputations of the living and of the dead.

Who, then, was Lorenzo? exclaim the readers I have mentioned. If we cannot be sure that he was his son, which would have been finely terrible, was he not his nephew, his cousin?

These are questions which I do not pretend to answer. For the sake of human nature, I could wish Lorenzo to have been only the creation of the Poet's fancy: like the Quintus of Anti Lucretius, *quo nomine*, says Polignac, *quemvis Atheum intellige*. That this was the case, many expressions in the "Night Thoughts" would seem to prove, did not a passage in "Night Eight" appear to show that he had something in his eye for the ground-work at least of the painting. Lovelace or Lorenzo may be feigned characters; but a writer does not feign a name of which he only gives the initial letter:

> Tell not Calista. She will laugh thee dead,
> Or send thee to her hermitage with L——

The Biographia, not satisfied with pointing out the son of Young, in that son's life-time, as his father's Lorenzo, travels out of its way into the history of the son, and tells us of his having been forbidden his college at Oxford for misbehaviour. How such anecdotes, were they true, tend to illustrate the life of Young, it is not easy to discover. Was the son of the

Author of the "Night Thoughts," indeed, forbidden his college for a time, at one of the universities? The author of "Paradise Lost," is by some supposed to have been disgracefully ejected from the other. From juvenile follies who is free? But, whatever the Biographia chooses to relate, the son of Young experienced no dismission from his college either lasting or temporary.

Yet, were nature to indulge him with a second youth, and to leave him at the same time the experience of that which is past, he would probably spend it differently—who would not?—he would certainly be the occasion of less uneasiness to his father. But, from the same experience, he would as certainly, in the same case, be treated differently by his father.

Young was a poet: poets, with reverence be it spoken, do not make the best parents. Fancy and imagination seldom deign to stoop from their heights; always stoop unwillingly to the low level of common duties. Aloof from vulgar life, they pursue their rapid flight beyond the ken of mortals, and descend not to earth but when compelled by necessity. The prose of ordinary occurrences is beneath the dignity of poets.

He who is connected with the Author of the "Night Thoughts," only by veneration for the poet and the Christian, may be allowed to observe, that Young is one of those concerning whom, as you remark in your account of Addison, it is proper rather to say "nothing that is false than all that is true."

But the son of Young would almost sooner, I know, pass for a Lorenzo, than see himself vindicated, at the expense of his father's memory, from follies which, if it may be thought blameable in a boy to have committed them, it is surely praiseworthy in a man to lament, and certainly not only unnecessary, but cruel in a biographer to record.

Of the "Night Thoughts," notwithstanding their Author's professed retirement, all are inscribed to great or to growing names. He had not yet weaned himself from earls and dukes, from the speakers of the House of Commons, lords commissioners of the Treasury, and chancellors of the Exchequer. In "Night Eight" the politician plainly betrays himself——

> Think no post needful that demands a knave:
> When late our civil helm was shifting hands,
> So P—— thought: think better if you can.

Yet it must be confessed, that at the conclusion of "Night Nine," weary perhaps of courting earthly patrons, he tells his soul,

> Henceforth
> Thy *patron* be, whose diadem has dropt
> You gems of Heaven; eternity thy prize;
> And leave the racers of the world their own.

The "Fourth Night" was addressed by "a much indebted Muse" to the Honourable Mr. Yorke, now Lord Hardwicke; who meant to have laid the Muse under still greater obligation, by the living at Shenfield, in Essex, if it had become vacant.

The "First Night" concludes with this passage—

> Dark, though not blind, like thee, Meonides:
> Or Milton, thee. Ah! could I reach your strain;
> Or his who made Meonides our own!
> Man too he sung. Immortal man I sing.
> Oh had he prest this theme, pursued the track
> Which opens out of darkness into day!
> Oh had he mounted on his wing of fire,
> Soar'd, where I sink, and sung immortal man—
> How had it blest mankind, and rescued me!

To the Author of these lines was dedicated, in 1756, the first volume of "An Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope," which attempted, whether justly or not, to pluck from Pope his "Wing of Fire," and to reduce him to a rank at least one degree lower than the first class of English poets. If Young accepted and approved the dedication, he countenanced this attack upon the fame of him whom he invokes as his Muse.

Part of "paper-sparing" Pope's Third Book of the "Odyssey," deposited in the Museum, is written upon the back of a letter signed "E. Young," which is clearly the hand-writing of our Young. The letter, dated only May the 2d, seems obscure; but there can be little doubt that the friendship he requests was a literary one, and that he had the highest literary opinion of Pope. The request was a prologue, I am told.

"Dear Sir, May the 2d.

"Having been often from home, I know not if you have done me the favour of calling on me. But, be that as it will, I much want that instance of your friendship I mentioned in my last; a friendship I am very sensible I can receive from no one but yourself. I should not urge this thing so much but for very particular reasons; nor can you be at a loss to conceive how a 'trifle of this nature' may be of serious moment to me; and while I am in hopes of the great advantage of your advice about it, I shall not be so absurd as to make any further step without it. I know you are much engaged, and only hope to hear of you at your entire leisure.

I am, Sir, your most faithful
And obedient servant,
E. Young."

Nay, even after Pope's death, he says, in "Night Seven,"

Pope, who could'st make immortals, art thou dead?

Either the "Essay," then, was dedicated to a patron who disapproved its doctrine, which I have been told by the author was not the case; or Young appears, in his old age, to have bartered for a dedication, an opinion entertained of his friend through all that part of life when he must have been best able to form opinions.

From this account of Young, two or three short passages, which stand almost together in "Night Four," should not be excluded. They afford a picture by his own hand, from the study of which my readers may choose to form their own opinion of the features of his mind, and the complexion of his life.

Ah me! the dire effect
Of loitering here, of death defrauded long;
Of old so gracious (and let that suffice)
My very Master knows me not.
I've been so long remember'd I'm forgot.

•

When in his courtiers' ears I pour my plaint,
They drink it as the Nectar of the Great;
And squeeze my hand, and beg me come to-morrow.

•

Twice told the period spent on stubborn Troy,
Court-favour, yet untaken, I *besiege.*

•

If this song lives, Posterity shall know
One, though in Britain born, with courtiers bred
Who thought e'en gold might come a day too late;
Nor on his subtle death-bed plann'd his scheme
For future vacancies in church or state.

Deduct from the writer's age "twice told the period spent on stubborn Troy," and you will still leave him more than forty when he sat down to the miserable siege of court favour. He has before told us

A fool at forty is a fool indeed.

After all, the siege seems to have been raised only in consequence of what the general thought his "death-bed."

By these extraordinary poems, written after he was sixty, of which I have been led to say so much, I hope, by the wish of doing justice to the living and the dead, it was the desire of Young to be principally known. He entitled the four volumes which he published himself, "The Works of the Author of the Night Thoughts." While it is remembered that from these he excluded many of his writings, let it not be forgotten that the rejected pieces contained nothing prejudicial to the cause of virtue, or of religion. Were every thing that Young ever wrote to be published, he would only appear, perhaps, in a less respectable light as a poet, and more despicable as a dedicator; he would not pass for a worse Christian, or for a worse man. This enviable praise is due to Young. Can it be claimed by every writer? His dedications, after all, he had perhaps no right to suppress. They all, I believe, speak, not a little to the credit of his gratitude, of favours received; and I know not whether the author, who has once solemnly printed an acknowledgment of a favour, should not always print it.

Is it to the credit or to the discredit of Young, as a poet, that of his "Night Thoughts" the French are particularly fond?

Of the "Epitaph on Lord Aubrey Beauclerk," dated 1740, all I know is, that I find it in the late body of English Poetry, and that I am sorry to find it there.

Notwithstanding the farewell which he seemed to have taken in the "Night Thoughts" of every thing which bore the least resemblance to ambition, he dipped again in politics. In 1745 he wrote "Reflections on the public Situation of the Kingdom, addressed to the Duke of Newcastle;" indignant, as it appears, to behold

— a pope-bred Princeling crawl ashore,
And whistle cut-throats, with those swords that scraped
Their barren rocks for wretched sustenance,
To cut his passage to the British throne.

This political poem might be called a "Night Thought." Indeed it was originally printed as the conclusion of the "Night Thoughts," though he did not gather it with his other works.

Prefixed to the second edition of Howe's "Devout Meditations" is a Letter from Young, dated Jan. 19, 1752, addressed to Archibald Macauly, Esq. thanking him for the book, which he says he shall "never lay far out of his reach; for a greater demonstration of a sound head and a sincere heart he never saw."

In 1753, when "The Brothers" had lain by him above thirty years, it appeared upon the stage. If any part of his fortune had been acquired by servility of adulation, he now determined to deduct from it no inconsiderable sum, as a gift to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. To this sum he hoped the profits of "The Brothers" would amount. In his calculation he was deceived; but by the bad success of his play the Society was not a loser. The Author made up the sum he originally intended, which was a thousand pounds, from his own pocket.

The next performance which he printed was a prose publication, entitled, "The Centaur not fabulous, in Six Letters to a Friend, on the Life in Vogue." The conclusion is dated November 29, 1754. In the third Letter is described the death-bed of the "gay, young, noble, ingenious, accomplished, and most wretched Altamont." His last words were—"My

principles have poisoned my friend, my extravagance has beggared my boy, my unkindness has murdered my wife." Either Altamont and Lorenzo were the twin production of fancy, or Young was unlucky enough to know two characters who bore no little resemblance to each other in perfection of wickedness. Report has been accustomed to call Altamont Lord Euston.

"The Old Man's Relapse," occasioned by an Epistle to Walpole, if written by Young, which I much doubt, must have been written very late in life. It has been seen, I am told, in a Miscellany published thirty years before his death. In 1758, he exhibited "The Old Man's Relapse" in more than words, by again becoming a dedicator, and publishing a sermon addressed to the King.

The lively Letter in prose, "On Original Composition," addressed to Richardson, the author of "Clarissa," appeared in 1759. Though he despair "of breaking through the frozen obstructions of age and care's incumbent cloud, into that flow of thought and brightness of expression which subjects so polite require;" yet is it more like the production of untamed, unbridled youth, than of jaded fourscore. Some sevenfold volumes put him in mind of Ovid's sevenfold channels of the Nile at the conflagration:

——— ostia septem
Pulverulenta vocant, septem sine flumine valles.

Such leaden labours are like Lycurgus's iron money, which are so much less in value than in bulk, that it required barns for strong boxes, and a yoke of oxen to draw five hundred pounds.

If there is a famine of invention in the land, we must travel, he says, like Joseph's brethren, far for food; we must visit the remote and rich ancients. But an inventive genius may safely stay at home; that, like the widow's cruise, is divinely replenished from within, and affords us a miraculous delight. He asks why it should seem altogether impossible, that Heaven's latest editions of the human mind may be the most correct and fair? and Jonson, he tells us, was very learned, as Samson was very strong, to his own hurt. Blind to the nature of tragedy, he pulled down all antiquity on his head, and buried himself under it.

Is this "care's incumbent cloud," or "the frozen obstructions of age?"

In this Letter Pope is severely censured for his "fall from Homer's numbers, free as air, lofty and harmonious as the spheres, into childish shackles and tinkling sounds; for putting Achilles into petticoats a second time:" but we are told that the dying swan talked over an epic plan with Young a few weeks before his decease.

Young's chief inducement to write this Letter was, as he confesses, that he might erect a monumental marble to the memory of an old friend. He, who employed his pious pen for almost the last time in thus doing justice to the exemplary deathbed of Addison, might probably, at the close of his own life, afford no unuseful lesson for the deaths of others.

In the postscript, he writes to Richardson, that he will see in his next how far Addison is an original. But no other letter appears.

The few lines which stand in the last edition, as "sent by Lord Melcombe to Dr. Young, not long before his Lordship's death," were indeed so sent, but were only an introduction to what was there meant by "The Muse's latest Spark." The poem is necessary, whatever may be its merit, since the Preface to it is already printed. Lord Melcombe called his Tusculum "La Trappe."

Love thy country, wish it well,
Not with too intense a care,
'Tis enough, that when it fell,
Thou its ruin didst not share.

Envy's censure, Flattery's praise,
With unmoved indifference view;
Learn to tread life's dangerous maze,
With unerring Virtue's clue.

Void of strong desire and fear,
Life's wide ocean trust no more;
Strive thy little bark to steer
With the tide, but near the shore.

Thus prepared, thy shorten'd sail
Shall, whene'er the winds increase,
Seizing each propitious gale
Waft thee to the port of peace.

Keep thy conscience from offence,
And tempestuous passions free,
So, when thou art call'd from hence,
Easy shall thy passage be;

Easy shall thy passage be,
Cheerful thy allotted stay,
Short th' account 'twixt God and thee;
Hope shall meet thee on the way:

Truth shall lead thee to the gate,
Mercy's self shall let thee in,
Where its never-changing state,
Full perfection shall begin.

The poem was accompanied by a letter.

"*La Trappe, the 27th of Oct.* 1761.

"Dear Sir,

"You seemed to like the ode I sent you for your amusement: I now send it you as a present. If you please to accept of it, and are willing that our friendship should be known when we are gone, you will be pleased to leave this among those of your own papers that may possibly see the light by a posthumous publication. God send us health while we stay, and an easy journey!

My dear Dr. Young,
Yours, most cordially,
Melcombe."

In 1762, a short time before his death, Young published "Resignation." Notwithstanding the manner in which it was really forced from him by the world, criticism has treated it with no common severity. If it shall be thought not to deserve the highest praise, on the other side of fourscore, by whom, except by Newton and by Waller, has praise been merited?

To Mrs. Montagu, the famous champion of Shakspeare, I am indebted for the history of "Resignation." Observing that Mrs. Boscawen, in the midst of her grief for the loss of the admiral, derived consolation from the perusal of the "Night Thoughts," Mrs. Montagu proposed a visit to the Author. From conversing with Young, Mrs. Boscawen derived still further consolation; and to that visit she and the world were indebted for this poem. It compliments Mrs. Montagu in the following lines:

Yet write I must. A lady sues:
How shameful her request!
My brain in labour with dull rhyme,
Hers teeming with the best

And again—

And friend you have, and I the same,
Whose prudent, soft address
Will bring to life those healing thoughts
Which died in your distress.

That friend, the spirit of thy theme
Extracting for your ease,
Will leave to me the dreg, in thoughts
Too common; such as these.

By the same lady I was enabled to say, in her own words, that Young's unbounded genius appeared to greater advantage in the companion than even in the author; that the Christian was in him a character still more inspired, more enraptured, more sublime, than the poet; and that, in his ordinary conversation,

——letting down the golden chain from high,
He drew his audience upward to the sky.

Notwithstanding Young had said, in his "Conjectures on original Composition," that "blank verse is verse unfallen, uncurst; verse reclaimed, re-enthroned in the true language of the gods:" notwithstanding he administered consolation to his own grief in this immortal language, Mrs. Boscawen was comforted in rhyme.

While the poet and the Christian were applying this comfort, Young had himself occasion for comfort, in consequence of the sudden death of Richardson, who was printing the former part of the poem. Of Richardson's death he says—

When Heaven would kindly set us free,
And earth's enchantment end;
It takes the most effectual means,
And robs us of a friend.

To "Resignation" was prefixed an Apology for its appearance: to which more credit is due than to the generality of such apologies, from Young's unusual anxiety that no more productions of his old age should disgrace his former fame. In his will dated February 1760, he desires of his executors, *in a particular manner*, that all his manuscript books and writings whatever might be burned, except his book of accounts.

In September, 1764, he added a kind of codicil, wherein he made it his dying intreaty to his housekeeper, to whom he left 1000*l.* "that all his manuscripts might be destroyed as soon as he was dead, which would greatly oblige her deceased *friend*."

It may teach mankind the uncertainty of worldly friendships, to know that Young, either by surviving those he loved, or by outliving their affections, could only recollect the names of two *friends*, his housekeeper and a hatter, to mention in his will; and it may serve to repress that testamentary pride, which too often seeks for sounding names and titles, to be informed that the Author of the "Night Thoughts" did "not blush to leave a legacy to his friend Henry Stevens, a hatter at the Templegate." Of these two remaining friends, one went before Young. But at eighty-four, "where," as he asks in *The Centaur*, "is that world into which we were born?"

The same humility which marked a hatter and a housekeeper for the friends of the Author of the "Night Thoughts," had before bestowed the same title on his footman, in an epitaph in his "Church-yard" upon James Baker, dated 1749; which I am glad to find in the late collection of his works.

Young and his housekeeper were ridiculed with more ill-nature than wit, in a kind of novel published by Kidgell in 1755, called "The Card," under the names of Dr. Elwes and Mrs. Fusby.

In April, 1765, at an age to which few attain, a period was put to the life of Young.

He had performed no duty for three or four years, but he retained his intellects to the last.

Much is told in the "Biographia," which I know not to have been true, of the manner of his burial; of the master and children of a charity school, which he founded in his parish, who neglected to attend their benefactor's corpse; and of a bell which was not caused to toll as often as upon those occasions bells usually toll. Had that humanity, which is here lavished upon things of little consequence either to the living or to the dead, been shown in its proper place to the living, I should have had

less to say about Lorenzo. They who lament that these misfortunes happened to Young, forget the praise he bestows upon Socrates, in the preface to "Night Seven," for resenting his friend's request about his funeral.

During some part of his life Young was abroad, but I have not been able to learn any particulars.

In his seventh satire he says,

When, after battle, I the field have SEEN
Spread o'er with ghastly shapes which once were *men*.

It is known also, that from this or from some other field he once wandered into the camp with a classic in his hand, which he was reading intently; and had some difficulty to prove that he was only an absent poet, and not a spy.

The curious reader of Young's life will naturally inquire to what it was owing, that though he lived almost forty years after he took orders, which included one whole reign uncommonly long, and part of another, he was never thought worthy of the least preferment. The Author of the "Night Thoughts" ended his days upon a living which came to him from his college without any favour, and to which he probably had an eye when he determined on the church. To satisfy curiosity of this kind is, at this distance of time, far from easy. The parties themselves know not often, at the instant, why they are neglected, or why they are preferred. The neglect of Young is by some ascribed to his having attached himself to the Prince of Wales, and to his having preached an offensive sermon at St. James's. It has been told me that he had two hundred a year in the late reign, by the patronage of Walpole; and that, whenever any one reminded the King of Young, the only answer was, "he has a pension." All the light thrown on this inquiry, by the following letter from Secker, only serves to show at what a late period of life the Author of the "Night Thoughts" solicited preferment:

"*Deanery of St. Paul's, July* 8, 1758.

"Good Dr. Young,

"I have long wondered, that more suitable notice of your great merit hath not been taken by persons in power: but how to remedy the omission I see not. No encouragement hath ever been given me to mention things of this nature to his Majesty. And therefore, in all likelihood, the only consequence of doing it would be weakening the little influence which I may possibly have on some other occasions. Your fortune and your reputation set you above the need of advancement; and your sentiments, above that concern for it, on your own account, which, on that of the public, is sincerely felt by

"Your loving brother,

"THO. CANT."

At last, at the age of fourscore, he was appointed, in 1761, clerk of the closet to the Princess Dowager.

One obstacle must have stood not a little in the way of that preferment after which his whole life seems to have panted. Though he took orders, he never entirely shook off politics. He was always the lion of his master Milton, "pawing to get free his hinder parts." By this conduct, if he gained some friends, he made many enemies.

Again: Young was a poet; and again, with reverence be it spoken, poets by profession do not always make the best clergymen. If the Author of the "Night Thoughts" composed many sermons, he did not oblige the public with many.

Besides, in the latter part of life, Young was fond of holding himself out for a man retired from the world. But he seemed to have forgotten that the same verse which contains "oblitus meorum," contains also "obliviscendus et illis." The brittle chain of worldly friendship and patronage is broken as effectually, when one goes beyond the length of it, as when the other does. To the vessel which is sailing from the shore, it only appears that the shore also recedes; in life it is truly thus. He who retires from the world will find himself, in reality, deserted as fast, if not faster, by the world. The public is not to be treated as the coxcomb treats his mistress; to be threatened with desertion, in order to increase fondness.

Young seems to have been taken at his word. Notwithstanding his frequent complaints of being neglected, no hand was reached out to pull him from that retirement of which he declared himself enamoured. Alexander assigned no palace for the residence of Diogenes, who boasted his surly satisfaction with his tub.

Of the domestic manners and petty habits of the Author of the "Night Thoughts," I hoped to have given you an account from the best authority: but who shall dare to say, To-morrow I will be wise or virtuous, or to-morrow I will do a particular thing? Upon inquiring for his housekeeper, I learned that she was buried two days before I reached the town of her abode.

In a letter from Tscharner, a noble foreigner, to Count Haller, Tscharner says, he has lately spent four days with Young at Welwyn, where the Author takes all the ease and pleasure mankind can desire. "Every thing about him shows the man, each individual being placed by rule. All is neat without art. He is very pleasant in conversation, and extremely polite."

This, and more, may possibly be true; but Tscharner's was a first visit, a visit of curiosity and admiration, and a visit which the Author expected.

Of Edward Young an anecdote which wanders among readers is not true, that he was

Fielding's Parson Adams. The original of that famous painting was William Young, who was a clergyman. He supported an uncomfortable existence by translating for the booksellers from Greek; and, if he did not seem to be his own friend, was at least no man's enemy. Yet the facility with which this report has gained belief in the world argues, were it not sufficiently known, that the Author of the "Night Thoughts" bore some resemblance to Adams.

The attention which Young bestowed upon the perusal of books is not unworthy imitation. When any passage pleased him, he appears to have folded down the leaf. On these passages he bestowed a second reading. But the labours of man are too frequently vain. Before he returned to much of what he had once approved, he died. Many of his books, which I have seen, are by those notes of approbation so swelled beyond their real bulk, that they will hardly shut.

What though we wade in wealth or soar in fame!
Earth's highest station ends in *Here he lies!*
And *dust to dust* concludes her noblest song!

The Author of these lines is not without his *Hic jacet*.

By the good sense of his son, it contains none of that praise which no marble can make the bad or the foolish merit; which, without the direction of a stone or a turf, will find its way, sooner or later, to the deserving.

M. S.
Optimi Parentis
Edvardi Young, LL.D
Hujus Ecclesiæ rect.
Et Elizabethæ
fœm. prænob.
Conjugis ejus amantissimæ,
Pio et gratissimo animo
Hoc marmor posuit
F. Y.
Filius superstes.

Is it not strange that the Author of the "Night Thoughts" has inscribed no monument to the memory of his lamented wife? Yet, what marble will endure as long as the poems?

Such, my good friend, is the account which I have been able to collect of the great Young. That it may be long before any thing like what I have just transcribed be necessary for you, is the sincere wish of,

Dear Sir,
Your greatly obliged friend,
Herbert Croft, Jun.

Lincoln's Inn,
Sept. 1780.

P. S. This account of Young was seen by you in manuscript, you know, Sir; and, though I could not prevail on you to make any alteration, you insisted on striking out one passage, because it said, that, if I did not wish you to live long for your sake, I did for the sake of myself and of the world. But this postscript you will not see before the printing of it; and I will say here, in spite of you, how I feel myself honoured and bettered by your friendship: and that, if I do credit to the church, after which I always longed, and for which I am now going to give in exchange the bar, though not at so late a period of life as Young took orders, it will be owing, in no small measure, to my having had the happiness of calling the Author of "The Rambler" my friend.

H. C.

Oxford, Oct. 1782.

Of Young's poems it is difficult to give any general character; for he has no uniformity of manner; one of his pieces has no great resemblance to another. He began to write early, and continued long; and at different times had different modes of poetical excellence in view. His numbers are sometimes smooth, and sometimes rugged; his style is sometimes concatenated, and sometimes abrupt; sometimes diffusive, and sometimes concise. His plan seems to have started in his mind at the present moment; and his thoughts appear the effect of chance, sometimes adverse, and sometimes lucky, with very little operation of judgment.

He was not one of those writers whom experience improves, and who, observing their own faults, become gradually correct. His poem on the "Last Day," his first great performance, has an equability and propriety, which he afterwards either never endeavoured or never attained. Many paragraphs are noble, and few are mean, yet the whole is languid; the plan is too much extended, and a succession of images divides and weakens the general conception; but the great reason why the reader is disappointed is, that the thought of the Last Day makes every man more than poetical, by spreading over his mind a general obscurity of sacred horror, that oppresses distinction, and disdains expression.

His story of "Jane Grey" was never popular. It is written with elegance enough; but Jane is too heroic to be pitied.

The "Universal Passion" is indeed a very great performance. It is said to be a series of epigrams; but if it be, it is what the Author intended: his endeavour was at the production of striking distichs and pointed sentences; and his distichs have the weight of solid sentiment, and his points the sharpness of resistless truth.

His characters are often selected with discernment, and drawn with nicety; his illustrations were often happy, and his reflections often just. His species of satire is between those of Horace and Juvenal; and he has the gayety of Horace without his laxity of numbers, and the morality of Juvenal with greater variation of images.

He plays, indeed, only on the surface of life; he never penetrates the recesses of the mind, and therefore the whole power of his poetry is exhausted by a single perusal; his conceits please only when they surprise.

To translate he never condescended, unless his "Paraphrase on Job" may be considered as a version: in which he has not, I think, been unsuccessful; he indeed favoured himself, by choosing those parts which most easily admit the ornaments of English poetry.

He had least success in his lyric attempts, in which he seems to have been under some malignant influence: he is always labouring to be great, and at last is only turgid.

In his "Night Thoughts" he has exhibited a very wide display of original poetry, variegated with deep reflections and striking allusions, a wilderness of thought, in which the fertility of fancy scatters flowers of every hue and of every odour. This is one of the few poems in which blank verse could not be changed for rhyme but with disadvantage. The wild diffusion of the sentiments, and the digressive sallies of imagination, would have been compressed and restrained by confinement to rhyme. The excellence of this work is not exactness, but copiousness; particular lines are not to be regarded; the power is in the whole; and in the whole there is a magnificence like that ascribed to Chinese plantation, the magnificence of vast extent and endless diversity.

His last poem was "Resignation;" in which he made, as he was accustomed, an experiment of a new mode of writing, and succeeded better than in his "Ocean" or his "Merchant." It was very falsely represented as a proof of decayed faculties. There is Young in every stanza, such as he often was in the highest vigour.

His tragedies, not making part of the Collection, I had forgotten, till Mr. Stevens recalled them to my thoughts by remarking, that he seemed to have one favourite catastrophe, as his three plays all concluded with lavish suicide; a method by which, as Dryden remarked, a poet easily rids his scene of persons whom he wants not to keep alive. In "Busiris" there are the greatest ebullitions of imagination: but the pride of Busiris is such as no other man can have, and the whole is too remote from known life to raise either grief, terror, or indignation. The "Revenge" approaches much nearer to human practices and manners, and therefore keeps possession of the stage; the first design seems suggested by "Othello;" but the reflections, the incidents, and the diction, are original. The moral observations are so introduced, and so expressed, as to have all the novelty that can be required. Of "The Brothers" I may be allowed to say nothing, since nothing was ever said of it by the public.

It must be allowed of Young's poetry that it abounds in thought, but without much accuracy or selection. When he lays hold of an illustration, he pursues it beyond expectation, sometimes happily, as in his parallel of *Quicksilver* with *Pleasure*, which I have heard repeated with approbation by a lady, of whose praise he would have been justly proud, and which is very ingenious, very subtle, and almost exact; but sometimes he is less lucky, as when, in his "Night Thoughts," it having dropped into his mind, that the orbs, floating in space, might be called the *cluster* of creation, he thinks on a cluster of grapes, and says, that they all hang on the great vine, drinking the "nectareous juice of immortal life."

His conceits are sometimes yet less valuable. In "The Last Day" he hopes to illustrate the re-assembly of the atoms that compose the human body at the "Trump of Doom" by the collection of bees into a swarm at the tinkling of a pan.

The prophet says of Tyre, that "her merchants are princes." Young says of Tyre in his "Merchant,"

Her merchants princes, and each *deck a throne*.

Let burlesque try to go beyond him.

He has the trick of joining the turgid and familiar: to buy the alliance of Britain, "Climes were paid down." Antithesis is his favourite. "They for kindness hate:" and "because she's right she's ever in the wrong."

His versification is his own; neither his blank nor his rhyming lines have any resemblance to those of former writers; he picks up no hemistichs, he copies no favourite expressions; he seems to have laid up no stores of thought or diction, but to owe all to the fortuitous suggestions of the present moment. Yet I have reason to believe that, when once he had formed a new design, he then laboured it with very patient industry; and that he composed with great labour and frequent revisions.

His verses are formed by no certain model; he is no more like himself in his different productions than he is like others. He seems never to have studied prosody, nor to have had any direction but from his own ear. But with all his defects, he was a man of genius and a poet.

MALLET.

Of David Mallet, having no written memorial, I am able to give no other account than such as is supplied by the unauthorised loquacity of common fame, and a very slight personal knowledge.

He was by his original one of the Macgregors, a clan, that became, about sixty years ago, under the conduct of Robin Roy, so formidable and so infamous for violence and robbery, that the name was annulled by a legal abolition; and when they were all to denominate themselves anew, the father, I suppose, of this author, called himself Malloch.

David Malloch was, by the penury of his parents, compelled to be *janitor* of the high school at Edinburgh; a mean office, of which he did not afterwards delight to hear. But he surmounted the disadvantages of his birth and fortune; for when the Duke of Montrose applied to the College of Edinburgh for a tutor to educate his sons, Malloch was recommended; and I never heard that he dishonoured his credentials.

When his pupils were sent to see the world, they were entrusted to his care; and having conducted them round the common circle of modish travels, he returned with them to London, where by the influence of the family in which he resided, he naturally gained admission to many persons of the highest rank and the highest character, to wits, nobles, and statesmen.

Of his works, I know not whether I can trace the series. His first production was "William and Margaret;"* of which, though it contains nothing very striking or difficult, he has been envied the reputation; and plagiarism has been boldly charged, but never proved.

Not long afterwards he published "The Excursion;" (1728) a desultory and capricious view of such scenes of nature as his fancy led him, or his knowledge enabled him to describe. It is not devoid of poetical spirit. Many of his images are striking, and many of the paragraphs are elegant. The cast of diction seems to be copied from Thomson, whose "Seasons" were then in their full blossom of reputation. He has Thomson's beauties and his faults.

His poem on "Verbal Criticism" (1733) was written to pay court to Pope, on a subject which he either did not understand, or willingly misrepresented; and is little more than an improvement, or rather expansion, of a fragment which Pope printed in a Miscellany long before he engrafted it into a regular poem. There is in this piece more pertness than wit, and more confidence than knowledge. The versification is tolerable, nor can criticism allow it a higher praise.

His first tragedy was "Eurydice," acted at Drury-lane, in 1731; of which I know not the reception nor the merit, but have heard it mentioned as a mean performance. He was not then too high to accept a prologue and epilogue from Aaron Hill, neither of which can be much commended.

Having cleared his tongue from his native pronunciation so as to be no longer distinguished as a Scot, he seems inclined to disencumber himself from all adherences of his original, and took upon him to change his name from Scotch *Malloch* to English *Mallet*, without any imaginable reason of preference which the eye or ear can discover. What other proofs he gave of disrespect to his native country, I know not; but it was remarked of him, that he was the only Scot whom Scotchmen did not commend.

About this time Pope, whom he visited familiarly, published his "Essay on Man," but concealed the author; and when Mallet entered one day, Pope asked him slightly what there was new. Mallet told him, that the newest piece was something called an "Essay on Man," which he had inspected idly, and seeing the utter inability of the author, who had neither skill in writing nor knowledge of the subject, had tossed it away. Pope, to punish his self-conceit, told him the secret.

A new edition of the works of Bacon being prepared (1750) for the press, Mallet was employed to prefix a life, which he has written with elegance, perhaps with some affectation; but with so much more knowledge of history than of science, that when he afterwards undertook the Life of Marlborough, Warburton remarked, that he might perhaps forget that Marlborough was a general, as he had forgotten that Bacon was a philosopher.

* Mallet's "William and Margaret" was printed in Aaron Hill's "Plain Dealer," No. 36, July 24, 1724. In its original state it was very different from what it is in the last edition of his works.

When the Prince of Wales was driven from the palace, and, setting himself at the head of the opposition, kept a separate court, he endeavoured to increase his popularity by the patronage of literature, and made Mallet his undersecretary, with a salary of two hundred pounds a year; Thomson likewise had a pension; and they were associated in the composition of "The Mask of Alfred," which in its original state was played at Cliefden in 1740; it was afterwards almost wholly changed by Mallet, and brought upon the stage at Drury-Lane, in 1751, but with no great success.

Mallet, in a familiar conversation with Garrick, discoursing of the diligence which he was then exerting upon the Life of Marlborough, let him know, that, in the series of great men quickly to be exhibited, he should *find a niche* for the hero of the theatre. Garrick professed to wonder by what artifice he could be introduced; but Mallet let him know, that, by a dexterous anticipation, he should fix him in a conspicuous place. "Mr. Mallet," says Garrick, in his gratitude of exultation, "have you left off to write for the stage?" Mallet then confessed that he had a drama in his hands. Garrick promised to act it; and "Alfred" was produced.

The long retardation of the Life of the Duke of Marlborough, shows, with strong conviction, how little confidence can be placed in posthumous renown. When he died, it was soon determined that his story should be delivered to posterity; and the papers supposed to contain the necessary information were delivered to Lord Molesworth, who had been his favourite in Flanders. When Molesworth died, the same papers were transferred with the same design to Sir Richard Steele, who in some of his exigences put them in pawn. They then remained with the old Dutchess, who in her will assigned the task to Glover and Mallet, with a reward of a thousand pounds, and a prohibition to insert any verses. Glover rejected, I suppose with disdain, the legacy, and devolved the whole work upon Mallet; who had from the late Duke of Marlborough a pension to promote his industry, and who talked of the discoveries which he had made; but left not, when he died, any historical labours behind him.

While he was in the Prince's service he published "Mustapha," with a Prologue by Thomson, not mean, but far inferior to that which he received from Mallet for "Agamemnon." The Epilogue, said to be written by a friend, was composed in haste by Mallet, in the place of one promised which was never given. This tragedy was dedicated to the Prince his master. It was acted at Drury-Lane in 1739, and was well received, but was never revived.

In 1740, he produced, as has been already mentioned, "The Mask of Alfred," in conjunction with Thomson.

For some time afterwards he lay at rest. After a long interval, his next work was "Amyntor and Theodora," (1747) a long story in blank verse; in which it cannot be denied that there is copiousness and elegance of language, vigour of sentiment, and imagery well adapted to take possession of the fancy. But it is blank verse. This he sold to Vaillant for one hundred and twenty pounds. The first sale was not great, and it is now lost in forgetfulness.

Mallet, by address or accident, perhaps by his dependence on the Prince, found his way to Bolingbroke; a man whose pride and petulance made his kindness difficult to gain, or keep, and whom Mallet was content to court by an act, which, I hope, was unwillingly performed. When it was found that Pope had clandestinely printed an unauthorized number of the pamphlet called "The Patriot King," Bolingbroke, in a fit of useless fury, resolved to blast his memory, and employed Mallet (1749) as the executioner of his vengeance. Mallet had not virtue, or had not spirit, to refuse the office; and was rewarded, not long after, with the legacy of Lord Bolingbroke's works.

Many of the political pieces had been written during the opposition to Walpole, and given to Franklin, as he supposed, in perpetuity. These, among the rest, were claimed by the will. The question was referred to arbitrators; but, when they decided against Mallet, he refused to yield to the award; and by the help of Millar the bookseller, published all that he could find, but with success very much below his expectation.

In 1755, his mask of "Britannia" was acted at Drury-Lane; and his tragedy of "Elvira" in 1763; in which year he was appointed keeper of the book of entries for ships in the port of London.

In the beginning of the last war, when the nation was exasperated by ill success, he was employed to turn the public vengeance upon Byng, and wrote a letter of accusation under the character of a "Plain Man." The paper was with great industry circulated and dispersed; and he, for his seasonable intervention, had a considerable pension bestowed upon him, which he retained to his death.

Towards the end of his life he went with his wife to France; but after a while, finding his health declining, he returned alone to England, and died in April, 1765.

He was twice married, and by his first wife had several children. One daughter, who married an Italian of rank named Cilesia, wrote a tragedy called "Almida," which was acted at Drury-lane. His second wife was the daughter of a nobleman's steward, who had a considerable

fortune, which she took care to retain in her own hands.

His stature was diminutive, but he was regularly formed; his appearance, till he grew corpulent, was agreeable, and he suffered it to want no recommendation that dress could give it. His conversation was elegant and easy. The rest of his character may, without injury to his memory, sink into silence.

As a writer, he cannot be placed in any high class. There is no species of composition in which he was eminent. His dramas had their day, a short day, and are forgotten; his blank verse seems to my ear the echo of Thomson. His "Life of Bacon" is known as it is appended to Bacon's volumes, but is no longer mentioned. His works are such as a writer, bustling in the world, showing himself in public, and emerging occasionally, from time to time, into notice, might keep alive by his personal influence; but which, conveying little information, and giving no great pleasure, must soon give way, as the succession of things produces new topics of conversation, and other modes of amusement.

AKENSIDE.

Mark Akenside was born on the ninth of November, 1721, at Newcastle upon Tyne. His father Mark was a butcher, of the presbyterian sect; his mother's name was Mary Lumsden. He received the first part of his education at the grammar-school of Newcastle; and was afterwards instructed by Mr. Wilson, who kept a private academy.

At the age of eighteen he was sent to Edinburgh, that he might qualify himself for the office of a dissenting minister, and received some assistance from the fund which the dissenters employ in educating young men of scanty fortune. But a wider view of the world opened other scenes, and prompted other hopes: he determined to study physic, and repaid that contribution, which, being received for a different purpose, he justly thought it dishonourable to retain.

Whether, when he resolved not to be a dissenting minister, he ceased to be a dissenter, I know not. He certainly retained an unnecessary and outrageous zeal for what he called and thought liberty; a zeal which sometimes disguises from the world, and not rarely from the mind which it possesses, an envious desire of plundering wealth or degrading greatness; and of which the immediate tendency is innovation and anarchy, an impetuous eagerness to subvert and confound, with very little care what shall be established.

Akenside was one of those poets who have felt very early the motions of genius, and one of those students who have very early stored their memories with sentiments and images. Many of his performances were produced in his youth; and his greatest work, "The Pleasures of Imagination," appeared in 1744. I have heard Dodsley, by whom it was published, relate, that when the copy was offered him, the price demanded for it, which was a hundred and twenty pounds, being such as he was not inclined to give precipitately, he carried the work to Pope, who, having looked into it, advised him not to make a niggardly offer; for "this was no every-day writer."

In 1741 he went to Leyden, in pursuit of medical knowledge; and three years afterwards (May 16, 1744) became doctor of physic, having, according to the custom of the Dutch Universities, published a thesis or dissertation. The subject which he chose was "The Original and Growth of the Human Fœtus;" in which he is said to have departed, with great judgment, from the opinion then established, and to have delivered that which has been since confirmed and received.

Akenside was a young man, warm with every notion that by nature or accident had been connected with the sound of liberty, and, by an eccentricity which such dispositions do not easily avoid, a lover of contradiction, and no friend to any thing established. He adopted Shaftesbury's foolish assertion of the efficacy of ridicule for the discovery of truth. For this he was attacked by Warburton, and defended by Dyson: Warburton afterwards reprinted his remarks at the end of his dedication to the Freethinkers.

The result of all the arguments, which have been produced in a long and eager discussion of this idle question, may easily be collected. If ridicule be applied to any position as the test of truth, it will then become a question whether such ridicule be just; and this can only be decided by the application of truth, as the test of

ridicule. Two men fearing, one a real and the other a fancied danger, will be for awhile equally exposed to the inevitable consequences of cowardice, contemptuous censure, and ludicrous representation; and the true state of both cases must be known, before it can be decided whose terror is rational, and whose is ridiculous; who is to be pitied, and who to be despised. Both are for awhile equally exposed to laughter, but both are not therefore equally contemptible.

In the revisal of his poem, though he died before he had finished it, he omitted the lines which had given occasion to Warburton's objections.

He published, soon after his return from Leyden, (1745) his first collection of odes: and was impelled, by his rage of patriotism, to write a very acrimonious epistle to Pulteney, whom he stigmatizes, under the name of Curio, as the betrayer of his country.

Being now to live by his profession, he first commenced physician at Northampton, where Dr. Stonehouse then practised, with such reputation and success, that a stranger was not likely to gain ground upon him. Akenside tried the contest awhile; and having deafened the place with clamours for liberty, removed to Hampstead, where he resided more than two years, and then fixed himself in London, the proper place for a man of accomplishments like his.

At London he was known as a poet, but was still to make his way as a physician; and would perhaps have been reduced to great exigences, but that Mr. Dyson, with an ardour of friendship that has not many examples, allowed him three hundred pounds a year. Thus supported, he advanced gradually in medical reputation, but never attained any great extent of practice, or eminence of popularity. A physician in a great city seems to be the mere plaything of fortune; his degree of reputation is, for the most part, totally casual: they that employ him know not his excellence; they that reject him know not his deficience. By any acute observer, who had looked on the transactions of the medical world for half a century, a very curious book might be written on the "Fortune of Physicians."

Akenside appears not to have been wanting to his own success: he placed himself in view by all the common methods; he became a Fellow of the Royal Society; he obtained a degree at Cambridge; and was admitted into the College of Physicians; he wrote little poetry, but published, from time to time, medical essays and observations: he became physician to St. Thomas's Hospital; he read the Gulstonian Lectures in Anatomy; but began to give, for the Crounian Lecture, a history of the revival of learning, from which he soon desisted; and, in conversation, he very eagerly forced himself into notice by an ambitious ostentation of elegance and literature.

His Discourse on the Dysentery (1764) was considered as a very conspicuous specimen of Latinity; which entitled him to the same height of place among the scholars as he possessed before among the wits; and he might perhaps have risen to a greater elevation of character, but that his studies were ended with his life, by a putrid fever, June 23, 1770, in the forty-ninth year of his age.

Akenside is to be considered as a didactic and lyric poet. His great work is "The Pleasures of Imagination;" a performance which, published as it was, at the age of twenty-three, raised expectations that were not very amply satisfied. It has undoubtedly a just claim to very particular notice, as an example of great felicity of genius, and uncommon amplitude of acquisitions, of a young mind stored with images, and much exercised in combining and comparing them.

With the philosophical or religious tenets of the author I have nothing to do; my business is with his poetry. The subject is well chosen, as it includes all images that can strike or please, and thus comprises every species of poetical delight. The only difficulty is in the choice of examples and illustrations; and it is not easy, in such exuberance of matter, to find the middle point between penury and satiety. The parts seem artificially disposed, with sufficient coherence, so as that they cannot change their places without injury to the general design.

His images are displayed with such luxuriance of expression, that they are hidden like Butler's moon, by a "veil of light;" they are forms fantastically lost under superfluity of dress. *Pars minima est ipsa puella sui.* The words are multiplied till the sense is hardly perceived; attention deserts the mind, and settles in the ear. The reader wanders through the gay diffusion, sometimes amazed, and sometimes delighted, but, after many turnings in the flowery labyrinth, comes out as he went in. He remarked little, and laid hold on nothing.

To his versification justice requires that praise should not be denied. In the general fabrication of his lines he is, perhaps, superior to any other writer of blank verse; his flow is smooth, and his pauses are musical; but the concatenation of his verses is commonly too long continued, and the full close does not recur with sufficient frequency. The sense is carried on through a long intertexture of complicated clauses, and, as nothing is distinguished, nothing is remembered.

The exemption which blank verse affords from the necessity of closing the sense with the couplet betrays luxuriant and active minds into such self-indulgence, that they pile image upon image,

ornament upon ornament, and are not easily persuaded to close the sense at all. Blank verse will, therefore, I fear, be too often found in description exuberant, in argument loquacious, and in narration tiresome.

His diction is certainly poetical as it is not prosaic, and elegant as it is not vulgar. He is to be commended as having fewer artifices of disgust than most of his brethren of the blank song. He rarely either recalls old phrases, or twists his metre into harsh inversions. The sense, however, of his words is strained, when "he views the Ganges from Alpine heights;" that is from mountains like the Alps. And the pedant surely intrudes (but when was blank verse without pedantry?) when he tells how "Planets *absolve* the stated round of Time."

It is generally known to the readers of poetry that he intended to revise and augment this work, but died before he had completed his design. The reformed work as he left it, and the additions which he had made, are very properly retained in the late collection. He seems to have somewhat contracted his diffusion; but I know not whether he has gained in closeness what he has lost in splendour. In the additional book, "The Tale of Solon" is too long.

One great defect of his poem is very properly censured by Mr. Walker, unless it may be said, in his defence, that what he has omitted was not properly in his plan. His "picture of man is grand and beautiful, but unfinished. The immortality of the soul, which is the natural consequence of the appetites and powers she is invested with, is scarcely once hinted throughout the poem. This deficiency is amply supplied by the masterly pencil of Dr. Young; who, like a good philosopher, has invincibly proved the immortality of man, from the grandeur of his conceptions, and the meanness and misery of his state; for this reason, a few passages are selected from the 'Night Thoughts,' which, with those of Akenside, seem to form a complete view of the powers, situation, and end of man."—'Exercises for Improvement in Elocution.' p. 66.

His other poems are now to be considered; but a short consideration will despatch them. It is not easy to guess why he addicted himself so diligently to lyric poetry, having neither the ease and airiness of the lighter, nor the vehemence and elevation of the grander ode. When he lays his ill-fated hand upon his harp, his former powers seem to desert him; he has no longer his luxuriance of expression, nor variety of images. His thoughts are cold, and his words inelegant. Yet such was his love of lyrics, that, having written with great vigour and poignancy his "Epistle to Curio," he transformed it afterwards into an ode disgraceful only to its author.

Of his odes nothing favourable can be said: the sentiments commonly want force, nature, or novelty; the diction is sometimes harsh and uncouth, the stanzas ill-constructed and unpleasant, and the rhymes dissonant, or unskilfully disposed, too distant from each other, or arranged with too little regard to established use, and therefore perplexing to the ear, which in a short composition has not time to grow familiar with an innovation.

To examine such compositions singly cannot be required; they have doubtless brighter and darker parts; but when they are once found to be generally dull, all further labour may be spared; for to what use can the work be criticised that will not be read?

GRAY.

THOMAS GRAY, the son of Mr. Philip Gray, a scrivener of London, was born in Cornhill, November 26th, 1716. His grammatical education he received at Eton under the care of Mr. Antrobus, his mother's brother, then assistant to Dr. George; and when he left school, in 1734, entered a pensioner at Peterhouse in Cambridge.

The transition from the school to the college is, to most young scholars, the time from which they date their years of manhood, liberty, and happiness; but Gray seems to have been very little delighted with academical qualifications; he liked at Cambridge neither the mode of life nor the fashion of study, and lived sullenly on to the time when his attendance on lectures was no longer required. As he intended to profess the common law, he took no degree.

When he had been at Cambridge about five years, Mr. Horace Walpole, whose friendship he had gained at Eton, invited him to travel with him as his companion. They wandered

through France into Italy; and Gray's "Letters" contain a very pleasing account of many parts of their journey. But unequal friendships are easily dissolved: at Florence they quarrelled, and parted; and Mr. Walpole is now content to have it told that it was by his fault. If we look, however, without prejudice on the world, we shall find that men, whose consciousness of their own merit sets them above the compliances of servility, are apt enough in their association with superiors to watch their own dignity with troublesome and punctilious jealousy, and in the fervour of independence to exact that attention which they refuse to pay. Part they did, whatever was the quarrel; and the rest of their travels was doubtless more unpleasant to them both. Gray continued his journey in a manner suitable to his own little fortune, with only an occasional servant.

He returned to England in September, 1741, and in about two months afterwards buried his father, who had, by an injudicious waste of money upon a new house, so much lessened his fortune, that Gray thought himself too poor to study the law. He therefore retired to Cambridge, where he soon after became bachelor of civil law, and where, without liking the place or its inhabitants, or professing to like them, he passed, except a short residence at London, the rest of his life.

About this time he was deprived of Mr. West, the son of a chancellor of Ireland, a friend on whom he appears to have set a high value, and who deserved his esteem by the powers which he shows in his letters, and in the "Ode to May," which Mr. Mason has preserved, as well as by the sincerity with which, when Gray sent him part of "Agrippina," a tragedy that he had just begun, he gave an opinion which probably intercepted the progress of the work, and which the judgment of every reader will confirm. It was certainly no loss to the English stage that "Agrippina" was never finished.

In this year (1742) Gray seems to have applied himself seriously to poetry; for in this year were produced the "Ode to Spring," his "Prospect of Eton," and his "Ode to Adversity." He began likewise a Latin poem, "De Principiis Cogitandi."

It may be collected from the narrative of Mr. Mason, that his first ambition was to have excelled in Latin poetry: perhaps it were reasonable to wish that he had prosecuted his design; for, though there is at present some embarrassment in his phrase, and some harshness in his lyric numbers, his copiousness of language is such as very few possess; and his lines, even when imperfect, discover a writer whom practice would have made skilful.

He now lived on at Peterhouse, very little solicitous what others did or thought, and cultivated his mind and enlarged his views without any other purpose than of improving and amusing himself; when Mr. Mason, being elected fellow of Pembroke Hall, brought him a companion who was afterwards to be his editor, and whose fondness and fidelity has kindled in him a zeal of admiration which cannot be reasonably expected from the neutrality of a stranger, and the coldness of a critic.

In his retirement he wrote (1747) an ode on the "Death of Mr. Walpole's Cat;" and the year afterwards attempted a poem, of more importance, on "Government and Education," of which the fragments which remain have many excellent lines.

His next production (1750) was his far-famed "Elegy in the Churchyard," which, finding its way into a magazine, first, I believe, made him known to the public.

An invitation from Lady Cobham about this time gave occasion to an odd composition called "A Long Story," which adds little to Gray's character.

Several of his pieces were published (1753) with designs by Mr. Bentley: and that they might in some form or other make a book, only one side of each leaf was printed. I believe the poems and the plates recommended each other so well, that the whole impression was soon bought. This year he lost his mother.

Some time afterwards (1756) some young men of the college, whose chambers were near his, diverted themselves with disturbing him by frequent and troublesome noises, and, as is said, by pranks yet more offensive and contemptuous. This insolence, having endured it awhile, he represented to the governors of the society, among whom perhaps he had no friends; and, finding his complaint little regarded, removed himself to Pembroke Hall.

In 1757 he published "The Progress of Poetry," and "The Bard," two compositions at which the readers of poetry were at first content to gaze in mute amazement. Some that tried them confessed their inability to understand them, though Warburton said that they were understood as well as the works of Milton and Shakspeare, which it is the fashion to admire. Garrick wrote a few lines in their praise. Some hardy champions undertook to rescue them from neglect; and in a short time many were content to be shown beauties which they could not see.

Gray's reputation was now so high, that, after the death of Cibber, he had the honour of refusing the laurel, which was then bestowed on Mr. Whitehead.

His curiosity, not long after, drew him away from Cambridge to a lodging near the Museum, where he resided near three years, reading and transcribing; and, so far as can be discovered, very little affected by two odes on "Oblivion" and "Obscurity," in which his lyric perform-

ances were ridiculed with much contempt and much ingenuity.

When the professor of modern history at Cambridge died, he was, as he says, "cockered and spirited up," till he asked it of Lord Bute, who sent him a civil refusal; and the place was given to Mr. Brocket, the tutor of Sir James Lowther.

His constitution was weak, and, believing that his health was promoted by exercise and change of place, he undertook (1765) a journey into Scotland, of which his account, so far as it extends, is very curious and elegant: for, as his comprehension was ample, his curiosity extended to all the works of art, all the appearances of nature, and all the monuments of past events. He naturally contracted a friendship with Dr. Beattie, whom he found a poet, a philosopher, and a good man. The Mareschal College at Aberdeen offered him the degree of doctor of laws, which, having omitted to take it at Cambridge, he thought it decent to refuse.

What he had formerly solicited in vain was at last given him without solicitation. The professorship of history became again vacant, and he received (1768) an offer of it from the Duke of Grafton. He accepted and retained it to his death; always designing lectures, but never appearing reading them; uneasy at his neglect of duty, and appeasing his uneasiness with designs of reformation, and with a resolution which he believed himself to have made of resigning the office, if he found himself unable to discharge it.

Ill health made another journey necessary, and he visited (1769) Westmoreland and Cumberland. He that reads his epistolary narration wishes, that to travel, and to tell his travels, had been more of his employment; but it is by studying at home that we must obtain the ability of travelling with intelligence and improvement.

His travels and his studies were now near their end. The gout, of which he had sustained many weak attacks, fell upon his stomach, and, yielding to no medicines, produced strong convulsions, which (July 30, 1771) terminated in death.

His character I am willing to adopt, as Mr. Mason has done, from a letter written to my friend Mr. Boswell, by the Rev. Mr. Temple, rector of St. Gluvias in Cornwall; and am as willing as his warmest well-wisher to believe it true.

"Perhaps he was the most learned man in Europe. He was equally acquainted with the elegant and profound parts of science, and that not superficially, but thoroughly. He knew every branch of history, both natural and civil; had read all the original historians of England, France, and Italy; and was a great antiquarian. Criticism, metaphysics, morals, politics, made a principal part of his study; voyages and travels of all sorts were his favourite amusements; and he had a fine taste in painting, prints, architecture, and gardening. With such a fund of knowledge, his conversation must have been equally instructing and entertaining; but he was also a good man, a man of virtue and humanity. There is no character without some speck, some imperfection; and I think the greatest defect in his, was an affectation in delicacy, or rather effeminacy, and a visible fastidiousness, or contempt and disdain of his inferiors in science. He also had, in some degree, that weakness which disgusted Voltaire so much in Mr. Congreve: though he seemed to value others chiefly according to the progress that they had made in knowledge, yet he could not bear to be considered merely as a man of letters; and, though without birth, or fortune, or station, his desire was to be looked upon as a private independent gentleman, who read for his amusement. Perhaps it may be said, What signifies so much knowledge, when it produced so little? Is it worth taking so much pains to leave no memorials but a few poems? But let it be considered that Mr. Gray was to others at least innocently employed; to himself certainly beneficially. His time passed agreeably: he was every day making some new acquisition in science; his mind was enlarged, his heart softened, his virtue strengthened; the world and mankind were shown to him without a mask; and he was taught to consider every thing as trifling, and unworthy of the attention of a wise man, except the pursuit of knowledge and practice of virtue, in that state wherein God hath placed us."

To this character Mr. Mason has added a more particular account of Gray's skill in zoology. He has remarked that Gray's effeminacy was affected most "before those whom he did not wish to please;" and that he is unjustly charged with making knowledge his sole reason of preference, as he paid his esteem to none whom he did not likewise believe to be good.

What has occurred to me from the slight inspection of his Letters in which my undertaking has engaged me is, that his mind had a large grasp; that his curiosity was unlimited, and his judgment cultivated; that he was a man likely to love much where he loved at all; but that he was fastidious and hard to please. His contempt, however, is often employed where I hope it will be approved, upon scepticism and infidelity. His short account of Shaftesbury I will insert.

"You say you cannot conceive how Lord Shaftesbury came to be a philosopher in vogue; I will tell you; first, he was a lord; secondly, he was as vain as any of his readers; thirdly, men are very prone to believe what they do not understand; fourthly, they will believe any

thing at all, provided they are under no obligation to believe it; fifthly, they love to take a new road, even when that road leads no where; sixthly, he was reckoned a fine writer, and seems always to mean more than he said. Would you have any more reasons? An interval of above forty years has pretty well destroyed the charm. A dead lord ranks with commoners; vanity is no longer interested in the matter; for a new road has become an old one."

Mr. Mason has added, from his own knowledge, that, though Gray was poor, he was not eager of money; and that, out of the little that he had, he was very willing to help the necessitous.

As a writer he had this peculiarity, that he did not write his pieces first rudely, and then correct them, but laboured every line as it arose in the train of composition; and he had a notion not very peculiar, that he could not write but at certain times, or at happy moments; a fantastic foppery, to which my kindness for a man of learning and virtue wishes him to have been superior.

Gray's poetry is now to be considered; and I hope not to be looked on as an enemy to his name, if I confess that I contemplate it with less pleasure than his life.

His ode "On Spring" has something poetical, both in the language and the thought; but the language is too luxuriant, and the thoughts have nothing new. There has of late arisen a practice of giving to adjectives derived from substantives the termination of participles; such as the *cultured* plain, the *daisied* bank; but I was sorry to see, in the lines of a scholar like Gray, the *honied* Spring. The morality is natural, but too stale; the conclusion is pretty.

The poem "On the Cat" was doubtless by its Author considered as a trifle; but it is not a happy trifle. In the first stanza, "the azure flowers *that* blow" show resolutely a rhyme is sometimes made when it cannot easily be found. Selima, the Cat, is called a nymph, with some violence both to language and sense; but there is no good use made of it when it is done; for of the two lines,

> What female heart can gold despise?
> What cat's averse to fish?

the first relates merely to the nymph, and the second only to the cat. The sixth stanza contains a melancholy truth, that "a favourite has no friend;" but the last ends in a pointed sentence of no relation to the purpose; if *what glistered* had been *gold*, the cat would not have gone into the water; and, if she had, would not less have been drowned.

The "Prospect of Eton College" suggests nothing to Gray which every beholder does not equally think and feel. His supplication to father Thames, to tell him who drives the hoop or tosses the ball, is useless and puerile. Father Thames has no better means of knowing than himself. His epithet "buxom health" is not elegant; he seems not to understand the word. Gray thought his language more poetical as it was more remote from common use; finding in Dryden "honey redolent of Spring," an expression that reaches the utmost limits of our language, Gray drove it a little more beyond common apprehension, by making "gales" to be "redolent of joy and youth."

Of the "Ode on Adversity" the hint was at first taken from "O Diva, gratum quæ regis Antium:" but Gray has excelled his original by the variety of his sentiments, and by their moral application. Of this piece, at once poetical and rational, I will not, by slight objections, violate the dignity.

My process has now brought me to the *wonderful* "Wonder of Wonders," the two Sister Odes, by which, though either vulgar ignorance or common sense at first universally rejected them, many have been since persuaded to think themselves delighted. I am one of those that are willing to be pleased, and therefore would gladly find the meaning of the first stanza of "The Progress of Poetry."

Gray seems in his rapture to confound the images of "spreading sound and running water." A "stream of music" may be allowed; but where does "music," however "smooth and strong," after having visited the "verdant vales, roll down the steep amain," so as that "rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the roar?" If this be said of music, it is nonsense; if it be said of water, it is nothing to the purpose.

The second stanza, exhibiting Mar's car and Jove's eagle, is unworthy of further notice. Criticism disdains to chase a school-boy to his common-places.

To the third it may likewise be objected, that it is drawn from 'mythology, though such as may be more easily assimilated to real life. Idalia's "velvet green" has something of cant. An epithet or metaphor drawn from Nature ennobles Art; an epithet or metaphor drawn from Art degrades Nature. Gray is too fond of words arbitrarily compounded. "Many-twinkling" was formerly censured as not analogical; we may say "many spotted," but scarcely "many spotting." This stanza, however, has something pleasing.

Of the second ternary of stanzas, the first endeavours to tell something, and would have told it, had it not been crossed by Hyperion: the second describes well enough the universal prevalence of poetry; but I am afraid that the conclusion will not arise from the premises. The caverns of the North and the plains of Chili are not the residences of "Glory and generous

Shame." But that Poetry and Virtue go always together is an opinion so pleasing, that I can forgive him who resolves to think it true.

The third stanza sounds big with "Delphi," and "Egean," and "Ilissus," and "Meander," and "hallowed fountains," and "solemn sound;" but in all Gray's odes there is a kind of cumbrous splendour which we wish away. His position is at last false: in the time of Dante and Petrarch, from whom we derive our first school of Poetry, Italy was overrun by "tyrant power;" and "coward vice;" nor was our state much better when we first borrowed the Italian arts.

Of the third ternary, the first gives a mythological birth of Shakspeare. What is said of that mighty genius is true; but it is not said happily: the real effects of this poetical power are put out of sight by the pomp of machinery. Where truth is sufficient to fill the mind, fiction is worse than useless; the counterfeit debases the genuine.

His account of Milton's blindness, if we suppose it caused by study in the formation of his poem, a supposition surely allowable, is poetically true, and happily imagined. But the *car* of Dryden, with his *two coursers*, has nothing in it peculiar; it is a car in which any other rider may be placed.

"The Bard" appears, at the first view, to be, as Algarotti and others have remarked, an imitation of the prophecy of Nereus. Algarotti thinks it superior to its original; and, if preference depends only on the imagery and animation of the two poems, his judgment is right. There is in "The Bard" more force, more thought, and more variety. But to copy is less than to invent, and the copy has been unhappily produced at a wrong time. The fiction of Horace was to the Romans credible; but its revival disgusts us with apparent and unconquerable falsehood. *Incredulus odi.*

To select a singular event, and swell it to a giant's bulk by fabulous appendages of spectres and predictions, has little difficulty; for he that forsakes the probable may always find the marvellous. And it has little use; we are affected only as we believe; we are improved only as we find something to be imitated or declined. I do not see that "The Bard" promotes any truth, moral or political.

His stanzas are too long, especially his epodes; the ode is finished before the ear has learned its measures, and consequently before it can receive pleasure from their consonance and recurrence.

Of the first stanza the abrupt beginning has been celebrated: but technical beauties can give praise only to the inventor. It is in the power of any man to rush abruptly upon his subject, that has read the ballad of "Johnny Armstrong,"

Is there ever a man in all Scotland—

The initial resemblances, or alliterations, "ruin, ruthless, helm or hauberk," are below the grandeur of a poem that endeavours at sublimity.

In the second stanza the Bard is well described; but in the third we have the puerilities of obsolete mythology. When we are told that "Cadwallo hush'd the stormy main," and that "Modred made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topp'd head," attention recoils from the repetition of a tale that, even when it was first heard, was heard with scorn.

The *weaving* of the *winding sheet* he borrowed, as he owns, from the Northern Bards: but their texture, however, was very properly the work of female powers, as the act of spinning the thread of life is another mythology. Theft is always dangerous; Gray has made weavers of slaughtered bards by a fiction outrageous and incongruous. They are then called upon to "Weave the warp, and weave the woof," perhaps with no great propriety; for it is by crossing the *woof* with the *warp* that men weave the *web* or piece; and the first line was dearly bought by the admission of its wretched correspondent, "Give ample room and verge enough."* He has, however, no other line as bad.

The third stanza of the second ternary is commended, I think, beyond its merit. The personification is indistinct. *Thirst* and *Hunger* are not alike; and their features, to make the imagery perfect, should have been discriminated. We are told, in the same stanza, how "towers are fed." But I will no longer look for particular faults; yet let it be observed that the ode might have been concluded with an action of better example; but suicide is always to be had, without expense of thought.

These odes are marked by glittering accumulations of ungraceful ornaments; they strike, rather than please; the images are magnified by affectation; the language is laboured into harshness. The mind of the writer seems to work with unnatural violence. "Double, double, toil and trouble." He has a kind of strutting dignity, and is tall by walking on tiptoe. His art and his struggle are too visible, and there is too little appearance of ease and nature.†

To say that he had no beauties, would be unjust; a man like him, of great learning and great industry, could not but produce something valuable. When he pleases least, it can only be said that a good design was ill directed.

His translations of Northern and Welsh

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* "I have a soul, that like an *ample* shield
Can take in all; and *verge enough* for more."
Dryden's Sebastian.

† Lord Orford used to assert, that Gray "never wrote any thing easily, but things of humour:" and added, that humour was his natural and original turn.—C.

Poetry deserve praise; the imagery is preserved, perhaps often improved; but the language is unlike the language of other poets.

In the character of his Elegy I rejoice to concur with the common reader; for by the common sense of readers, uncorrupted with literary prejudices, after all the refinements of subtilty and the dogmatism of learning, must be finally decided all claim to poetical honours. The "Church-yard" abounds with images which find a mirror in every mind, and with sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo. The four stanzas, beginning "Yet even these bones," are to me original: I have never seen the notions in any other place; yet he that reads them here persuades himself that he has always felt them. Had Gray written often thus, it had been vain to blame, and useless to praise him.

LYTTELTON.

George Lyttelton, the son of Sir Thomas Lyttelton, of Hagley, in Worcestershire, was born in 1709. He was educated at Eton, where he was so much distinguished, that his exercises were recommended as models to his school-fellows.

From Eton he went to Christ-church, where he retained the same reputation of superiority, and displayed his abilities to the public in a poem on "Blenheim."

He was a very early writer, both in verse and prose. His "Progress of Love," and his "Persian Letters," were both written when he was very young; and indeed the character of a young man is very visible in both. The Verses cant of shepherds and flocks, and crooks dressed with flowers; and the Letters have something of that indistinct and headstrong ardour for liberty which a man of genius always catches when he enters the world, and always suffers to cool as he passes forward.

He stayed not long in Oxford; for in 1728 he began his travels, and saw France and Italy. When he returned, he obtained a seat in parliament, and soon distinguished himself among the most eager opponents of Sir Robert Walpole, though his father, who was commissioner of the admiralty, always voted with the court.

For many years the name of George Lyttelton was seen in every account of every debate in the House of Commons. He opposed the standing army; he opposed the excise; he supported the motion for petitioning the King to remove Walpole. His zeal was considered by the courtiers not only as violent, but as acrimonious and malignant; and when Walpole was at last hunted from his places, every effort was made by his friends, and many friends he had, to exclude Lyttelton from the secret committee.

The Prince of Wales, being (1737) driven from St. James's, kept a separate court, and opened his arms to the opponents of the ministry. Mr. Lyttelton became his secretary, and was supposed to have great influence in the direction of his conduct. He persuaded his master, whose business it was now to be popular, that he would advance his character by patronage. Mallet was made under-secretary with two hundred pounds; and Thomson had a pension of one hundred pounds a year. For Thomson, Lyttelton always retained his kindness, and was able at last to place him at ease.

Moore courted his favour by an apologetical poem, called "The Trial of Selim;" for which he was paid with kind words, which, as is common, raised great hopes, that were at last disappointed.

Lyttelton now stood in the first rank of opposition; and Pope, who was incited, it is not easy to say how, to increase the clamour against the ministry, commended him among the other patriots. This drew upon him the reproaches of Fox, who, in the house, imputed to him as a crime his intimacy with a lampooner so unjust and licentious. Lyttelton supported his friend; and replied, that he thought it an honour to be received into the familiarity of so great a poet.

While he was thus conspicuous, he married

(1741) Miss Lucy Fortescue of Devonshire, by whom he had a son, the late Lord Lyttelton, and two daughters, and with whom he appears to have lived in the highest degree of connubial felicity: but human pleasures are short: she died in childbed about five years afterwards; and he solaced himself by writing a long poem to her memory.

He did not, however, condemn himself to perpetual solitude and sorrow; for, after a while he was content to seek happiness again by a second marriage with the daughter of Sir Robert Rich; but the experiment was unsuccessful.

At length, after a long struggle, Walpole gave way, and honour and profit were distributed among his conquerors. Lyttelton was made (1744) one of the Lords of the Treasury; and from that time was engaged in supporting the schemes of the ministry.

Politics did not, however, so much engage him as to withhold his thoughts from things of more importance. He had, in the pride of juvenile confidence, with the help of corrupt conversation, entertained doubts of the truth of Christianity; but he thought the time now come when it was no longer fit to doubt or believe by chance, and applied himself seriously to the great question. His studies being honest, ended in conviction. He found that religion was true; and what he had learned he endeavoured to teach (1747) by "Observations on the Conversion of St. Paul;" a treatise to which infidelity has never been able to fabricate a specious answer. This book his father had the happiness of seeing, and expressed his pleasure in a letter which deserves to be inserted.

"I have read your religious treatise with infinite pleasure and satisfaction. The style is fine and clear, the arguments close, cogent, and irresistible. May the King of kings, whose glorious cause you have so well defended, reward your pious labours, and grant that I may be found worthy, through the merits of Jesus Christ, to be an eye-witness of that happiness which I don't doubt he will bountifully bestow upon you. In the mean time, I shall never cease glorifying God, for having endowed you with such useful talents, and giving me so good a son.

Your affectionate father,

THOMAS LYTTELTON."

A few years afterwards, (1751) by the death of his father, he inherited a baronet's title with a large estate, which, though perhaps he did not augment, he was careful to adorn, by a house of great elegance and expense, and by much attention to the decoration of his park.

As he continued his activity in parliament, he was gradually advancing his claim to profit and preferment; and accordingly was made in time (1754) cofferer and privy counsellor: this place he exchanged next year for the great office of chancellor of the Exchequer; an office, however, that required some qualifications which he soon perceived himself to want.

The year after, his curiosity led him into Wales; of which he has given an account, perhaps rather with too much affectation of delight, to Archibald Bower, a man of whom he had conceived an opinion more favourable than he seems to have deserved, and whom, having once espoused his interest and fame, he was never persuaded to disown. Bower, whatever was his moral character, did not want abilities; attacked as he was by a universal outcry, and that outcry, as it seems, the echo of truth, he kept his ground; at last, when his defences began to fail him, he sallied out upon his adversaries, and his adversaries retreated.

About this time Lyttelton published his "Dialogues of the Dead," which were very eagerly read, though the production rather, as it seems, of leisure than of study: rather effusions than compositions. The names of his persons too often enable the reader to anticipate their conversation; and when they have met, they too often part without any conclusion. He has copied Fenelon more than Fontenelle.

When they were first published, they were kindly commended by the "Critical Reviewers:" and poor Lyttelton, with humble gratitude, returned in a note which I have read, acknowledgments which can never be proper, since they must be paid either for flattery or for justice.

When, in the latter part of the last reign, the inauspicious commencement of the war made the dissolution of the ministry unavoidable, Sir George Lyttelton, losing with the rest his employment, was recompensed with a peerage; and rested from political turbulence in the House of Lords.

His last literary production was his "History of Henry the Second," elaborated by the searches and deliberations of twenty years, and published with such anxiety as vanity can dictate.

The story of this publication is remarkable. The whole work was printed twice over, a great part of it three times, and many sheets four or five times. The booksellers paid for the first impression; but the charges and repeated operations of the press were at the expense of the author, whose ambitious accuracy is known to have cost him at least a thousand pounds. He began to print in 1755. Three volumes appeared in 1764, a second edition of them in 1767, a third edition in 1768, and the conclusion in 1771.

Andrew Reid, a man not without considerable abilities, and not unacquainted with letters or with life, undertook to persuade Lyttelton, as he had persuaded himself, that he was master of the secret of punctuation; and, as fear begets credulity, he was employed, I know not at what price, to point the pages of "Henry the Second." The book was at last pointed and printed, and sent into the world. Lyttelton took money for his copy, of which, when he had paid the printer, he probably gave the rest away; for he was very liberal to the indigent.

When time brought the History to a third edition, Reid was either dead or discarded; and the superintendence of typography and punctuation was committed to a man originally a comb-maker, but then known by the style of Doctor. Something uncommon was probably expected, and something uncommon was at last done; for to the Doctor's edition is appended, what the world had hardly seen before, a list of errors in nineteen pages.

But to politics and literature there must be an end. Lord Lyttelton had never the appearance of a strong or of a healthy man; he had a slender uncompacted frame, and a meagre face; he lasted however sixty years, and was then seized with his last illness. Of his death a very affecting and instructive account has been given by his physician, which will spare me the task of his moral character.

"On Sunday evening the symptoms of his Lordship's disorder, which for a week past had alarmed us, put on a fatal appearance, and his Lordship believed himself to be a dying man. From this time he suffered by restlessness rather than pain; though his nerves were apparently much fluttered, his mental faculties never seemed stronger, when he was thoroughly awake.

"His Lordship's bilious and hepatic complaints seemed alone not equal to the expected mournful event; his long want of sleep, whether the consequence of the irritation in the bowels, or, which is more probable, of causes of a different kind, accounts for his loss of strength, and for his death, very sufficiently.

"Though his Lordship wished his approaching dissolution not to be lingering, he waited for it with resignation. He said, 'It is a folly, a keeping me in misery, now to attempt to prolong life;' yet he was easily persuaded, for the satisfaction of others, to do or take any thing thought proper for him. On Saturday he had been remarkably better, and we were not without some hopes of his recovery.

"On Sunday, about eleven in the forenoon, his Lordship sent for me, and said he felt a great flurry, and wished to have a little conversation with me in order to divert it. He then proceeded to open the fountain of that heart, from whence goodness had so long flowed, as from a copious spring. 'Doctor,' said he, 'you shall be my confessor: when I first set out in the world, I had friends who endeavoured to shake my belief in the Christian religion. I saw difficulties which staggered me; but I kept my mind open to conviction. The evidences and doctrines of Christianity, studied with attention, made me a most firm and persuaded believer of the Christian religion. I have made it the rule of my life, and it is the ground of my future hopes. I have erred and sinned; but have repented, and never indulged any vicious habit. In politics, and public life, I have made public good the rule of my conduct. I never gave counsels which I did not at the time think best. I have seen that I was sometimes in the wrong, but I did not err designedly. I have endeavoured, in private life, to do all the good in my power, and never for a moment could indulge malicious or unjust designs upon any person whatsoever.'

"At another time he said, 'I must leave my soul in the same state it was in before this illness; I find this a very inconvenient time for solicitude about any thing.

"On the evening, when the symptoms of death came on, he said, 'I shall die; but it will not be your fault.' When Lord and Lady Valentia came to see his Lordship, he gave them his solemn benediction, and said, 'Be good, be virtuous, my Lord; you must come to this.' Thus he continued giving his dying benediction to all around him. On Monday morning a lucid interval gave some small hopes, but these vanished in the evening; and he continued dying, but with very little uneasiness, till Tuesday morning, August 22, when between seven and eight o'clock he expired, almost without a groan."

His Lordship was buried at Hagley; and the following inscription is cut on the side of his Lady's monument:

> This unadorned stone was placed here
> By the particular desire and express
> Directions of the Right Honourable
> GEORGE LORD LYTTELTON,
> Who died August 22, 1773, aged 64.

Lord Lyttelton's Poems are the works of a man of literature and judgment, devoting part of his time to versification. They have nothing to be despised, and little to be admired. Of his "Progress of Love," it is sufficient blame to say that it is pastoral. His blank verse in "Blenheim" has neither much force nor much elegance. His little performances, whether songs or epigrams, are sometimes sprightly, and sometimes insipid. His epistolary pieces have

a smooth equability, which cannot much tire, because they are short, but which seldom elevates or surprises. But from this censure ought to be excepted his "Advice to Belinda," which, though for the most part written when he was very young, contains much truth and much prudence, very elegantly and vigorously expressed, and shows a mind attentive to life, and a power of poetry which cultivation might have raised to excellence.

THE END.

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